



Start with the Heart

Positive practices
in anti-bullying



Scottish
Government
Riaghaltas
na h-Alba

SAMH
Scottish Action for Mental Health





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Foreword

Colleagues, supporters and friends of respectme,

It is with a warm heart, and sincere gratitude to all participants, that I present this delightful progress report on the 'respectme reward' programme.

respectme, Scotland's Anti-Bullying Service, is wholly funded by the Scottish Government to provide policy support and guidance, professional learning/training for adults, Anti-Bullying Week annual campaigns and a suite of high-quality resources for use across education and youth work services.

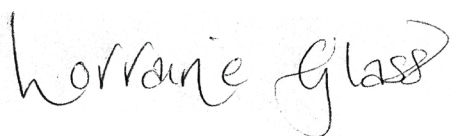
Placing the safety, health, wellbeing and happiness of all children and young people at the heart of everything we do is our ultimate purpose. Our work is driven by children's rights legislation and underpinned by the values of fairness, respect, equality and inclusion. Bullying is never acceptable and is not a normal, or inevitable, part of growing-up.

In response to requests from our stakeholders, I developed, designed and piloted the unique, innovative reward programme. It is a validated self-assessment method, which seeks to test the gap between local policy and practice by examining the impact of anti-bullying work, correlated with measures on how safe children and young people report feeling in their school or youth setting, as well as data from parents/carers and staff/volunteers.

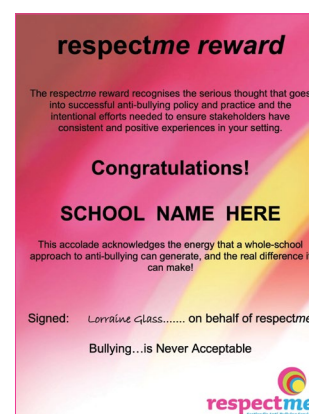
Open-hearted colleagues from Dumfries and Galloway Council area worked closely with me to trust and test the system, which evaluated positively and was later scaled for national roll-out across Scotland.

We gather data on the anti-bullying prevention, response and inclusive practices in place which combine to create safer cultures, rooted in strong, shared values. Policy feedback and suggestions for practice are offered in return to participants for future implementation, with improved outcomes for children and young people firmly at the heart of the process.

A coveted 'reward' certificate is presented upon completion, and good practice is shared widely. Gaining a reward does not mean that there is no bullying in that school or setting – instead it shows that the whole school or group community are committed to, and relentlessly persistent, in their anti-bullying ambitions, which start with the heart!



Lorraine Glass
Director, respectme



1 Introduction and summary

The **respectme** reward supports schools and other organisations to assess progress in putting their anti-bullying policy into practice and identify next steps. **respectme** acts as a 'critical friend' providing validation of each organisation's self-assessment.

Since it was piloted in 2020-21, more than 100 schools have registered interest and 26 have fully achieved the reward.

In working through the process, schools have:

- provided evidence of their practices;
- surveyed pupils, staff and volunteers and parents and carers about the school's approach to anti-bullying;
- assessed their practice through a series of reflective questions.

This evidence provides valuable information about how anti-bullying is approached in schools across Scotland.

Each school has specific needs based on its context but, for reward schools, there are commonalities. This report shines a light on the practices that are helping reward schools create a culture of respect, where there is no place for bullying. This has led to the following outcomes:

- Children and young people feel safer and happier;
- Friendships and relationships have improved;
- Children and young people are better able to deal with conflict and support each other;
- Children and young people have a greater awareness of bullying, its negative impacts and how to get support.

Anti-bullying work in Scotland has three key strands: prevention, inclusion and response. reward schools' practices in these areas are shared throughout this report and illustrated by case studies and quotations from their reward submissions. Common approaches in practice were:

Prevention: A culture of kindness, respect and empathy is created where bullying does not thrive. Nurturing relationships are formed that model these positive behaviours and build trust. Clear anti-bullying messages are embedded into the curriculum and creative approaches are used to involve and empower children and young people in their delivery. Staff check in on children and young people's emotional wellbeing and provide spaces where they can feel safe.

Inclusion: Schools have a welcoming environment where everyone feels safe and included and diversity is celebrated. There are clear messages and learning about inclusion. When discrimination takes place, it is challenged. Support and safe spaces help children and young people to be themselves and know they belong there.

Response: Clear processes are in place that make it safe and easy for people to report instances of bullying. School staff respond by listening to and supporting those involved, understanding their concerns and investigating fairly. Incidents are responded to by using restorative approaches, giving support and agency to those

involved. Recording incidents allows schools to monitor and respond to trends in behaviour.

reward schools use a plan-do-review cycle to evaluate and improve practice across these areas. Involving the whole school community improves the success of anti-bullying interventions. The review of Behaviour in Scottish Schools¹ in 2023 found that where schools had buy-in from staff and pupils regarding the school's values it greatly contributed to the overall ethos of the school. Nurturing approaches, promoting ethos and values and restorative approaches were used by schools to promote positive relationships and behaviour. It is these approaches that have been embraced by schools achieving the *respectme* reward as they progress through their anti-bullying journey.

¹ Behaviour in Scottish Schools 2023 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/behaviour-scottish-schools-research-report-2023/>

2 Anti-bullying policy

Schools that participate in the reward must first have an anti-bullying policy in place. 'Respect for All'² outlines the factors that should be included within a policy.

In line with this guidance, reward schools have involved the whole school community in developing their policy using consultation and collaboration.



We have posters displayed around the school explaining our policy, support, and how the law views bullying, and staff refer to our school policy when discussing bullying with pupils, parents and carers. We regularly update staff with professional development opportunities and resources to further their understanding and practice in support of our Anti-Bullying Policy.

For some schools, pupil ambassadors gained feedback from their peers and worked alongside staff and parents and carers. This approach helps to create a policy that is meaningful and understood across the school. It has paved the way for everyday practices to be developed to make the intent of the policy a reality.

