

## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

This policy is based on DfE guidance “Preventing and Tackling Bullying. Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies” 2017, and supporting documents. It also considers the DfE statutory guidance “Keeping Children Safe in Education” and ‘Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges’ guidance.

### **Policy Objective**

This policy outlines what Portal House School will do to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying. The policy has been drawn up through the involvement of the whole school community and we are committed to developing an anti-bullying culture where bullying of adults, children or young people is not tolerated in any form.

### **Our School Community - School Ethos**

- Portal House School community recognises that bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals; it can create a barrier to learning and have serious consequences for mental wellbeing. By effectively preventing and tackling bullying, our schools can help to create a safe, disciplined environment, where students are able to learn and fulfil their potential.
- Discusses, monitors and reviews our anti-bullying policy and practice on a regular basis.
- Supports all members of staff to promote positive relationships to prevent bullying.
- Recognises that some members of our community may be more vulnerable to bullying and its impact than others; being aware of this will help us to develop effective strategies to prevent bullying from happening and provide appropriate support, if required.
- Will intervene by identifying and tackling bullying behaviour appropriately and promptly.
- Ensures that students are aware that all bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively; that everyone should feel safe to learn; and abide by the anti-bullying policy.
- Recognises the potential impact of bullying on the wider family of those affected so will work in partnership with parents/carers regarding all reported bullying concerns and will seek to keep them informed at all stages.
- Requires all members of the community to work with the school to uphold the anti-bullying policy.
- Reports back to parents/carers regarding concerns on bullying, dealing promptly with complaints in line with our Complaints Policy.
- Seeks to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere
- Utilises support from the Local Authority and other relevant organisations when appropriate.

### **Definition of bullying**

- Bullying is “Behaviour by an individual or a group, usually repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally”. (DfE “Preventing and Tackling Bullying”, July 2017)
- “The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online.” (Anti-bullying Alliance, 2023)
- Bullying can include: name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments; kicking; hitting; taking belongings; producing offensive graffiti; gossiping; excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.

- This includes the same unacceptable behaviours expressed online, sometimes called online or cyberbullying. This can include: the sending of offensive, upsetting and inappropriate messages by phone, text, Instant Messenger, through gaming, websites, social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading imagery.
- Bullying can be a form of peer on peer abuse and can be emotionally abusive; it can cause severe and adverse effects on children's emotional development.

### **Forms of bullying covered by this Policy**

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types of bullying including:

- Prejudicial Bullying (against people/students with protected characteristics): Bullying related to race, religion, faith and belief, those without faith, ethnicity, nationality or culture.
- Bullying related to SEND (Special Educational Needs or Disability).
- Bullying related to appearance or physical/mental health conditions.
- Physical bullying.
- Emotional bullying.
- Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic/biphobic bullying).
- Bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances.
- Sexist, sexual and gender based bullying including transphobic bullying
- Bullying against teenage parents (pregnancy and maternity under the Equality Act)
- Bullying via technology, known as online or cyberbullying.

### **Preventing, identifying and responding to bullying**

The whole school community will:

- Create and support an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration and care for others which will be upheld by all.
- Work with staff and outside agencies to identify all forms of prejudice-driven bullying.
- Actively provide systematic opportunities to develop students' social and emotional skills, including their resilience.
- Recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the community, including adults and children (peer on peer abuse).
- Recognise the potential for children with SEN and disabilities to be disproportionately impacted by bullying and will implement additional pastoral support as required.
- Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality or appearance related differences. Also children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities.
- Provide a range of approaches for students, staff and parents/carers to access support and report concerns.
- Challenge practice (including 'banter') which does not uphold the values of tolerance, non discrimination and respect towards others.
- Consider all opportunities for addressing bullying in all forms throughout the curriculum and supported with a range of approaches such as through displays, assemblies, peer support and the school/student council.
- Regularly update and evaluate our approaches to take into account the developments of technology and provide up-to-date advice and education to all members of the community regarding positive online behaviour.
- Train all staff including teaching staff, support staff (including administration staff, lunchtime support staff and site support staff) and pastoral staff to identify all forms of bullying, follow the school policy and procedures (including recording and reporting incidents).
- Proactively gather and record concerns and intelligence about bullying incidents and issues so as to effectively develop strategies to prevent bullying from occurring.

- Implement appropriate disciplinary sanctions; the consequences of bullying will reflect the seriousness of the incident, so that others see that bullying is unacceptable.
- Take appropriate, proportionate and reasonable action, in line with existing school policies, for any bullying brought to the school's attention which involves or affects students even when they are not on school premises, for example when using school transport or online etc.
- Actively create "safe spaces" for vulnerable children and young people.
- Use a variety of techniques to resolve the issues between those who perpetrate bullying and those who have been a target of bullying.
- Work with staff, other agencies and the wider school community to prevent and tackle concerns including all forms of prejudice-driven bullying.
- Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos.
- Be encouraged to use technology, especially mobile phones and social media positively and responsibly.
- Provide systematic opportunities to develop students' social and emotional skills, including building their resilience and self-esteem.

