

QVS Dealing with Bullying policy

Please note that further updates to this policy will be made after consultation with all stakeholders. The final version of this policy will be uploaded after consultation with students, staff and parents. This policy reflects current practice at QVS.

Pupils in QVS have the right to:

- be safe, secure and supported
- express their views about any issues or decision affecting or worrying them
- be protected from all forms of abuse
- be able to report issues without fear of reprisal

QVS has a strong commitment to inclusion and diversity.

We have a zero-tolerance to bullying. All reported incidents of bullying will be dealt with in line with the Scottish Government policy. See below for an extract from that policy, which recognises several approaches to dealing with issues as they arise.

Those involved in incidents of bullying will be offered a number of support strategies, including regular meetings with chosen staff, wellbeing counselling, and/or other interventions.

Approaches to preventing bullying

Bullying takes place in the context of relationships. Promoting respectful relationships, repairing relationships where appropriate and ensuring we respond to all forms of prejudice will help create an environment where bullying cannot thrive. There are a range of strategies and programmes being used throughout Scotland that can improve relationships and behaviour, promote equality and challenge inequality, and develop emotional wellbeing to help prevent and address bullying. These focus on:

- Anti-bullying professional learning
- Recognising and Realising Children's Rights
- Restorative Approaches
- Creating inclusive and supportive learning environments
- Solution Oriented Approaches
- Nurturing Approaches

You will note that, as per Scottish Government guidance, QVS has moved to a much more inclusive, restorative and nurturing approach to dealing with all incidents of bullying. We will deal with every incident strongly in order to change behaviours but that does not necessarily mean significant sanctions will be issued.

Our past model has been very much based on sanctions and we still reserve the right to use appropriate sanctions when it is deemed necessary by school staff. However, dealing with issues through our school values of Respect, Nurture and Integrity, in tandem with the

Scottish Government guidance, will result in long-term learning and changes of behaviour in our young people.

A definition of bullying

Bullying occurs in schools when the actions of one or more young people have a negative impact on another young person.

Every young person is actively encouraged to report anything that they identify as bullying and the school will act accordingly to protect and support them, as well as ensuring the reported issue is resolved.

Young people at QVS should report bullying when it happens to themselves or to others. If anyone is uncomfortable having an initial conversation, bullying and other incidents can be emailed or young people can use our anonymous reporting system.

The topic of bullying is discussed regularly in school, including during chapel assemblies, in boarding houses and in classes. Every young person is continuously reminded to report anything that makes them feel uncomfortable in one of the ways listed above.

The vast majority of issues are resolved at a low level. The purpose of school action is to improve the behaviour of children and young people in an inclusive way.

This version updated: April 2023.