For reward schools, their anti-bullying policy is a living document. Care has been taken to involve both pupils and their families in sharing the policy. For example, pupils creating a child-friendly version of the document or parent councils planning its launch. Staff are confident in its implementation. It is regularly referred to and helps to create an accurate expectation of how bullying will be responded to.



2 Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/advice-and-guidance/2017/11/respect-national-approach-anti-bullying-scotlands-children-young-people/documents/00527674-pdf/00527674-pdf/govscot%3Adocument/00527674.pdf>

The best way for schools to manage bullying is to create an environment where it's less likely to happen in the first place. The impact of bullying spreads wide, it affects relationships, wellbeing, attendance and achievement. So preventative approaches should also reach all areas of school life.

reward schools work hard to embed their values across the school community. Kindness, respect and empathy are both taught and modelled. Schools develop approaches to building nurturing relationships that are tailored to their own communities. Creative anti-bullying inputs are included in the curriculum and pupils are involved in its development. Emotional wellbeing is a priority, and pupils are able to access calm spaces that meet their needs. The whole school community is involved in reviewing and improving anti-bullying practices.

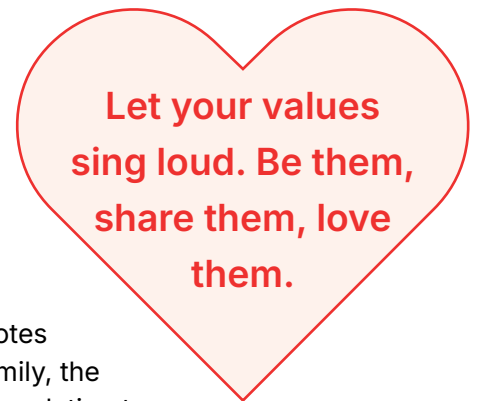
Pupils' views underpin all prevention activity. Pupil voice groups allow children and young people to have a say in preventing bullying and lead on activities that support this. Their needs are assessed and inform developments in practice.

Start with the Heart

reward schools feel strongly that their vision, values and ethos are central to preventing bullying. Values are:

Visible: From messaging in school assemblies, positive quotes on display, to stickers and fridge magnets given to each family, the school ethos is clear to see. There are consistent messages relating to the approaches that lie at the heart of each school community.

Modelled: School staff actively model positive behaviours, treating others with kindness, empathy and respect.



All adults have a clear commitment to promoting and role-modelling positive relationships and positive behaviour. Adults will model positive, respectful relationships and behaviours between staff, pupils and parents.

Many schools also have pupil ambassadors that act as role models to their peers.



Our Primary 7s have received training as Young Sports Leaders and lead games and clubs at break times. They model appropriate behaviour and provide opportunities for the children to interact positively and help the younger children develop various skills.

Embraced: Where values have been created or revamped, the whole school community has been involved. Pupils use the school values to develop their own classroom charters.



Our school values were created with staff, parents and pupils: 'Respect, Responsibility and Resilience which are nurtured and nourished through our Relationships'.

Celebrated: Displaying the characteristics of the values is actively rewarded. Schools are creative in recognising this – from house points to kindness walls and from merit postcards to Hot Chocolate Wednesdays, where children who go over and above in displaying the school values are invited to have hot chocolate with the senior leadership team.

Case study: Sandhead and Drummore Primary Schools

The values were brought to life through characters designed and named by the children. The children have explored real-life situations of the application of the values through roleplaying, literacy activities and storyboarding.

The values are recognised through the Headteacher's VIP awards, using the characters on stickers and certificates.



Trusted bonds

Positive relationships across the school community create trusted bonds which underpin anti-bullying practices. This approach:

- Creates a respectful environment, modelling how people should treat each other;
- Nurtures children and young people and places their needs at the heart of school life;
- Ensures that pupils feel welcome and are confident they can approach adults and feel listened to and valued;
- Helps adults to get to know the young people in their care and spot changes or when things aren't quite right.

Connect with respect.
Know each other
and learn
together.

Relationships are:

Actively nurtured: In schools of all sizes, staff actively build relationships. Senior leadership members are visible, creating a welcoming environment both for families and pupils. This includes welcoming pupils at the start and end of the day and chatting informally with families.

Teaching staff understand the importance of relationship building and take the time to get to know their pupils.



All teachers greet their pupils at the door of the classroom and talk to them about their day, hobbies and interests.

Pupils have enjoyed this and feel that this small step has helped them get to know their teachers better and made them more approachable.

Non-teaching staff such as librarians or catering staff also play an important role in providing pupils with a range of trusted, approachable adults with whom to build relationships.

Schools have been supported to develop a whole school approach by local authority initiatives, such as Renfrewshire's Nurturing Relationships Approach (RNRA)³.



It provides an implementation process which has helped the staff develop nurturing relationships in their classes and across the whole school.

We have found that RNRA has helped us give support to parents where anxiety or conflict is an issue at home.

³ Renfrewshire's Nurturing Relationships Approach (RNRA) exemplar <https://education.gov.scot/resources/renfrewshire-s-nurturing-relationships-approach-rnra/>

Defined in policy: reward schools recognise the need to change their approach and have moved away from having a behaviour policy which seeks to manage or punish, to creating a relationship policy built on listening, understanding and respect.

Pupils, families and staff have been involved in anti-bullying policy rewrites which link relationships with nurturing and attachment and strongly contribute to reducing bullying.



This work supports a culture and ethos of inclusion and respect for all in school.

We have a strong values and relationship-based approach in all we do which is crucial in making positive change when it comes to anti-bullying work.

Our young people as individuals are at the centre of all we do.

Embraced by pupils: Children and young people want to play a part in supporting their peers and helping them feel included. Schools create opportunities for friendship building, buddying and more formal peer mentoring. Senior pupils are often trained to support younger pupils, such as through peer mentoring or play leader programmes.



Our peer mentoring programme allows young people to build a relationship with a trusted senior pupil helping them with friendship skills, assertiveness skills, conflict resolution and problem solving and communication skills. It has encouraged some young people to express concerns surrounding bullying in school.

