



# Model Anti-Bullying Policy Template

## How to use this template

This template reflects the minimum recommended requirements for a policy statement as set out in '[Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People](#)' the Scottish Government's guidance for anti-bullying policy and practice in Scotland's schools and children's services.

Respect for All contains detailed information in Section 4 on 'Developing Your Policy', which should be read in conjunction with this document with particular reference to Appendices 1,2 and 3.

- By adopting or adapting this Model Anti-Bullying Policy, it should be tailored accordingly to ensure that it is representative of your local authority, school or youth setting's own ethos, values, supporting policies and procedures.
- It is important that you consider these areas fully and add/reflect any tailored arrangements or policies your setting has in place regarding specific areas of relationships, behaviour or safeguarding.
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## Developing your policy

An anti-bullying policy sets out a clear commitment to developing a respectful, equitable and inclusive climate, culture and ethos within an organisation or establishment. Constant reinforcement of the message that bullying is never acceptable helps to create safe and secure environments which are conducive to positive relationships, learning, teaching and play.

All education authorities, organisations, schools, services and clubs providing services to children and young people in the public, voluntary or private sectors should develop an anti-bullying policy that reflects the guidance set out in Respect for All. Public schools are also expected to align their anti-bullying policy with the relevant education authority's anti-bullying policy. Successful implementation requires the strategic intent of an anti-bullying policy to be translated and embedded into effective, everyday practice.

Anti-bullying practice should be focused towards prevention, response and inclusivity. For meaningful impact, full ownership of the policy is essential, including a process of engagement and consultation with the people who are responsible for its implementation. Anti-bullying policies should be child-friendly and should be produced through consultation, using a rights-based lens. Online bullying should be woven throughout, with a detailed section to support practitioners and parent/carers.





# What should anti-bullying policies include?

## Policies should include:

1. The agreed national definition of bullying as set out in Respect for All.

2. A statement which sets out the organisational stance on bullying and the scope of the policy.

3. Strategies and action statements to describe how all forms of bullying will be prevented and responded to.

4. A clear statement that bullying is a violation of children's rights and is incompatible with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, now enacted in Scots law.

5. A statement of how the application of the policy upholds the statutory equality duties, where it applies, and/or how it will respond to bullying related to the protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act 2010, as well as forms of prejudice and discrimination related to other characteristics, for example socio-economic or appearance-related bullying.

6. Expectations and responsibilities of staff/volunteers, children and young people and parents to support and uphold the policy aims.

7. A clear commitment to promoting and role modelling respectful behaviour by adults in the school or setting.

8. The avoidance of using labelling language, i.e. 'bullies', 'victims', 'perpetrators'.

9. The recording and monitoring strategies that will be used for management purposes in line with the Data Protection Act 2018, e.g. SEEMiS.

10. Evidence that children and young people have been able to access their right to express their views in matters that affect them, and for these views to be given due weight in both policy development and implementation phases.

11. Evidence that parents have, in line with their rights, been included and consulted in the policy development process.

12. Evidence that staff/volunteers have been included and consulted in the policy development process'.

13. How often the policy will be communicated, evaluated and reviewed with children and young people and their parent(s) and staff/volunteers (it is good practice that this takes place a minimum of every three years).

14. A commitment to training and supporting staff and volunteers.



[Name of e.g. Council/School/Youth setting]

## Anti-Bullying Policy

Date:

Review Date:

Author/Originator:

Website link:

### Opening statement/context

Local Authorities and other settings can preface and personalise their policies with a context statement, for example:

[Name of e.g. Council/School/Club] is located in central Scotland and serves a population of [insert number] children and young people. Local demographics, geography, economy etc are [insert data]. Local or national statistics to indicate the scale of bullying in the area could be included.



## 1 The agreed national definition of bullying as set out in 'Respect for All'

Sample text:

Bullying should never be viewed as a normal or inevitable part of growing up. Adults are not expected to be the subject of abuse by colleagues or friends, therefore it should not be any different for children and young people.

[Name of e.g. Council/School/Club] has adopted the national definition of bullying, as set out in Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People (RfA).