### **Education and Training**

The whole school community will:

- Train all staff, including: teaching staff, support staff (e.g. administration staff, lunchtime support staff and site support staff) and pastoral staff, to identify all forms of bullying and take appropriate action, following the school's policy and procedures, including recording and reporting incidents.
- Consider a range of opportunities and approaches for addressing bullying throughout the curriculum and other activities, such as: through displays, assemblies, peer support, the school/student council, etc.
- Collaborate with other local educational settings as appropriate, and during key times of the year, for example during transition.
- Ensure anti-bullying has a high profile throughout the year, reinforced through key opportunities such as anti-bullying week.
- Provide systematic opportunities to develop students' social and emotional skills, including building their resilience and self-esteem.

### **Involvement of students**

We will:

- Regularly canvas children and young people's views on the extent and nature of bullying.
- Ensure that all students know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying.
- Ensure that all students are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying.
- Involve students in anti-bullying campaigns in schools and embedded messages in the wider school curriculum.
- Utilise student voice in providing pupil-led education and support.
- Publicise the details of internal support, as well as external helplines and websites.
- Offer support to students who have been bullied and to those who are perpetrating the bullying act in order to address the problems they have.

### **Liaison with parents and carers**

We will:

- Take steps to involve parents and carers in developing policies and procedures, to ensure they are aware that the school does not tolerate any form of bullying.
- Make sure that key information (including policies and named points of contact) about bullying is available to parents/carers in a variety of formats, including the school website.

- Ensure that all parents/carers know whom to contact if they are worried about bullying and where to access independent advice.
- Ensure all parents/carers know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively to raise
- concerns in an appropriate manner. Ensure all parents/carers know where to access independent advice about bullying.
- Work with all parents/carers and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying.
- Ensure that parents work with the school to role model positive behaviour for students, both on and offline.

#### **Links with other school policies and practices**

This Policy links with a number of other school policies, practices and action plans including:

- Behaviour Policy.
- Complaints Policy.
- Safeguarding and child protection policies.
- Confidentiality Policy.
- Online Safety and Acceptable Use Policies (AUPs).
- Curriculum Policies such as PSHE and citizenship and computing.
- E-Safety Policy.
- Mobile phone and social media policies.
- Searching and confiscation.

#### **Links to legislation**

There are a number of pieces of legislation which set out measures and actions for schools in response to bullying as well as criminal and civil law. These may include (but are not limited to):

- The Education and Inspection Act 2006, 2011
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children Act 1989
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- The Computer Misuse Act 1990

#### **Links to advice and guidance**

- DfE: Prevent and Tackling Bullying 2017
- NAHT Edge, Advice & Guidance. Preventing and Tackling Bullying of Pupils.

#### **Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of:

- The Headteacher to communicate the policy to the school community and to ensure that disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, and that a member of the senior leadership team has been identified to take overall responsibility.
- School Governors to take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy.
- All staff, including: governors, senior leadership, teaching and non-teaching staff, to support, uphold and implement it accordingly.
- Parents/carers to support their children and work in partnership with the school.
- Students to abide by the policy.

The named Governor with lead responsibility for this policy is: **Mr T. Porter**

The named member of staff with lead responsibility for this policy is: **Mrs R. Bradley**

### **Monitoring and review, putting policy into practice:**

This policy was approved by the Governing Body on: **March 2025**.

and will be monitored and reviewed on: **March 2027**.

- The Headteacher will report on a regular basis to the governing body on incidents of bullying and outcomes.
- The Headteacher will be informed of bullying concerns, as appropriate.
- The school will ensure that they regularly monitor and evaluate mechanisms to ensure that the policy is being consistently applied.
- Any issues identified will be incorporated into the school's action planning.