Case study: Rochsolloch Primary School

Through the development of a Positive Relationships Policy, children have developed coping strategies to help regulate behaviour and manage their emotions.

Investing in relationships is key to staff recognising pupil changes in attitude, motivation or engagement with tasks or their peers. When talking about behaviour with children, discussions are more constructive and consistent.

Older children created Kindness Booklets to share with younger children.

Children across the school were engaged in considering what kindness is.

Showing and explaining kind behaviours led to children being more aware of what kindness looks like, sounds like and feels like.

Extended across the school community: One of the challenges faced by schools is improved engagement with families. Improving relationships helps parents and carers to feel welcome and included, supports them to understand and have a voice in anti-bullying approaches, helps to mirror practices at home and school and provides role models for positive relationships. reward schools welcome parents into the school environment and listen to and respect their views. Schools create opportunities for pupils to engage with their wider community and develop bonds and understanding beyond the school gates.



We noted that our feedback came mostly from female parents and carers, so we organised a Donuts and Dads afternoon to entice our male parents and carers to come in. This was not a one-off and is the start of a regular session. We want to ensure everyone is aware that they have a voice in what we do. We are a whole school community and want it to continue to run as such.

Checking in

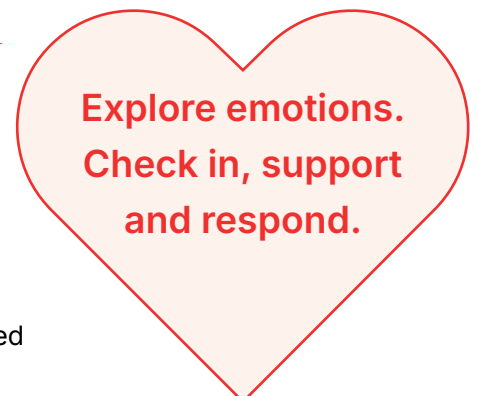
Understanding and managing emotions contributes to both preventing and responding to bullying incidents.

Checking in on emotions supports pupils to better understand how they are feeling and use tools to manage their emotions. It allows staff to have an understanding of how pupils are feeling and provide support. A change in emotions may be an indicator that a pupil has experienced bullying or is at risk of engaging in bullying behaviour.

Using wellbeing indicators can contribute to measuring the effectiveness of a school's anti-bullying practices.

Checking in is:

Accessible: reward schools use tools such as daily emotional check-ins and Worry Boxes to support pupils to safely explore their feelings, share concerns and access support.



Daily check-ins with class teachers and strong relationships with trusted adults means that we notice and respond to pupil who may need support.

Supported: Wellbeing-related inputs, including the use of the GIRFEC (Getting it Right for Every Child) wellbeing (SHANARRI – Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible, Included) indicators⁴, support pupils to understand and reflect on their wellbeing.



We have assigned each month within our school a SHANARRI indicator. That is the theme of the month within our schools. It is addressed within the classroom planning and in whole school assemblies. This helps pupils understand all that they are entitled to and their rights and helps them feel comfortable in approaching us if any of their needs are not met.

Actioned: Schools use a range of tools to measure and respond to pupils' wellbeing. Wellbeing surveys, incorporating the SHANARRI indicators, may be used once or twice a year to gain an understanding of pupils' needs. The Glasgow Motivation and Wellbeing Profile (GMWP)⁵ is used in schools across Glasgow to track and monitor wellbeing across the course of a pupil's school journey. Teaching staff use this and other data, such as their own observations or feedback from families, to assess each individual's needs and implement support. This may include partnering with external services and targeted health and wellbeing inputs to the curriculum.



Evidence suggested that the health and wellbeing of our learners was an issue. Health and wellbeing became a school improvement priority for the last three years.



Case study: Houston Primary School

Check ins and Worry boxes are used in all classes.

Pupils take a twice-yearly survey, using the Glasgow Motivation and Wellbeing Profile. Originally, the school used their own survey but moved over to the GMWP to marry up with the local high school to create a snapshot of pupils from age 3-18.

Regular GIRFEC meetings are held where staff discuss all pupils and raise concerns if needed.

Feedback from the surveys is used in the meetings to give pupils a voice. Staff respond to any concerns raised by pupils through their wellbeing surveys.


4 GIRFEC wellbeing indicators <https://www.gov.scot/policies/girfec/wellbeing-indicators-shanarri>

5 Glasgow Motivation and Wellbeing Profile <https://education.gov.scot/resources/wellbeing-profile-glasgow-motivation-and-wellbeing-profile-gmwp/>

Safe spaces

reward schools create environments where everyone should feel safe. In addition, they provide specific places for pupils to take time out or get peer or professional support. Spaces provide:

Quiet reflection: reward schools recognise that there are times when pupils need to take themselves away from busy social areas. Comfortable spaces are designated for peace and reflection.



**Make the space for
quiet, for fun and
for help.**



We have areas across our school for children to go if they require a quiet space. We have developed our Reflection Room, Sensory Room, Zen Zone and Nurture Garden as areas for the children to go to if they feel overwhelmed or need an alternative space from the playground.

Friendship building: Schools also allocate areas where children and young people can go to seek out social activities. This includes friendship benches where a pupil can take a seat, knowing that someone will join them to talk or play. Spaces are created for quieter friendship groups and a range of clubs exist. Many of these initiatives are developed and run by pupils for their peers and have been part of the remit of pupil voice groups.



Within our school there are break and lunchtime clubs set up to encourage children to make appropriate choices. If they do not believe that they are in the right frame of mind to be around their peers in a positive way within the playground they have the choice to attend one of the clubs where they are welcome to discuss how they are feeling within that moment.

Case study: Newmains Primary School

The school has a nurturing approach embedded within their work and has created safe spaces that support this. This includes a nurture room, used for drop-in and group work. The school's mental health co-ordinator runs a Chat 'n' Chill, which pupils can attend through self-referral or nomination by a teacher, parent or carer. The sessions take the form of play and take place in the family room, which is full of toys, books and art and crafts to put children at ease while they talk. The staff member involves the parents if appropriate and offers them help if needed.

