

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

RATIONALE

Portavogie Primary School is completely opposed to bullying. It is entirely contrary to the values and principles we work and live by. All members of the school community have a right to work in a secure and caring environment. They also have a responsibility to contribute, in whatever way they can, to the protection and maintenance of such an environment.

This policy has been developed through consultation which involved members of the school community.

PRINCIPLES

We believe that all pupils have the right to learn in an environment which is free from intimidation and fear. Accordingly, we will work to create an environment within which positive relationships will be fostered and violent behaviour of any sort will be unacceptable. Within such an environment, bullying behaviour will not be tolerated. Should bullying occur, the needs of victims of bullying will be paramount, and the school will take all reasonable measures to ensure that the situation is resolved and will not reoccur. The school will seek to involve and inform parents in all areas of its anti-bullying work.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Following consultation with members of the school community, the following definition of bullying behaviour has been agreed:

Bullying is a form of aggressive, hurtful behaviour which is persistent and unprovoked. It involves an abuse of power. It may take various forms, including physical, verbal and emotional.

Examples of bullying behaviour include:

Physical: *kicking, nipping, pushing, tripping*

Verbal: *name-calling, teasing, spreading rumours*

Emotional: *excluding from play, threatening, pulling faces.*

FORMS OF BULLYING

- Physical violence such as hitting, pushing or spitting at another pupil.
- Interfering with another pupil's property, by stealing, hiding or damaging it.
- Using offensive names when addressing another pupil.
- Teasing or spreading rumours about another pupil or his/her family.
- Belittling another pupil's abilities and achievements.
- Writing offensive notes or graffiti about another pupil.
- Excluding another pupil from a group activity.
- Ridiculing another pupil's appearance, way of speaking or personal mannerisms.
- Misusing technology to hurt or humiliate another person.
- Racist bullying related to race, religion or colour.
- Homophobic bullying related to gender or sexual orientation.

LINKS WITH OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES

This anti-bullying policy forms part of the school's overall Pastoral Care policy. It links with the Safeguarding/Child Protection policy in which the school outlines the steps it will take to protect children from harm and develop their personal safety strategies. It links with the positive behaviour policy in which the school outlines the types of behaviour which are considered appropriate and inappropriate, together with the sanctions which will be used as part of the disciplinary process.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

The Responsibilities of Staff

Our staff will:

- foster in our pupils' self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others;
 - demonstrate, by example, the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our pupils;
 - discuss bullying with all classes, so that every pupil learns about the damage it causes to both the child who is bullied and to the bully; and the importance of telling a teacher about bullying when it happens;
 - be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying;
 - listen to children who have been bullied, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them;
 - report suspected cases of bullying to our Designated Teacher for Child Protection or Principal;
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- follow up any complaint by a parent about bullying, and report back promptly and fully on the action which has been taken;
- deal with observed instances of bullying promptly and effectively, in accordance with agreed procedures.

The Responsibilities of Pupils

We expect our pupils to:

- refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity;
- intervene to protect the pupil who is being bullied, unless it is unsafe to do so;
- report to a member of staff any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying, to dispel any climate of secrecy and help to prevent further instances.

Anyone who becomes the target of bullies should not suffer in silence, but have the courage to speak out, to put an end to their own suffering and that of other potential targets.

The Responsibilities of Parents

We ask our parents to support their children and the school by:

- watching for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children, which might be evidence of bullying;
 - advising their children to report any bullying to their class teacher and explain the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other pupils;
 - advising their children not to retaliate violently to any forms of bullying;
 - being sympathetic and supportive towards their children, and reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken;
 - keeping a written record of any reported instances of bullying;
 - informing the school of any suspected bullying, even if their children are not involved;
 - co-operating with the school; if their children are accused of bullying, try to ascertain the truth. Point out the implications of bullying, both for the children who are bullied and for the bullies themselves.
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PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

We believe that the implementation of preventative measures will help to reduce the incidence of bullying behaviour. We will take the following steps:

Ethos and pastoral care:

We will seek to be a "listening school", in which pupils are encouraged to express their feelings, fears and concerns. This will be facilitated through measures such as Circle Time. We will promote and reward positive behaviour through measures such as awards for caring and friendliness.

