

Scottish autism

Anti-Bullying Policy

(For use in New Struan Day and Residential School and all Scottish Autism children's services)

Director Responsible

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CONSULTATION AND RATIFICATION SCHEDULE

Name of Consultative Body	Date of Approval
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CROSS REFERENCE TO OTHER POLICIES / STRATEGIES

This policy should be read in conjunction with:	Detail
Policy 1	Child Protection Policy/ Procedures
Policy 2	Compliments and Complaints Policy
Policy 3	Wellbeing policy

EQUALITY & PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

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1. INTRODUCTION

Young people who receive services provided by Scottish Autism including those who attend New Struan Day and Residential School have the right to be treated equally and cared for in an environment which is free from bullying, harassment and discrimination. These rights are set down in the Health and Social Care Standards and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

1.1 Health and Social Care Standards

Please note that the Health and Social Care standards can be accessed at:

<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2017/06/1327>

1.2 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child can be accessed at:

https://downloads.unicef.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/UNCRC_united_nations_convention_on_the_rights_of_the_child.pdf?_ga=2.177799328.464957926.1503334893-991220822.1502288248

2. RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOLS

New Struan Day and Residential School is implementing the Rights Respecting Schools Award. This award is broken into three sections. New Struan is currently working on Recognition of Commitment. Commitment to the final assessment Level 2 can take up to 4 years.

Recognition of Commitment

The Head Teacher and school leaders commit to becoming a right-respecting school. Children and young people work with adults to decide how to develop a whole-school Rights-respecting approach. The school submits electronic evidence to show their progress.

Level 1

The school implements the action plan and makes good progress towards embedding the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child into its ethos and curriculum. Assessors visit the school to accredit progress.

Level 2

The school has fully embedded the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child into its ethos and curriculum across all areas. Assessors visit the school to establish that the Convention is embedded.

3. WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying happens when people intentionally try to hurt others by saying or doing harmful things or by exerting inappropriate control or influence. It can include (for example):

- name calling;
- spreading lies and rumours;
- sending nasty text messages;
- stealing and hiding things;
- physically hurting someone;
- isolating someone;
- saying and doing things that can make someone feel embarrassed and humiliated.

People who experience bullying feel powerless to stop it and this can make them feel scared. Bullying impacts on a person's dignity and Scottish Autism staff believe that all young people have the right to be treated with dignity and respect at all times. This right is set down in the Health and Social Care standards.

Please note that fighting and 'falling out' are not bullying unless a person feels powerless to stop what is happening to them.

3.1 Unintentional bullying

Young people with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) including Asperger Syndrome can have difficulty maintaining what are considered to be acceptable standards of social relationships. Helping young people understand inappropriate and appropriate relationships is an important part of education.

Young people are often unable to recognise that another person has different thoughts, values, desires, beliefs and emotions to themselves. Inter-personal difficulties can arise, which in turn can lead to a person feeling that they are being bullied when the other person has not meant to hurt them. Scottish Autism staff therefore believe that not all bullying is wilfully perpetrated.

3.2 How concerns about bullying will be managed

Scottish Autism takes a 'no blame' approach to the management of concerns of bullying. We believe that the complex nature of autism makes it unhelpful to label any child a 'victim' or 'perpetrator' of bullying. Our stance is always to help a young person reflect on the impact of his/her behaviour towards others and to help a young person who feels powerless to feel empowered.

All young people involved in a concern relating to bullying will be appropriately supported by staff. Staff will work with each young person to increase his/her understanding of the effects of the behaviour on themselves and others. This will generally be done through one or a number of the following (as appropriate):

- Health and Well-being curriculum (which may include the use of Circle Time and social stories);
- meetings with members of staff
- discussions with parents/carers;

Individual needs and any relevant targets will be recorded in a young person's Child's Plan. Whenever a concern about bullying arises, parents/carers will be contacted. This will usually be done by telephone and staff may also undertake a home visit.

Serious allegations of bullying (for example physical assault, extortion, sexual peer to peer assault) in some instances it may be necessary to inform the Police and/or Social Work services depending on the nature and circumstances of the situation. Unless exceptional circumstances arise, the school will usually discuss the need to report an incident to the Police/Social Work with parents/carers prior to making the referral.

4. BULLYING AND CHILD PROTECTION

Scottish Autism staff recognise that sometimes, certain types of inter-personal difficulties may need to be managed as child protection concerns. Where such concerns arise, the organisation's Child Protection Procedures will be followed.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF

Scottish Autism staff have an individual and collective responsibility to act where they suspect or receive reports that a young person may be experiencing bullying. Their duty of care means that they are required to take action at all times where they believe that a young person's dignity is being compromised. Staff are required to report their concerns to the Head Teacher who will make sure that the concern is managed in line with the organisation's anti-bullying policy statement and other policies as required.

6. THE RIGHT OF YOUNG PEOPLE TO RAISE A CONCERN AND MAKE A COMPLAINT

Young people are encouraged to raise a concern and staff will always treat any concern seriously. Young people have a right to be supported by anyone who could help them express their worries, views and needs. This person could be (for example) a teacher, an autism practitioner, a support worker, a peer or external befriender. Through the curriculum staff will try to ensure that young people know of their right to be supported in this way.

Young people will be informed of external organisations which can give them information about bullying and their rights to care and protection. Young people will also be told of their right to make a formal complaint. Any complaints received will always be taken seriously and managed according to the Compliments and Complaints Policy. Whenever a young person makes a complaint, school staff will uphold the right set down in the Charter of Rights, which is that a young person should be able to complain effectively without fear of victimisation.

7. RIGHTS OF PARENTS/CARERS TO RAISE A CONCERN AND MAKE A COMPLAINT

Complaints will be managed according to the Compliments and Complaints Policy. Scottish Autism establishes and maintains strong and supportive links with parents/carers

to enable the needs of each young person to be met through a collaborative approach. Parents/carers are encouraged to contact our staff whenever they are concerned about the well-being of their child. Reports of possible bullying received from parents/carers will always be taken seriously and responded to immediately by the Head Teacher/Depute Head Teacher at New Struan, or other appropriate member of staff as applicable.

Parents/carers are entitled to be supported by a befriender or advocate whenever they wish to raise a concern with the organisation. Scottish Autism always welcomes any intervention that will help parents/carers voice their concerns and resolve difficulties for their child. Parents/carers will be given details of external organisations which can provide advice and information on bullying. Parents/carers will also be informed of their right to make a formal complaint if they are not satisfied with the way in which Scottish Autism has managed a concern of bullying involving their child.

8. FURTHER INFORMATION

Contact details for each service can be found online: <http://www.scottishautism.org>.

9. MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or earlier as required.