A range of staff are involved in playground monitoring and target their support to those in need. Pupils are keen to take on roles to help each other such as health and wellbeing champions, buddies, playground support and nurture support.



Safety for all: As well as specific areas for pupils to take themselves to, it is vital that the whole school environment is safe and welcoming. Pupils contribute to the development of charters for the classroom and playground, which create expectations about how people treat each other. Specific areas are monitored, both by staff and pupils, who receive training for this role.



Our Senior and Extended Leadership Teams form part of a daily supervision rota, in which key areas of the school, such as the dining area and playground, are staffed at social times. Our prefect team also help to organise the lunch hall in order to provide a safe and secure environment for all of our young learners.

Access to support: Schools have also created spaces for pupils to go to access support and guidance from staff, external agencies or their peers. Services are put in place in response to identified needs.




We have a youth work hub and partners on site such as Youth Justice, School Nurse and a Youth Engagement Officer. All of these services support our young people and families alongside school to address issues which our young people struggle with. These services offer one-to-one sessions, drop-ins or small group work as required, and can support mediation.

Creative curriculum

reward schools embed anti-bullying practices across the curriculum and the whole school community is involved. Links to health and wellbeing are clearly identified and targeted approaches are developed. Inputs to the curriculum are:

Pupil-led: Children and young people play a huge role in developing engaging teaching and learning relating to anti-bullying. Pupil voice groups give inputs to assemblies, develop their own lessons and even provide inputs to staff training. Anti-Bullying Week is an annual catalyst for young people getting involved, creating posters, displays and special events.



Let learning shine.
Use knowledge,
come together,
enjoy.



We have a group of anti-bullying ambassadors who support their peers and arrange a number of awareness campaigns throughout the year, especially anti-bullying week. Pupils run activities to highlight ways of tackling bullying and present to their peers at assemblies and in Personal and Social Education classes.

Informed by experts: Schools draw on a range of resources to use in teaching and learning. Some of these are listed in Appendix 1. External agencies provide expert inputs, for example, Community Police Officers giving online safety advice and mental health charities providing tailored workshops. *respectme*'s own resources for Anti-Bullying Week are well used and Odd Socks Day is a firm favourite in many schools' calendars.



Children's mental health is key in creating a positive nurturing ethos, and in turn helps prevent bullying, which is why we regularly run workshops and work with partners like SAMH or conduct Emotional Literacy in class.

Family-focused: Schools recognise that it's important to involve families in anti-bullying learning. This helps parents, carers and other family members to understand and get involved the school's anti-bullying policy and practices.

Families are able to think about their role in preventing bullying and spotting the signs of bullying taking place. Online bullying is a concern for parents and schools can provide useful information and support. Family sessions are run, particularly

during Anti-Bullying Week and Community Learning and Development (CLD) staff provide additional family learning.



We work with parents/carers/families to address concerns about online bullying and hold Family Learning events with a focus on online safety, including online bullying.

Creative: Schools use creative approaches to anti-bullying teaching and learning.

Pupils have created posters, films, poems and songs relating to anti-bullying.

Tailored programmes support particular groups, for example a mentoring programme for boys at the start of high school and a confidence building programme for girls in primary school.



The girls found their superpower as well as strategies for how to speak out with confidence. It was a really powerful time of growing and self-reflection.

By empowering the class to believe that they all possess a unique superpower, the programme helps them to build their confidence and flourish in their next step in becoming a P7 student or their next step when moving on to higher education.

Case study: Hamilton Grammar School

Anti-bullying and related topics such as empathy, resilience and discrimination feature in the Personal and Social Education (PSE) curriculum.

Senior pupils take part in a 'Mentors in Violence Prevention' programme and deliver peer education to younger pupils.

Pupils enjoy PSE lessons, Anti-Bullying Week events and find working with older pupils extremely helpful.

A group of the Mentors in Violence Prevention students delivered a session to all teaching staff. The discussions focused on the use of harmful language and challenged the idea of 'banter' in the classroom.

Hearing directly from students helped staff carefully consider how they react to bullying in the school and allowed pupils to share the leadership skills they had developed during the programme.

A mental health programme delivered by Action for Children was targeted at pupils identified, from a questionnaire, as having low mood, confidence or being at risk of anxious thoughts.

This has given young people the chance to access support options that they may not have otherwise requested or even considered themselves.



Review and improve

reward schools have a process for continual improvement which involves the whole school community. Improvement includes:

Consultation and involvement: Pupils, parents and carers' views are regularly sought to improve anti-bullying practices. Pupil voice groups are often involved in consulting others, for example, developing surveys for other pupils or parents and carers. Children and young people are given a role as leaders of change. Child-friendly policies and improvement plans are developed.

Act to make things better. Listen, use what you know, innovate.



We do regular formative surveys where we look at the statistics from pupils' responses of different areas and compare them to when we started our work a few years ago. We also carry out focus groups to receive the opinions of pupils and parents and discuss how we can make progress with eradicating bullying as much as possible.

Case study: Moffat Academy

The school hosts Dine and Democracy sessions where year groups come together to look at policy or a burning issue for the school and discuss it over a breakfast supported by staff. They have found this an effective platform to use for pupils to make positive change and have their views taken seriously.



The school sees communication with parents as a strength. Building positive relationships helps staff and families to work together to address any concerns. Parents and carers have a voice and their contributions support improvements. The school finds ways to seek their views throughout the year through school improvement planning meetings, focus groups and surveys.

Staff track wellbeing and review the data regularly to identify any patterns or dips in year groups so they can make improvements. They also analyse the data from recording bullying incidents and attendance data. This gives a clear picture of any rising issues or trends and allows the school to intervene, adapt inputs or courses and create staff training, based on particular areas being identified.