### **Dealing with Bullying Incidents**

The following steps may be taken when dealing with all incidents of bullying reported to the school:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached or witnessed the concern.
- A clear and precise account of the incident will be recorded (CPOMS) to the designated safeguarding lead if the incident appears to be Child Protection/Safeguarding related. This will include recording appropriate details regarding decisions and actions taken.
- The school will provide appropriate support for the person being bullied – making sure they are not at risk of immediate harm and will involve them in any decision-making, as appropriate.
- The Pastoral Lead/Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will interview all parties involved and will record the incident in accordance with school procedures.
- The DSL will be informed of all bullying issues where there are safeguarding concerns.
- Teachers/pastoral staff and other relevant members of staff will be kept informed as appropriate, via the Morning staff briefings.
- When responding to cyberbullying concerns the school will take all available steps to identify the person who has perpetrated the bullying act, including looking at the school systems, identifying and interviewing possible witnesses, and contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary.
- If content posted online is offensive or inappropriate, and the person or people responsible are known, then the school will ensure that they understand why the material is unacceptable or offensive and will request that they remove it.
- If necessary. Other agencies may be consulted or involved, such as the police, if a criminal offence has been committed, or other local services including early help or children's social care, if a child is felt to be at risk of significant harm
- Where the bullying of or by students takes place off the school site or outside of normal school hours (including cyberbullying) then the school will ensure that the concern is investigated. If required, the DSL will collaborate with other schools. Appropriate action, including providing support and implementing sanctions, is taken in accordance with the e-safety and safeguarding policies.
- The school will speak with and inform other staff members, where appropriate.
- Parents/carers of all children involved will be kept informed.
- Sanctions will be used as appropriate and support will be implemented, in consultation with all parties concerned.
- If necessary and appropriate, the police (if a criminal offence has been committed) or other local services (including children's social care where a child is felt to be at risk of significant harm) will be consulted or involved.
- The school will work with other agencies such as the Police through participation in Restorative Justice Meetings between affected parties.

**Cyberbullying** (*Note: Schools should ensure they access the Childnet Cyberbullying guidance*)

When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the school will:

- Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified:
- Provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.
- Encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation.
- Take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible. This may include:
  - looking at use of the school systems;
  - identifying and interviewing possible witnesses;
  - Contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary.
- Work with the individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation. This may include:
  - Support reports to a service provider to remove content if those involved are unable to be identified or if those involved refuse to or are unable to delete content.
  - Confiscating and searching students' electronic devices, such as mobile phones, in accordance with the law.

*(Note: Schools should ensure they access the DfE 'Searching, screening and confiscation at school' and Childnet Cyberbullying guidance to ensure that the schools powers are used proportionately and lawfully.)*

- Requesting the deletion of locally-held content and content posted online if they contravene school behavioural policies.
- Ensure that sanctions are applied to the person responsible for the cyberbullying; the school will take steps to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any additional help that they may need.
- Inform the police if a criminal offence has been committed.
- Provide information to staff and students regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online. This may include:
  - advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply;
  - providing advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists;
  - helping those involved to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain.

## **Supporting Students**

Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their teacher or a member of staff of their choice.
- Being advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to concerns and build resilience as appropriate.
- Reassuring the pupil and providing continuous pastoral support.
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence.
- Providing ongoing support; this may include: working and speaking with staff, offering formal counselling, engaging with parents and carers.
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this may include involvement from the Police or referrals to Early Help, Specialist Children's Services, or the Children and Young People's Mental Health Service (CYPMHS) as appropriate.

Students who have perpetrated the bullying will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened and establishing the concern and the need to change.
- Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child.
- Providing appropriate education and support regarding their behaviours and actions.

- If online, requesting that content be removed and reporting accounts/content to service providers.
- Sanctioning in line with school behaviour/discipline policy. This may include official warnings, detentions, removal of privileges (including online access when encountering cyberbullying concerns), and fixed-term or permanent exclusions.
- Where necessary working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance, this may include involvement from the Police or referrals to Early Help, Specialist Children's Services, or Child and Young Persons Mental Health Services (CYPMHS) as appropriate.

### **Supporting Adults**

Our school takes measures to prevent and tackle bullying among students' however, it is equally important to recognise that bullying of staff and parents, whether by students, parents of other staff members, is unacceptable.

- Adults (staff and parents) who have been bullied or affected will be supported by:
- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the concern with the designated safeguarding lead and/or a senior member of staff/Head of School.
- Being advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to concerns and build resilience as appropriate.
- Where the bullying takes place outside of the school site (including online) then the school will ensure that the concern is investigated and that appropriate action is taken in accordance with the schools behaviour and discipline policy.
- If the bullying takes place online, support those affected by reporting content and/or accounts to the service provider as appropriate.
- Reassuring and offering appropriate support.
- Working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance.

Adults (staff and parents/carers) who have bullied will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened with a senior member of staff and establishing the concern.
- Establishing whether a legitimate grievance or concern has been raised and signposting to the schools official complaints procedures.
- If online, requesting that content be removed.
- Instigating disciplinary, civil or legal action as appropriate or required.

