Anti-Bullying Policy

Portsdown Primary School & Early Years

Approved by:	Portsdown Governing Board	Date: September 2025
Last reviewed on:	September 2025	
Next review due by:	October 2027	

Contents

1. Bullying: our school's values and beliefs

All pupils and staff have the right to feel happy, safe and included. Pupils and staff have the right to work in an environment without harassment, intimidation or fear. All bullying, of any sort, is therefore unacceptable and will be challenged. Pupils and staff who experience bullying will be supported. We recognise the effects that bullying can have on pupils' feelings of worth and on their schoolwork, and the school community will actively promote an anti-bullying environment. The aim of this policy is to formalise a whole school policy on bullying which will help to ensure a common and consistent approach to bullying with the emphasis on prevention.

2. Aims

Our aims in producing this policy are:

- To provide a learning environment free from any threat or fear
- To reduce and to eradicate, wherever possible, instances in which pupils are made to feel frightened, excluded or unhappy.
- To establish a means of dealing with bullying, and of providing support to pupils who have been bullied.
- To ensure that all pupils are of equal value and to be treated equally, regardless of gender, disability or ethnicity.
- To continually help children, their parents / carers and our staff to increasingly understand what bullying is, and what it is not.
- To ensure that all pupils and staff are aware of the policy and that they fulfil their obligations to it.
- To meet any legal obligations which rest with the school
- To identify curriculum areas within which bullying will be dealt with as a topic.

Whilst the policy document can be read as a free-standing paper, it is intended that it should form part of the school policy document on Relationships and Behaviour Regulation Policy.

Links with Other School Policies and Practices

This policy links with several school policies, practices and action plans including:

Relationships and Behaviour Regulation Policy (as aforementioned)

 Complaints policy

Child Protection and Safeguarding policy

Confidentiality policy

Acceptable Use Policies (AUP)

Curriculum policies, such as PSHE/RSHE, citizenship and computing

Mobile phone policy

Social media policy

Searching, screening and confiscation guidance.

 Links to legislation

There are several 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.

This policy is consistent with **Keeping Children Safe in Education** and aligns with updated **Behaviour in Schools guidance (Feb 2024)**.

3. Definition of bullying

Bullying involves the dominance of one pupil by another, or a group of others, is pre-meditated and usually forms a pattern of behaviour. It can be physical or emotional.

Bullying is therefore:
- Deliberately hurtful.
- Repeated, often over a period of time.
- Difficult for victims to defend themselves against.

It can take many forms but the main types are:

- Physical – hitting, kicking, or taking another's belongings.
- Verbal – name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks.
- Indirect – spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours.

Some forms of bullying are attacks not only on the individual, but also on the group to which he or she may belong. Within school we will pay particular attention to the

protected characteristics (as outlined in the Equality Act 2010):

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types and forms of bullying including but not limited to:

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

AI-Related Bullying involves the malicious creation, possession, or distribution of AI-generated content (such as deepfakes, synthetic imagery, chatbot impersonation, AI-amplified hate). This constitutes a serious safeguarding concern. Evidence will be preserved securely, not redistributed; affected pupils will be supported, and referral to children's services or police will be made if appropriate.

4. Creating an anti-bullying climate in school

Our school's behaviour policy explains how we promote positive behaviour in school to create an environment where pupils behave well; where pupils take responsibility for each other's emotional and social well-being and include and support each other. We aim to promote appropriate behaviour through the implementation of the school's behaviour policy, direct teaching (notably through the PSHE curriculum) and by creating an emotionally and socially safe environment where skills are learned and practised.

Our aim is to create a climate where bullying is not accepted by anyone within the school community. Our curriculum will be used to:

- Raise awareness about bullying and our anti-bullying policy.
- Increase understanding for victims and help build an anti-bullying ethos.
- Teach pupils how to constructively manage their relationships with others.