Evaluation: Schools evaluate anti-bullying inputs using reflective practice and feedback from consultations to continually developing their offer. Analysis of the recording of bullying incidents has led to the development of bespoke programmes of support. Curriculum planning ensures that anti-bullying practices are embedded appropriately. For some schools, anti-bullying is a permanent agenda item at senior leadership team meetings.



Continual reflection of our practice is another key factor in preventing bullying. This allows us to ensure that our anti-bullying policy is a live document which can be adapted as the issues facing our young people change. This helps to ensure that the needs of all young people are met.

Staff development: School staff engage in a range of training that builds their skills and confidence in supporting young people. The *respectme* e-learning is the go-to place for specific anti-bullying training. Training in related areas is also common, for example in nurturing principles, attachment and adverse childhood experiences (ACES).



In-service days include facilities staff and support staff to ensure we are all using a common language and approach. The staff also participate in *respectme* training over the year and local authority training including attachment and promoting positive relationships and understanding distressed behaviour.

4 Inclusion

Creating an inclusive environment helps everyone to feel welcome and challenges prejudice. This helps children and young people to be themselves without feeling 'othered' and means prejudice-based bullying is less likely to thrive.

reward schools have a good understanding of the diverse make-up of their school's community and its related needs. They celebrate diversity, have strong messaging relating to inclusion and challenge prejudice.

Inclusion is embedded within the curriculum and safe spaces are created, particularly for those with protected characteristics.

Schools have a focus on improvement and empower the whole school community to create an inclusive environment for all.

Understand and embrace
the things that make
us different, learn
together and feel
safe to be who
we are.



Credit: Lee Ainslie, Moffat Academy

Celebrating diversity

reward schools celebrate the uniqueness of each pupil and value the diversity of their school community. Celebratory events are used to raise awareness and help pupils to feel included, for example by highlighting relevant library books during Black History Month.



We regularly visit different places of worship. We invite our families in to support in school, and to help us learn about their cultural celebrations and celebrate with them. We have an annual multi-faith blessing. Our entrance has a map of the world, where we highlight all the different countries our pupils come from. We have our child protection and safeguarding procedures available in all languages spoken in our school.

It is so important to us that our diverse community of pupils is celebrated.

Messaging and challenging

reward schools recognise that inclusion is inextricable from children's rights. Practices are informed by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and many schools have achieved UNICEF's Rights Respecting Schools award⁶. This rights-based approach has supported the development of an inclusive culture and ethos. Awareness-raising campaigns take place and are often pupil led. This includes activities that raise awareness of autism, mental health and disability. Schools demonstrate their LGBTQ+ allyship through use of rainbow lanyards and flags and awareness is raised through the rainbow laces campaign⁷. Staff and pupils are confident in challenging stereotypes, prejudice and inappropriate language.



We are a UNICEF Silver Accredited Rights Respecting School. As such, we have successfully evidenced our ability to embed fundamental children's rights within our curriculum and actively encourage and promote inclusion, diversity and respect. Our Pupil Empowerment Teams had, and continue to have, a large role to play in this and have actively promoted awareness raising campaigns (such as wearing green to highlight stigma around mental health), in order to ensure all of our community feel safe, valued and respected.

6 <https://www.unicef.org.uk/rights-respecting-schools/the-rrsa/>

7 <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/get-involved/support-us/rainbow-laces>

Spaces and support

reward schools understand the needs of their community and put support in place.

This includes creating safe spaces, for example, for LGBTQ+ groups to come together or for pupils to practise their faith.

Schools recognise the impact of poverty on some families and provide inputs that tackle this, for example, providing access to food, clothes and other necessary resources.

Pupils get involved in providing support and many schools have created roles for pupils as inclusion or equality ambassadors. Teachers look out for and address signs of exclusion, providing support where needed.

Tools such as the Circle Framework⁸ are used to assess and implement staged support.

Planning tools such as the child's plan within GIRFEC⁹ or behaviour risk assessments for more vulnerable children support a consistent approach across staff and ensure all parties have an input.



An excellent example of how we have supported our Muslim pupils was to make arrangements for classrooms to be available for prayer and a quiet space for those fasting away from other pupils who may have food at lunchtime during the month of Ramadan.

We used Twitter, notices and email to ensure all pupils and staff knew the arrangements for each day as the prayer times changed and senior pupils helped us to ensure we were providing the necessary support and acted as our advisors.

Information was also shared with staff to ensure that they had an understanding of what some of their pupils may be experiencing while fasting and the meaning of the festival to their Muslim pupils.

We found a greater number of pupils talked to their friends and classmates about Ramadan during this time and pupils appreciated the support of the school.

⁸ <https://education.gov.scot/resources/circle-resource-to-support-inclusive-learning-and-collaborative-working-secondary/>

⁹ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/getting-right-child-girfec-practice-statement-girfec-childs-plan/pages/1/>

Curriculum inputs

Improving understanding of inclusion reduces prejudice. Tailored teaching and learning is included in the curriculum.

This may be pupil led, be responsive to needs, or use external resources, eg from the Show Racism the Red Card education hub¹⁰, Time for Inclusive Education (TIE)¹¹ or quitfightingforlikes violence prevention campaign¹².



We had several reports of homophobic words being used. We addressed that by giving more targeted inputs around sexuality and linking in with the LGBT Youth worker who visited the school and supported us.

The impact was evident with a pupil who 'came out' as gay. He said these inputs will "stop him being bullied" and he thanked us for doing that. This was an amazing feeling.

Review and improve

Using quality frameworks such as Rights Respecting Schools or LGBT Youth Scotland's LGBT Charter¹³ allows schools to assess their practices and implement improvements. Accessing staff training, such as the awareness training included in the LGBT Charter, supports staff to create inclusive classroom environments and manage situations with confidence. Staff collaborate to evaluate the curriculum in relation to inclusion. The whole school community is involved in improvement, from pupil Inclusion Ambassadors to Parent Councils.



Our Inclusion Champions meet bi-monthly to discuss areas to develop and strengths within the school and with our anti-bullying messaging. This allows our school community to constantly develop and ensure we all meet the needs of all young people.