**“Bullying is face-to-face and/or online behaviour which impacts on a person’s sense of physical and emotional safety, their capacity to feel in control of their life and their ability to respond effectively to the situation they are in.”**

**“The behaviour does not need to be repeated, or intended to cause harm, for it to have an impact. Bullying behaviour can be physical, emotional or verbal and can cause people to feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out.”**

The non-exhaustive listing of bullying behaviours in RfA could be noted in this section for ease, together with a differentiation between conflict, bullying and potentially criminal behaviour as set out in RfA.

## 2 Organisational stance/policy scope and aims

It is imperative to set out a clear statement on where the organisation stands on the issue of bullying together with the policy scope, some examples outlined below:

### Example from Glasgow City Council:

“Bullying behaviour is never acceptable within Glasgow City Council’s schools or early learning centres. All children and young people have an entitlement to work and play in a learning environment in which they feel valued, respected and safe and are free from all forms of abuse, bullying or discrimination.”

### Further example from Aberdeenshire Council:

“The scope of this policy extends to all establishments and to all practitioners working within Education. This policy applies to all instances of bullying behaviour within establishments, between learners. This policy applies to all instances of bullying behaviour which impact on a child or young person’s attendance or engagement to their learning or the learning environment.”

## East Renfrewshire Council

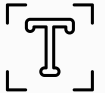
“We are committed to providing a supportive and inclusive environment for all. This policy is designed to reinforce existing good practice and sets out the Education Department’s policy on preventing and responding effectively to bullying, racism and all forms of prejudice and discrimination. Schools should work with pupils, parents/carers and staff to develop establishment anti-bullying policies that reflect the guidance outlined in this document. Wider school documentation such as school handbooks and websites, should include a clear policy statement about bullying, racism, prejudice and discrimination for parents and carers, with advice on how to obtain documentation.

We aim to:

- Support schools to be safe, respectful, nurturing and bullying-free environments;
- Respond to bullying behaviour as unacceptable and not to be tolerated;
- Maximise opportunities available to all by addressing bullying behaviour promptly and effectively; and,
- Work in partnership to prevent and respond effectively to all forms of bullying, racism, prejudice and discrimination.”

Alternative standard text below:

[Insert name of Council] is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people within the community. Bullying is not a normal part of growing up and [Insert name of Council] believe that children and young people have the right to be protected, supported and respected. Bullying is a violation of rights set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, notably Articles 3, 12, 13, 19, 28, 29, 39.



## 3 Preventing and responding to bullying

To create a safe, inclusive and positive environment where it is understood that bullying is unacceptable, strategies and action statements explaining how all forms of bullying will be prevented and responded to are essential to anti-bullying policy. Embedding anti-bullying interventions, based upon mutual respect and inclusive practice is vital to a healthy school culture and ethos.

### Angus Council

Angus Council detailed statements on the prevention of bullying behaviour, provides an example:

- Ensure safety and supervision in areas where children and young people congregate such as the playground, corridors and social areas
- Plan pro-active strategies e.g. anti-bullying weeks/days, assemblies, parents, carers nights, posters to be displayed etc.
- Discuss anti-bullying (including what bullying is and what the impact is), where appropriate, through the curriculum. Use of art, literature, drama and role-play can be particularly effective

Angus Council goes on to explain what responding to bullying should look like with a series of questions to ask after a bullying incident has occurred:

- What was the behaviour?
- What impact did it have?
- What does the child or young person want to happen?
- What do I need to do about it?
- What attitudes, prejudice or other behaviours have influenced the behaviour?

### East Renfrewshire Council

East Renfrewshire Council sets out their preventative approach this way:

Schools should embed anti-bullying interventions within a positive ethos and culture which is rooted in respectful, equitable and inclusive practice. Promoting healthy relationships and responding to all forms of prejudice will help create a bullying free environment. Relational approaches which support improved behaviour, promote equality and develop emotional wellbeing enhance this. These include:

- Rights Respecting Schools
- Solution-oriented approaches
- Mentoring and peer support
- Restorative approaches
- Nurturing approaches
- Pupil voice and participative approaches



Prevention is the most effective intervention when it comes to bullying and is supported by the creation of inclusive learning/leisure environments. Thereafter, effective responses that are meaningful to children and young people can reduce long-term impact and restore well-being.