*(Note: Specific guidance is available for school leaders regarding dealing with complaints made on social networking sites by parents/carers: [www.kelsi.org.uk/child-protection-and-safeguarding/esafety](http://www.kelsi.org.uk/child-protection-and-safeguarding/esafety))*

### **Useful Links and Supporting Organisations and Guidance**

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: [www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)
- Childline: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)
- DfE: "Preventing and Tackling Bullying. Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies", and "Supporting children and young people who are bullied: advice for schools" November 2014: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>
- DfE: ' No Health without mental health': <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/no-healthwithout-mental-health-a-cross-government-outcomes-strategy>
- Family Lives: [www.familylives.org.uk](http://www.familylives.org.uk)
- Kidscape: [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)
- MindEd: [www.minded.org.uk](http://www.minded.org.uk)
- NSPCC: [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

- The BIG Award: [www.bullyinginterventiongroup.co.uk/index.php](http://www.bullyinginterventiongroup.co.uk/index.php)
- PSHE Association: [www.pshe-association.org.uk](http://www.pshe-association.org.uk)
- Restorative Justice Council: [www.restorativejustice.org.uk](http://www.restorativejustice.org.uk)
- The Diana Award: [www.diana-award.org.uk](http://www.diana-award.org.uk)
- Victim Support: [www.victimsupport.org.uk](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk)
- Young Minds: [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)
- Young Carers: [www.youngcarers.net](http://www.youngcarers.net)
- The Restorative Justice Council [www.restorativejustice.org.uk/restorative-practice-schools](http://www.restorativejustice.org.uk/restorative-practice-schools)

### **Cyberbullying**

- Childnet International: [www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com)
- Digizen: [www.digizen.org](http://www.digizen.org)
- Internet Watch Foundation: [www.iwf.org.uk](http://www.iwf.org.uk)
- Think U Know: [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)
- UK Safer Internet Centre: [www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk)
- The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) [www.gov.uk/government/groups/ukcouncil-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis](http://www.gov.uk/government/groups/ukcouncil-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis)
- DfE 'Cyberbullying: advice for headteachers and school staff' [www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying)
- DfE 'Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying': [www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying)

### **LGBT**

- Barnardos LGBT Hub: [www.barnardos.org.uk/what\\_we\\_do/our\\_work/lgbtq.htm](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/lgbtq.htm)
- Metro Charity: [www.metrocentreonline.org](http://www.metrocentreonline.org)
- Proud Trust: [www.theproudtrust.org](http://www.theproudtrust.org)
- EACH: [www.eachaction.org.uk](http://www.eachaction.org.uk)
- Pace: [www.pacehealth.org.uk](http://www.pacehealth.org.uk)
- Schools Out: [www.schools-out.org.uk](http://www.schools-out.org.uk)
- Stonewall: [www.stonewall.org.uk](http://www.stonewall.org.uk)

### **SEND**

- Changing Faces: [www.changingfaces.org.uk](http://www.changingfaces.org.uk)
- Mencap: [www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk)
- Anti-Bullying Alliance Cyberbullying and children and young people with SEN and disabilities: [www.cafamily.org.uk/media/750755/cyberbullying\\_and\\_send\\_-\\_module\\_final.pdf](http://www.cafamily.org.uk/media/750755/cyberbullying_and_send_-_module_final.pdf)
- DfE: SEND code of practice: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25)

### **Race, Religion and Nationality**

- Anne Frank Trust: [www.annefrank.org.uk](http://www.annefrank.org.uk)
- Kick it Out: [www.kickitout.org](http://www.kickitout.org)
- Report it: [www.report-it.org.uk](http://www.report-it.org.uk)
- Stop Hate: [www.stophateuk.org](http://www.stophateuk.org)
- Tell Mama: [www.tellmama.org](http://www.tellmama.org)
- Educate against Hate: [www.educateagainsthate.com/](http://www.educateagainsthate.com/)
- Show Racism the Red Card: [www.srtrc.org/educational](http://www.srtrc.org/educational)

### **Sexual harassment and sexual bullying**

- Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAW) [www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk](http://www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk)
- A Guide for Schools:  
[www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/data/files/resources/71/EVAWCoalition-Schools-Guide.pdf](http://www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/data/files/resources/71/EVAWCoalition-Schools-Guide.pdf)
- Disrespect No Body: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/disrespect-nobody-campaignposters](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disrespect-nobody-campaignposters)
- Anti-bullying Alliance: Preventing and responding to Sexual Bullying:  
[www.antibullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/sexual-and-genderrelated/preventing-and-responding-sexual](http://www.antibullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/sexual-and-genderrelated/preventing-and-responding-sexual)
- Anti-bullying Alliance: advice for school staff and professionals about developing effective anti-bullying practice in relation to sexual bullying: [www.antibullyingalliance.org.uk/toolsinformation/all-about-bullying/sexual-and-gender-relate](http://www.antibullyingalliance.org.uk/toolsinformation/all-about-bullying/sexual-and-gender-relate)

*Note: Additional links can be found in 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (July 2017)*

*([www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying))*

Portal House School  
Sea Street  
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Kent, CT15 6SS

Policy: **Anti-Bullying Policy**

This Policy has been approved by the Governing body of Portal House School.

Signed:	(Chair of Governors)
Date:	
Signed:	(Head Teacher)
Date:	
Review Date:	March 2027