¹⁰ <https://theredcardhub.org>

¹¹ <https://tie.scot>

¹² <https://www.quitfightingforlikes.scot>

¹³ <https://lgbtyouth.org.uk/supporting-inclusive-education/>

5 Response

Bullying won't ever be eradicated but the way schools respond to instances of bullying will impact on those involved and the likelihood of repeat behaviour.

reward schools have a policy which outlines clear steps to be taken in response to an incident. They act swiftly, prioritise safety, ensure the right people are involved and listen to the views of the children and young people affected.

It is important that children and young people who have experienced bullying feel they have a choice in what happens next. Schools manage situations with empathy and understanding and, where appropriate, use restorative approaches. Incidents of bullying are clearly and accurately recorded and this data is used as part of the improvement cycle.

Case study: Dunfermline High School

The school's primary concern is to provide an environment that is safe and reassuring for the young people involved, and one in which there is mutual trust. It is imperative that those experiencing bullying behaviours are supported and that they are taken seriously.

All incidents are treated with the utmost confidentiality. When an incident is noticed, all staff recognise their responsibility in responding to this. Their processes are standardised and this system is widely shared.

Initial concerns can be logged by staff by completing a form. This is sent to a Named Person inbox, where it is then sent on to the relevant staff member. Concerns can also be reported via a QR Code which also links to the Named Person inbox. Expectations of each person are clearly outlined in the school's anti-bullying policy.



Reporting

Reporting an instance of bullying should be easy. There should be a clear transparent process for how to report and what happens next.

In reward schools, reporting is:

Accessible: There is clear information for children and families on how to report incidents of bullying. Information is shared in assemblies, in class and on websites and posters to raise awareness. Many reward schools use an online form for reporting linked to a QR code to help make this easy to access. This reporting

Make reporting easy and safe. Be prompt, trustworthy and consistent.

feature is also available for parents and carers. Pupils have trusted people they can report to, including teachers, support staff and pupil ambassadors.



Young people are aware of how they can approach staff discreetly with any concerns. We have QR codes displayed in the toilets which young people can use to anonymously report or seek support.

We also have a bully button on our website for the same thing. Parents and carers may also use this.

Safe: When an incident or concern is reported, the safety of those involved is a priority.

Pupils can be confident that reporting won't negatively impact their safety. Being able to report anonymously can help children and young people feel more secure. School staff act quickly to ensure pupils are safe and supported. An early response reduces the negative impact on those experiencing bullying.



Our pupils are more encouraged to disclose concerns about bullying behaviours and we have then been able to support our young people to feel safer and take back control of their agency through more targeted awareness of where to go for support, how to report concerns, and strategies to support their wellbeing.

Consistent: The process of reporting is consistent across the school. There is a clear process of what should happen once a report is made and everyone in the school community is clear on their role and what they can expect.




We have worked hard with all stakeholders to develop a matrix so that everyone knows what they can do if they experience or witness bullying behaviour.

This has been developed with and for pupils, families, staff and the Senior Leadership Team so that there is a clear process should concerns arise.

Recording

Each reward school has developed its own system for capturing a record of bullying incidents. Recording should be:

Consistent: The SEEMiS management information system is used by Scottish schools to record bullying incidents. The Bullying and Equalities Module supports the recording of information. The perceived reason for the bullying can be noted, which allows schools to capture prejudice-based bullying relating to one or more protected characteristic. Schools also use pastoral notes on SEEMiS as a recording tool. This can capture incidents that may not have been categorised as bullying to provide a wider record for analysis, for example noting interpersonal conflict. Staff receive training to ensure that recording is consistent. Some schools have developed a template for recording pastoral notes so the appropriate information can be accurately captured.



**Capture information
and use it. Be
accurate and
consistent.**



We log all incidents, bullying or not, on pastoral notes to ensure we have an ongoing record. This allows us to identify any patterns forming and put support in place as early intervention.

Accurate: For recorded data to have value, it should be accurate and comprehensive. If not all instances of bullying are recorded, it creates a false picture that doesn't support improvement. reward schools triangulate their records with other sources of data to better understand their anti-bullying needs, and the impact of their work. For example, a school may review its anti-bullying records in the context of attendance or wellbeing. The stakeholder surveys that were undertaken as part of the *respectme* reward were useful in creating a broader picture of prejudice-based bullying. For example, in some schools the percentage of children and young people who had noticed prejudice-based bullying wasn't reflected in the number of incidents recorded. This may be due to an unwillingness to either report or to record incidents.



If staff have noticed, seen or heard bullying behaviour which is racist, sexist, homophobic, disablist or derogatory about someone's faith or religion these cases are being under reported as the survey responses do not align with the number of incidents reported and recorded on SEEMiS which is something we will monitor closely.

Case study: Sandhead and Drummore Primary Schools


The Bullying and Equalities Module on SEEMiS is used whenever there is a report of alleged bullying behaviours. Both the person experiencing and the person exhibiting bullying behaviours are spoken to and all detail is stored. Parents are contacted when there is an entry made and as part of the review after the incident has been responded to. Staff also record whether the parents/carers are happy with the outcome. The specific incident of bullying is captured in the 'Type' field, so they can track if there are patterns or things they need to address as a school. This let staff and partners provide inputs to the curriculum after multiple instances of homophobic language being used.

All teaching staff have been trained in recording pastoral notes in SEEMiS. These have proved invaluable in supporting children in a holistic manner. Staff refer to pastoral notes regularly to help piece the puzzle together and link to Bullying and Equalities incidents. This makes support and interventions more targeted and personalised. Staff have an agreed structure, using the headings of Source, Event, Detail, Action, Impact to ensure a consistent approach in recording incidents. This has proved an excellent transitional tool when children have moved away from the school and gives a structured overview of the child's history.

Investigation and communication

Following a report of bullying there is a phase of investigation and communicating with those concerned. It is important that accurate information is gathered in a non-judgmental way and pupils and their families feel listened to and understood. Investigation involves:

Listening: Information gathering following a report of bullying may involve speaking to a range of people including those directly involved and any witnesses. reward schools listen actively, encouraging those involved to express their views and concerns and take ownership of the situation. Time is taken to understand any triggers and context behind the event.