## 4 Children's Rights (and supporting legislation)

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is an international human rights treaty that protects children and young people's rights. It is based on equality, dignity, respect, protection, development and participation. Policies should include a clear statement that bullying is a violation of children's rights and is incompatible with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, now enacted in Scots Law.

### Argyll and Bute Council

Argyll and Bute Council gives some examples of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child articles related to bullying:

"Each child and young person in Argyll and Bute has a right to be free from fear, discrimination, intimidation, harassment and social exclusion. When a child or young person experiences bullying the following rights as enshrined in The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child are compromised:

- The right to 'protection against discrimination' (Article 2)
- The right to protection against all forms of violence – including physical or mental violence (Article 19)
- The right to be kept safe from harm and (Article 19)
- The right 'to be given proper care by those looking after them' (Article 19)
- The right 'to contribute meaningfully to the decisions and circumstances that affect their lives'(Article 19)
- The right 'to an opinion and for it to be listened to and taken seriously' (Article 12)

### East Renfrewshire Council

East Renfrewshire Council sets out the legislative context as follows:

"The incorporation into Scots law of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) will further strengthen the requirement for local authorities to ensure that all children and young people are able to enjoy their rights at all times. This includes Article 2 (non-discrimination) and 29 (goals of education):

- Article 29: Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.
- Article 2 (non-discrimination): The Convention applies to every child without discrimination, whatever their ethnicity, sex, religion, language, abilities or any other status, whatever they think or say, whatever their family background.

Continued over to Page 6.



## East Renfrewshire Council cont:

The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) Act (Scotland) 2007 amended the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 and the Standards in Scotland's Schools Etc. Act 2000, placing a number of duties on education authorities to ensure that schools are health promoting. This includes promoting physical, social, mental and emotional wellbeing by supporting pupils to make positive lifestyle choices in relation to their health and wellbeing.

Bullying, whether linked to prejudicial attitudes or not, can sometimes create additional support needs for children and young people. There is specific legislation in this area in the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 (as amended) which provides a comprehensive legal framework for the provision of additional, targeted support for children and young people who face barriers to learning. Further detailed information on relevant legislation and policy is contained within Respect for All".



A comprehensive listing of all relevant Scottish legislation relating to anti-bullying work is available in Appendix 1 of RfA and could be copied across into local policies for completeness. The following section focusses specifically on equality duties.

## 5 Equality duties

The policy should carry a statement of how the application of the policy upholds the statutory equality duties, where it applies, and/or how it will respond to bullying related to the protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act (2010), as well as other forms of prejudice and discrimination related to other characteristics, for example socio-economic or appearance-based bullying. There are nine characteristics protected under the Equality Act 2010. These are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

Part 6 (chapter 1) of the Equality Act 2010, which deals with school education, does not apply to the protected characteristics of 'age' and 'marriage and civil partnership'

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) in the Equality Act (2010) requires an organisation exercising public functions to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in the exercise of those functions. To help them to do this, most Scottish public authorities are subject to a set of specific duties.

Schools/organisations subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) are required to assess the impact of their anti-bullying policy in relation to equalities, which they may do through carrying out an Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA). Schools/organisations may also wish to complete the Child Rights and Wellbeing.

Impact Assessment (CRWIA). The Scottish Government has published guidance and useful resources to support the development of a CRWIA for education authorities and children's services.

## East Renfrewshire Council

East Renfrewshire Council summarises the above, as:

"The Equality Act (2010) does not just protect people from discrimination because they have these characteristics; it also protects a person from discrimination because they are perceived to have one or more of the protected characteristics or because they are associated with someone who does. The Equality and Human Rights Commission published Technical Guidance for all schools in Scotland outlining the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 in relation to the provision of education and access to benefits, facilities or services, both educational and non-educational, providing an authoritative, comprehensive and technical guide to the law."

Appendix 2 of RfA carries further detail on prejudice-based bullying and the range of non-legislated for circumstances which can be the subject of prejudiced behaviours.