Curriculum:

We will provide a personal development (PDMU) teaching programme from P1 - P7. This programme will help children to develop a range of skills including assertiveness and communication skills. Anti-bullying week is in the Autumn term where all classes partake in activities.

Playtime provision:

We will provide training for teachers, classroom assistants and lunchtime supervisors in the promotion of positive play and strategies for dealing with incidents of bullying. P7 Buddies wear high visibility vests and are available in each playground at break and lunchtime.

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH INCIDENTS OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

Each case of bullying will be dealt with individually and follow-up action will be tailored to meet the individual needs of the pupils concerned. The following steps will be followed.

1. Reporting of an incident

When a bullying incident is reported, the information will be passed on to the following people:

- ◆ The teacher of any child involved
- ◆ The Principal
- ◆ The Designated Teacher for Child Protection

2. Investigation of an incident

This will normally be carried out by the Designated Teacher for Child Protection or the Principal, in co-operation with any class teachers concerned. Pupils involved will be interviewed and a record made of their responses using the school's incident report form.

Parents of all pupils involved will then be informed of the school's action up to this point and will be kept informed of subsequent action as appropriate.

3. Agreeing a plan for resolution

Working with the pupils and parents concerned, the Designated Teacher or Principal will devise a plan for resolution of the conflict. This plan will include targets for acceptable behaviour and will set out support measures which will be provided for the pupils concerned.

4. Reviewing the situation

The situation will be closely monitored until resolved. This will be done by the Designated Teacher or Principal, in co-operation with the other teachers, pupils and parents concerned.

5. Involvement of other agencies in provision of support

When necessary, the school will draw on support from a range of outside agencies including Education Welfare Officer, Behaviour Support Team and the Educational Psychology Service. In most instances, the school will seek to deal with the situation from within its own resources. However, if it becomes clear at step 3 or 4 that outside help is needed, the school will not hesitate to avail of it.

If parents are unhappy with the way in which the matter has been dealt, then they may make recourse to the Principal in the first instance, taking account of the school's Complaints Policy.

CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF STAFF

The school will continue to offer opportunities for staff to be trained in anti-bullying procedures as part of the School Development Plan and within regular Child Protection training.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

Implementation of this policy will be monitored by the Principal and Designated Teacher for Child Protection. A report on implementation should be provided annually to the Board of Governors, within the overall report on pastoral care provision. This policy will be formally evaluated and reviewed every three years.

Portavogie Primary School Bullying Concern Record Sheet

Child's name..... Class..... School Year.....

Teacher.....

Contact made by: in person by phone

Date.....

<p><u>Stage 1</u> Initial Reporting Details</p>	
<p><u>Stage 2</u> Investigation of incident (to include specific incidents, dates, times etc.)</p>	
<p><u>Stage 3</u> Plan for resolution (to include personnel responsible and completion dates)</p>	

<p><u>Stage 4</u> Review of situation To be attended by: Meeting Date and Time:</p>	
<p><u>Stage 5</u> Other agencies and further action</p>	
<p><i>Signed - DT</i></p>	
<p><i>Signed - Principal</i></p>	

Teacher/Adult completing this form _____

Date _____

APPENDIX 2

Portavogie Primary School Record Sheet for a Pupil(s) Who Has Been Displaying Bullying Behaviour

Outline of action/support to be implemented:

Have the parents been informed? Yes/No (Give Details)

Date	Interventions	Action

Status of Concern

This concern is now resolved: Yes/No

When a Concern is not resolved:

Further intervention required - this may include a referral to the Principal.

Teacher/Adult completing this form _____

Date _____