**Gather the facts and understand views.
Be sensitive and fair.**



Listening to the views of those involved is essential and giving them options so that they feel a regained sense of control. We take every reported incident seriously and reassure young people that we will act and support them.

Involving: If it's appropriate, the parents and carers of those involved are contacted. Those involved are kept informed and their views heard. The anti-bullying policy is referred to in discussions so everyone is clear of what to expect.



Pupils should be involved in deciding what happens next and be supported throughout the process of investigating the incident and on the way forward.

Staff should have training so that they respond appropriately, with the child at the centre of actions taken.

Parents and carers must be confident that their children are safe and nurtured in the school setting, mirroring what happens in the home.

Case study: St Patrick's Primary School

When a bullying incident is reported, staff actively listen and support those involved. They help pupils to understand what is causing the bullying.

The school regularly promotes pupil voice, which means pupils are comfortable in sharing their views and can respond effectively when asked what they would like to happen in response to an incident.

Staff ensure not only that the pupil's voice is heard but, if there are further issues, support is offered to the families involved too.

The anti-bullying policy is referred to as part of discussions.

Supporting: Those involved in a bullying incident are treated with understanding and empathy.

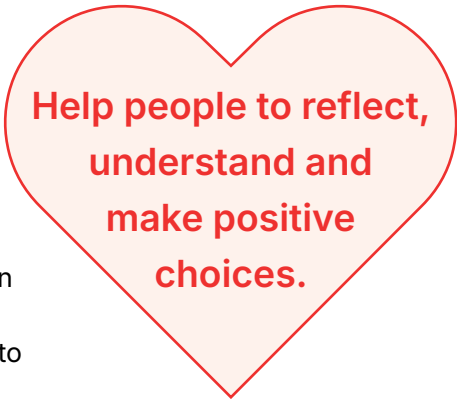
Support is given to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all involved. Pupils should be confident that, if they report bullying, they will be supported.



Understanding the issues and ensuring the young people and their families feel supported is imperative.

Responding

reward schools use restorative approaches to respond to bullying. The focus of follow up is to find solutions and provide support with a staged approach relevant to the situation. It is important that the child or young person experiencing bullying feels they have choice in how the school responds to their situation. The child or young person displaying bullying behaviours needs support to understand what has driven their actions, and its impact. The response to bullying:



**Help people to reflect,
understand and
make positive
choices.**

Uses restorative approaches: Where possible, reward schools use restorative conversations and reflective exercises that focus on labelling the behaviours, not the person. Staff receive training to build confidence in this role, and some schools use a standard framework of questions to guide the conversation. This approach seeks to help children and young people to explore what is behind their behaviours and understand the impact it has had on others. Bullying can take place, even when harm isn't intended. This helps to challenge attitudes in a supportive and non-judgmental way and agree a way forward.



We look to encourage empathy by highlighting the impact of behaviours on others. By building accountability, we seek to encourage young people to reflect on what is causing the behaviours demonstrated. Again, staff look to validate feelings by actively listening and encouraging ownership.

Gives agency: reward schools place importance on children and young people having choice and control in responding to bullying, including in being involved in agreeing solutions. Where parents are included in discussions, their expectations of how the school responds may diverge from the policy and they may feel they lack agency. Involving parents in policy development, maintaining clear communications and building relationships all help to manage expectations.



Pupils experience more informed supports and there is a strong restorative approach used when working to resolve incidents. Consequently, our overall reaction – and proactive stance – has enabled our young people to have more opportunities to take control of situations and work towards enhancing their sense of agency.

Provides support: Those involved in bullying can expected to be supported in response. For those who have experienced bullying, this may include practical support to keep them safe, mental health support and referrals to external agencies. For those displaying bullying behaviours, targeted support through the curriculum or external inputs is also identified.



We offer support on how to express our emotions appropriately, sometimes this is done through a long-term intervention - through nurture groups, skills academy, play therapy, wellbeing mentors. We explore all options and apply solution focused problem solving in collaboration with the pupil - allowing their voice to be heard and enabling them to take ownership for their actions and how they can work to resolve them, all the while focusing on the positive outcomes and the strengths of the pupil.

Case study: Clyde Valley High School

The school's anti-bullying policy is available to all and gives clear guidelines on responding to bullying. This allows all staff to approach and deal with instances of bullying in a consistent way, in line with whole school staged interventions. It also allows cases of bullying to be dealt with swiftly so that the behaviour does not become a regular pattern for young people.

Conflict resolution is also important in dealing with instances of bullying as this helps to defuse tensions between young people and can help to ensure that the behaviour does not occur again or lead to resentments among young people. This involves offering support services, for example, counselling sessions, for both the young person experiencing bullying and the person displaying bullying behaviour. This can help to identify the root causes of the behaviour which allows the school to more effectively deal with this and prevent it from re-emerging. Interactions between young people are tracked so that the re-emergence of bullying can be dealt with immediately in line with the school's policy.

Any information related to bullying is included in tailored classroom plans for pupils. This was an innovative measure introduced to the school to ensure that pupils with additional needs (including related to bullying) had an individualised plan for each subject to ensure that they are healthy and happy across the school. This can help to inform staff about the circumstances surrounding certain pupils and means that they must create a plan to accommodate that pupil's needs in the classroom. This is an active working document which can help in the response to bullying.

Prejudice-based bullying

Some bullying is directly motivated by prejudice and stems from a dislike of one or more aspects of a person's actual or perceived identity.

Creating an inclusive environment helps everyone in the school community to feel welcome and reduces prejudiced views. These may be related to the seven protected characteristics relevant to school education¹⁴. It also could relate to other areas of inequality such as socio-economic background, family circumstances or appearance.

There are specific actions that are different in the response to prejudice-based bullying. In some cases, the response is escalated to the senior leadership team. It is quite common for external agencies, such as campus police officers, to be included in conversations. They can help pupils to understand that their actions have the potential to become a criminal act, such as a hate crime.