## 6 Expectations and responsibilities of children and young people, staff/volunteers and parent/carers

Explicit statements on the expectations and responsibilities for children and young people, staff/volunteers and parent/carers ensure that everyone understands their role in relation to preventing and responding to bullying.

### Argyll and Bute Council

Argyll and Bute Council detail what they expect of children and young people, parents and staff/volunteers in their anti-bullying policy, as follows:

#### Children and Young People

- Be aware of their establishment's anti-bullying policy
- Know that they can speak to an adult to talk about their concerns, when it is safe to do so
- Ensure that their voice is reflected in their establishment's anti-bullying policy

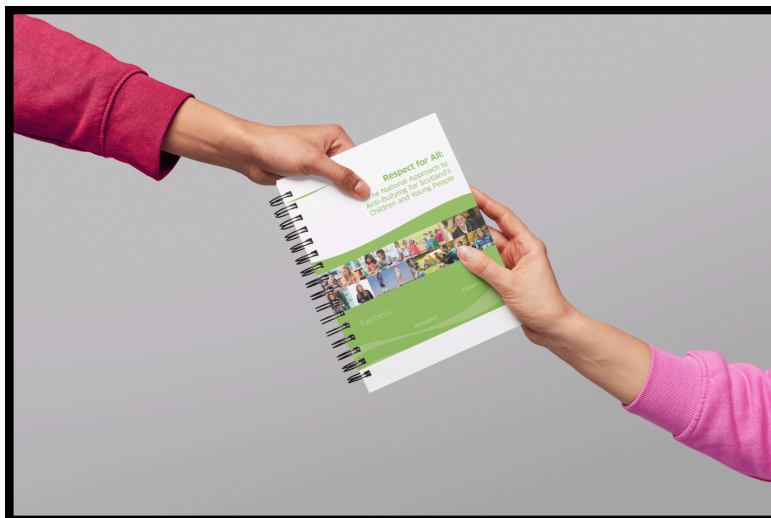
#### Parent/Carers

- Be aware of their child's establishment's anti-bullying policy
- Encourage their child to report any bullying incidents to their establishment
- Model respectful relationships with all members of their community

#### Staff/Volunteers

- Be aware of their establishment's anti-bullying policy and actively work to implement, monitor and review it
- Model behaviour which promotes health and well-being and understand anti-discriminatory, anti-bullying and child protection policies
- Establish respectful and supportive relationships with children and young people, parents and each other based on the ethos of that establishment and which models the expectations of the establishment's anti-bullying policy

Appendix 3 of RfA sets out roles, requests and expectations in greater detail.



## 7 Respectful behaviour

A clear commitment to promoting and role modelling respectful behaviour by adults in the school or setting;

Promoting positive relationships between children and young people and adults helps to create a respectful ethos in the local community. Further, these positive relations can help to ensure that children and young people feel safe, secure and happy in their local community, school setting and clubs. Promoting positive relationships allow children to have someone that they trust entirely and can speak to when they need some support. This is vital to the wellbeing of children and young people.

### Glasgow City Council

Glasgow City Council details the ethos expected in all establishments within the authority area.

“Our schools/early learning centres “are warm and welcoming to all children and young people. There is strong commitment by the Senior Leadership Team and other staff to ensuring positive relationships. Children and young people report that they feel respected and are treated fairly in their schools. This view is also shared by parents and carers.”

There is an opportunity to build on the expectations and requests of parents/carers in this section and the importance of role-modelling respectful relationships across the school community.

## 8 Labelling

Labelling children and young people as ‘bullies’ or ‘victims’ or ‘perpretrators’ can be disempowering, or confer status, and are unhelpful in supporting them to change their behaviour or to recover from the impacts of bullying. When adults can maintain focus on the behaviour itself and the impact it has had, rather than simply applying ‘labels’, it helps young people to understand what they did, why it was wrong and what is expected from them instead.

This allows space to be clear that the behaviour needs to change and to reinforce the behaviour you would like to see instead. This brings clarity and starts to build relationship with the young person, making it easier to address negative behaviour and, importantly, reward positive behaviour.