Circle time, role-play and stories will be used to show what pupils can do to prevent bullying, and to create an anti-bullying climate in school. Anti-bullying education will include digital citizenship and AI-generated media awareness lessons. Bullying will not be tolerated and we make this clear in the information we give to pupils and parents.

5. THE SCHOOL'S STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH BULLYING

Pupils who have been bullied, or have seen others being bullied, should report this as soon as possible to any adult who is supervising the activity or at a time when they feel comfortable to do so. This may include a note to the class teacher or informing parents who will then liaise with us. Pupils are listened to and are assured that it is 'OK to tell' any adult about bullying incidents. All reports of bullying are taken seriously and are followed up by an appropriate member of staff. Members of staff who receive reports that a pupil has been bullied should take action as recommended in this policy and should report this to relevant members of staff.

Incidents are recorded on the online system CPOMS by any staff member. Key staff have access to bullying incidents on CPOMs and are alerted when a bullying incident is reported.

Bullying can occur at any time of day. Many incidents are carried out in a surreptitious manner both in and out of class. All staff are responsible for preventing/dealing with bullying and therefore need to be constantly vigilant for such incidents.

Teamwork is essential: our pupils need to see that all staff are united and deal with bullying in a fair and consistent manner. Communication is an essential element of teamwork. Teaching assistants, welfare staff, admin staff and teaching staff should pass on information to the bully's/victim's class teacher. Sharing information helps to avoid pupils playing staff off against each other.

Whilst the high level of supervision within the school minimises the opportunities for bullying, there are certain vulnerable times of day - i.e. arrival/departure, break/lunchtimes and moving between lessons. Similarly, there are vulnerable areas of the school - i.e. playgrounds, corridors and toilets. Particular vigilance is needed here and all staff should be aware of these vulnerable areas.

The school will act and exercise authority where appropriate beyond the school day and apply appropriate sanctions. Further guidance on this can be found on the DfE website and in the school's relevant policies.

6. In all cases where bullying is reported, we will:

- Provide support to pupils who are bullied.
- Reassure them that they do not deserve to be bullied and it is not their fault.
- Assure them that it was right to report the incident and try to ascertain the extent of the problem.
- Engage them in making choices about how the matter may be resolved.
- Try to ensure that they feel safe.
- Ask them to report immediately any further incidents to us.

- Affirm that bullying can be stopped and that our school will persist with intervention until it does.
- Record the incident / the alleged incident on CPOMS

Reports of bullying will be acknowledged with the aim to be within one school day (we encourage parents and carers to report bullying by person/ to the office rather than email as emails may not be answered within one school day); investigations will begin within 24 hours. Digital evidence (screenshots, URLs, device data) will be preserved and stored directly without forwarding harmful content.

Ensure that those involved (victim, perpetrator/s and families) are informed of actions taken. We will interview the pupil (or pupils) involved in bullying separately and will:

- Listen to their version of events.
- Talk to anyone else who may have witnessed the bullying.
- Reinforce the message that bullying is not acceptable, and that we expect bullying to stop.
- Seek a commitment to this end.
- Affirm that it is right for pupils to let us know when they are being bullied.
- Adopt a joint problem-solving approach where this is appropriate.
- Consider sanctions under our school's behaviour policy.
- Advise the pupils responsible for bullying that we will be checking to ensure that bullying stops.
- Ensure that those involved know that we have done so.
- Involve the school's welfare team in working alongside victims / perpetrators when relevant.
- If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved, for example the police if a criminal offence has been committed
- Where the bullying of or by pupils takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including cyberbullying), the school will ensure that the concern is fully investigated and responded to in line with this policy, our Online Safety Policy and the school behaviour policy. If required, the school will collaborate with staff at other settings.
- Where incidents occur on third-party platforms, staff will support pupils/parents to report content under the **Online Safety Act 2023**'s platform duties. Staff may guide reporting to **Ofcom** or **police** when necessary.