Targeted approaches are put in place, either for the individual involved or for the wider school. For example, delivering direct teaching or assemblies based on addressing the discriminatory behaviour, or revisiting inclusive practices such as challenging stereotypes. In addressing prejudice-based bullying, schools remain non-judgmental and seek to respond to the underlying issues that have led to the incident.



Incidents relating to prejudice will most likely involve key partners such as Police Youth Engagement Officers and/or Youth Justice. The root cause of this prejudice should be explored. It is treated extremely seriously.

It is vital that we have systems in place for bullying related to prejudice that work alongside ongoing work that celebrates diversity, challenges prejudice and works to minimise the likelihood of any prejudice-based bullying arising.

Monitoring

There are two aspects to monitoring; the follow up of individual incidents to check in on the progress of resolutions; and the analysis of data to spot and respond to themes with the school. The latter informs prevention activity.

Follow up: reward schools have a structured approach to following up after an incident. This checks the effectiveness of the response and also monitors the child or young person's



¹⁴ EHRC Technical Guidance for Schools in Scotland <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/technical-guidance-schools-scotland>

wellbeing and safety. Concerns would be picked up in staff planning meetings and actions agreed.



When resolutions are agreed, a clear timeframe and monitoring process should be agreed, including opportunities to check-in with those involved.

Where a resolution is not agreed or forthcoming, or when a solution breaks down, it is necessary to follow this up.

This may involve starting the restorative process again, or by enlisting the help of external agencies and partners for more support.

Case study: Moffat Academy

The school has its own tracking and monitoring system for a range of data. The Bullying and Equalities module data is analysed regularly and inputs to the curriculum are adapted based on any specific areas identified. This is a standing item on team meeting agendas.

A range of other data is monitored and analysed including wellbeing, attendance, attainment, adverse childhood experiences, interventions, wider achievement, assessments and agency supports.

This whole-school approach tracks, monitors and supports the development of every child in a holistic manner, supporting personal, academic and social development.

Analysis: Data from the SEEMiS Bullying and Equalities module, pastoral notes and other relevant information is analysed to look for trends in behaviour. Schools regularly review this data and use it to develop tailored prevention activities.



We follow a consistent incident reporting system for behaviour and for bullying. This is audited to see if trends appear, which we then proactively plan prevention approaches, based on the need.

Appendix 1

External resources

The following external inputs were used by schools achieving the respectme reward. These aren't necessarily endorsed by respectme but may be a useful source of information.

External programmes for mental health and emotional wellbeing

SAMH <https://www.samh.org.uk/about-mental-health/children-and-young-people/schools-colleges-further-education>

BLUES programme <https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/our-work-and-impact/children-and-families/good-mental-health/blues-programme/>

Seasons for Growth <https://www.seasonsforgrowth.org.uk/>

Tree of knowledge <https://treeof.com/>

I am Me Scotland <https://iammescotlandeducation.org.uk/>

Emotion Works <https://www.emotionworks.org.uk/>

Rookie Rockstars <https://rookierockstars.org.uk/>

Zones of regulation <https://zonesofregulation.com/>

Aspire ring <https://www.whatmotivateslearning.com/>

Resources for inclusion and anti-bullying

Anti-racism resources <https://www.antiracism.education/>

Show racism the red card <https://www.theredcard.org/>

Time for Inclusive Education <https://tie.scot/>

Sense over sectarianism <https://education.gov.scot/resources/sense-over-sectarianism-primary-school-workshop-lesson-pack/>

Safer Schools <https://oursaferschools.co.uk/>

Resources for sport and play

Respect in sport <https://www.respectgroupinc.com/respect-in-sport/>

Playtime revolution <https://education.gov.scot/resources/playtime-revolution-a-resource-from-grounds-for-learning/>

Rainbow laces campaign <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/get-involved/fundraise-with-us/rainbow-laces>

Quality improvement frameworks

LGBT Youth Scotland's LGBT Charter <https://lgbtyouth.org.uk/supporting-inclusive-education/>

Rights respecting schools <https://www.unicef.org.uk/rights-respecting-schools/the-rrsa/>

The National Nurturing Schools Award (NNSA) <https://www.nurtureuk.org/supporting-you/awards/the-national-nurturing-schools-award/>

Diana Award Anti-bullying programme <https://diana-award.org.uk/our-programmes-and-initiatives/anti-bullying>

Professional development

Renfrewshire's Nurturing Relationships Approach <https://education.gov.scot/resources/renfrewshire-s-nurturing-relationships-approach-rnra/>

Glasgow Motivation and Wellbeing Profile <https://education.gov.scot/resources/wellbeing-profile-glasgow-motivation-and-wellbeing-profile-gmwp/>

When the adults change (restorative conversations) <https://www.pauldix.org/>

Solihull approach parenting <https://solihullapproachparenting.com/>

Circle Inclusive Classroom Scale <https://education.gov.scot/resources/circle-resource-to-support-inclusive-learning-and-collaborative-working-primary/>

Drawing and Talking <https://drawingandtalking.com/>

Better relationships, better learning, better behaviour <https://education.gov.scot/about-education-scotland/policies-and-information/education-policy-and-legislation/better-relationships-better-learning-better-behaviour/>

Mental health support

Kooth <https://www.kooth.com/>

Childline <https://www.childline.org.uk/>

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- Dumfries Academy
- Dunfermline High School
- Hamilton Grammar School
- Heathfield Primary School, Ayr
- Hillhead High School, Glasgow
- Houston Primary School
- James Aiton Primary School, South Lanarkshire
- Kaimhill Primary School, Aberdeen
- Moffat Academy
- Monkton Primary School
- Newmains Primary School
- North West Community Campus, Dumfries
- Penpont Primary School
- Prestwick Academy
- Rochsolloch Primary School
- Sandhead Primary School
- St Patrick's Primary School, Glasgow
- Tinto Primary School and Nursery Class

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