It is recommended against using labelling language in anti-bullying policy documents, using instead the suggested terms of ‘people displaying bullying behaviour’ or ‘people experiencing bullying behaviour towards them’. This language is reflected in SEEMiS when recording incidents.

## 9 Reporting, recording and monitoring

To ensure that children and young people are listened to and their concerns are given due weight, it is vital that they are offered a range of safe and simple pathways to report bullying in the first instance, with anonymous options. These should be outlined in the policy document.

In education settings it is important to record and monitor any reported incidents of bullying behaviour and/or language using the SEEMiS Bullying and Equalities module. Recording and monitoring bullying incidents via SEEMiS can be useful for schools to track progress based on the number of incidents reported and to see any trends of bullying behaviour specific to the school. It can help to identify trends or issues that need to be addressed which can help to determine what early prevention measures are effective. Each school/early learning centre should have their own procedure in place for reporting and investigating allegations of bullying.

Non-education settings should have clear procedures for children and young people to report bullying and be clear around the process of investigation that will follow reported incidents.

### Renfrewshire Council

Renfrewshire Council outlines the following recording and monitoring expectations of establishments in the local authority, as an example:

- Educational establishments will provide a number of ways in which alleged incidents of bullying behaviour can be reported by children and young people
- Each establishment will ensure children, young people and parents are aware of how concerns can be raised
- Establishments should consider ways to promote discreet or anonymous reporting mechanisms for pupils





## 9 Reporting, Recording and Monitoring Cont...

### Renfrewshire Council cont:

- Parents and carers should be informed of how they can raise concerns formally and informally. Reports of alleged bullying made by parents/carers/others will be treated as bullying incidents and schools will aim to complete an investigation and implement any remedial action within three working days and communicate the outcome to affected children, young people and their parents. Investigations into alleged incidents of bullying behaviour should begin, in the establishment, on the day the incident is reported. If the incident occurs at the end of the school day, or out with school hours, the investigation should commence at the start of the following school day. If a parent/carer is not satisfied with the way in which the establishment has handled an incident of alleged bullying, they should be referred to Renfrewshire Council's complaints procedure
- Each incident of bullying which takes place in a school will be recorded in the Bullying & Equalities module within SEEMIS Click & Go, which is the main information system used to hold pupil information in Scottish schools

- Renfrewshire Council staff should use their professional judgement when deciding when to record on the SEEMIS module. In line with the national guidance and this policy, not all disagreements between children and young people are necessarily bullying and staff should consider the behaviour and the impact before deciding if it is bullying and should be recorded. The purpose of recording is for schools to learn about what kind of bullying is happening in their school and to identify if there are trends or issues that require addressing, based on what the recording tells them. It should be seen as an improvement tool
- All data recording, monitoring and reporting will be undertaken in line with current data protection legislation



## 10 Evidence of children and young people's involvement

Children and young people have the right to feel safe and be free from bullying, and should:

- Be able to express their views in matters that affect them, and for these views to be given due weight
- Avoid engaging in bullying behaviour and should watch out for signs of bullying among their peers
- Be made aware of the options they have to report incidents of bullying behaviour
- Be encouraged to offer support for those experiencing bullying behaviour
- Respect everyone and promote anti-prejudice views
- Tell an adult they trust if they, or someone else, is being bullied

Including children and young people in the policy development and implementation phases of anti-bullying policy adds authenticity and richness to the process. Importantly it demonstrates respect for their rights, as this is a matter that directly affects them and enables them to use their voice and share what they feel is necessary for them to feel happy and safe in their local community.

There are many benefits to engaging with the children and young people, set out below and exemplified in RfA:

- Understanding the reality
- Empowerment
- Peer influence
- Practical solutions



There are a variety of fun, creative ways to include children and young people in the policy development process;

- Youth councils or committees
- Surveys and polls
- School/Group forums
- Collaboration
- Online platforms
- Training and education

Evidence of this involvement should be referenced in the policy document.



## 11 Evidence that parent/carers have, in line with their rights, been included and consulted in the policy development process

Including parent/carers in the policy development process is respectful of their rights and the role they play in the whole school community. It enables them to contribute to, and supportive of, the processes and measures in place to ensure safety for all children and young people, as well as what procedures are in place for complaints and escalation if dissatisfied. By including parent/carers in the process, it creates an opportunity to further encourage positive relations between all parties involved.

Ways to engaging parent/carer inclusion in the policy development process are set out below and exemplified in RfA:

- Collaboration and feedback
- Regular communication and support
- Transparency and reporting
- Inclusive and supportive events

All parents and carers can actively help to prevent bullying behaviour, and support the school/club endeavours, by:

- Being aware of potential signs of bullying behaviour such as distress, lack of concentration, feigning illness or other unusual behaviour
- Reporting all bullying incidents as quickly as possible
- Being vigilant to dangers online and encourage appropriate use of technology
- Understand that ‘fall outs’ and disagreements are a normal part of growing up, however bullying behaviour is not
- Seek support from the school or group the young person attends for themselves and their child(ren)

Evidence of involvement via parent councils, parent forum or surveys, etc., should be referenced in the policy document.



## 12 Evidence that staff/volunteers have been included and consulted in the policy development process

Staff and volunteers have a direct role in the implementation of a school/club policy, making their views highly influential in anti-bullying policy consultations.

All teachers, and staff working in other settings with children and young people, have a responsibility to ensure that anti-bullying policy is in place to keep children safe. This aim can be achieved through engaging them in the policy development process to consider how they will be equipped to:

- Promote and role model positive relationships and positive behaviour
- Report any bullying incidents that they have been made aware of or have witnessed
- Record all incidents using the Bullying & Equalities module in SEEMis which will be monitored by the authority through SEEMis annual reports.

- Listen to children and young people and take their concerns seriously
- Ensure that children and young people have a right to express their views in matters that affect them, and for these views to be given due weight
- Act in accordance with the school values, professional Codes of Conduct and the values and principles of RfA
- Ensure that all children, young people, parents and carers are aware of the school’s procedure to responding to anti-bullying incidents
- Ensure that the anti-bullying policy is followed and that the setting upholds its duty to promote the safety and well-being of all children and young people
- Refrain from using labels e.g. ‘bully’ and ‘victim’
- Engage in anti-bullying policy development and undertake anti-bullying training
- Be vigilant to the signs of bullying behaviour and play an active role in measures to prevent bullying behaviour

**Evidence of involvement via SLR, staff meetings, surveys, etc., should be referenced in the policy document.**



**13 Policy review and communication plan/process**

It is recommended that Local Authorities commit to evaluating and reviewing their anti-bullying policy on a frequent basis, ideally every three years. A policy review should include consultation with children and young people, parents, staff and volunteers and any other relevant external stakeholders.

**14 Commitment to training and supporting staff and volunteers**

Anti-bullying training is key to delivering anti-bullying work that is consistent and in step with national guidance in RfA.

**Free online training can be accessed at [www.respectme.org.uk](http://www.respectme.org.uk)**



**Renfrewshire Council**

Renfrewshire Council detail their plan to review and evaluate their anti-bullying policy as follows:

“This policy was developed in line with the revised guidance published by the Scottish Government in November 2017.

This policy will be reviewed no more than 3 years after its implementation date and thereafter at intervals of no more than 3 years. This is in line with national guidance. The Chief Education Officer is responsible for ensuring that the policy is reviewed every three years or when there has been a significant change to national policy. Renfrewshire Council will consult with relevant stakeholders as part of the regular policy review.”

**Clackmannanshire Council**

Clackmannanshire Council has made clear their commitment to training in their anti-bullying policy:

“Clackmannanshire Education Services has a commitment to support and implement relevant staff development and training. We believe that by undertaking a wide range of high-quality, sustained professional learning experiences, teachers are more likely to inspire learners and provide high quality teaching and learning experiences, enabling learners to achieve their best.

We will work closely with our partners and respectme to identify specific opportunities for both staff and parents. respectme offer a wide range of free training for adults working with children and young people.”

**Visit [respectme.org.uk](http://respectme.org.uk) for more information and sign up to our e-newsletter**

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