When bullying occurs, we will endeavour to contact the parents / carers of the pupils involved at an early stage, and will keep them informed of our actions and consequent outcomes. We will keep records of incidents that we become aware of and how we responded to them (using CPOMs to record these). We will follow up after incidents to check that the bullying has not started again. The following procedures should be implemented for all instances of bullying:

1. A discussion will take place with the 'victim' (if possible, write down their account of what happened – dates/ times/ names). They should be asked

what they want to happen next. This discussion should also be had with the perpetrator.

2. Having established that they are not in any immediate danger, measures should be taken to support them for the rest of the day and if necessary until the situation is resolved.

3. The key member of staff should then investigate the allegations and may wish to speak to the victim and the 'bully' both separately and together, using the restorative approach. (Both the 'victim' and the 'bully' will be given the opportunity to discuss the incident and problems related to the incident privately and individually with a chosen member of staff).

4. The evidence (plus accounts from reliable witnesses) will be collated by a the staff member investigating. The Deputy Head and Head will also be informed. A number of children may have to be spoken to until the truth of the situation emerges.

5. If allegations are true, parents of those involved should be contacted

6. An INCIDENT log should then be completed: which is an entry made on CPOMs.

7. Explain to pupils that this incident has been recorded.

8. The key member of staff may decide to involve other children as supporters for the victim and a set of roles drawn up which make expectations clear. These will be shared with all the children involved.

9. A future date will be set for a review of the situation.

10. Decide any longer-term response or solutions to those involved.

11. Inform all relevant staff

7. When tougher measures are needed

If necessary, we will invoke the full range of sanctions that are detailed in the school's behaviour policy. These include:

- Missing breaks and lunchtimes.
- Involvement of parents / carers.

In extreme cases, the school will consider the use of suspensions and permanent exclusion from school. The school follows Portsmouth City Council's guidelines.

8. RESPONSIBILITIES

Everyone within school is expected to:

- Act in a respectful and supportive way towards one another.
- Adhere to and to promote the objectives of this policy.
- Act on informal reports and log on CPOMS

Pupils are expected to:

- Report all incidents of bullying.

- Report suspected incidents that victims may be afraid to report.
- Support each other and to seek help to ensure that everyone feels safe and nobody feels excluded or afraid in school.

Parents / carers can help by:

- Supporting our anti-bullying policy and procedures, particularly in understanding the definitions of bullying.
- Work proactively and cooperatively with the school
- Discussing with their child's teacher any concerns that their child may be experiencing bullying or involved in some other way.
- Helping to establish an anti-bullying culture outside of school.

9. Bullying outside the school premises

The school is not responsible for bullying that occurs off the premises, but we know that bullying can occur outside the school gates, on journeys to and from school or through technology i.e online or messaging. The bullying may be done by pupils from our own school, by pupils from other schools, or by people who are not at school at all.

Where a pupil or parent / carer tell us of bullying off the school premises we will:

- Talk to pupils about how to avoid or handle bullying outside school.
- Talk to the Headteacher of another school whose pupils are bullying where appropriate .
- If we feel it to be appropriate, inform the police.

Parents / carers should inform the appropriate authorities or put in place appropriate actions. For example, it may be appropriate for them to report any online abuse to internet or social media companies; for numbers/contacts to be blocked; for access to devices capable of using the internet to be limited or monitored; or for them to inform the PCSO or police.

Generative artificial intelligence (AI)
Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard.
Portsdown Primary School recognises that AI has many uses to help pupils learn, but may also have the potential to be used to bully others. For example, in the form of 'deepfakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real.
Portsdown Primary School will treat any use of AI to bully pupils in line with this anti-bullying policy.

10. Concerns, complaints and compliments

We recognise that there may be times when parents / carers feel that we have not dealt well with an incident of bullying. We would ask that this be brought to the Headteacher's notice. If the Headteacher cannot resolve these concerns informally, parents / carers can raise their concerns more formally through the school's complaints procedures. We would also be pleased to receive compliments – feedback from parents / carers on the when things have gone well.

Unacceptable communications towards staff (by parents or others) will be addressed via the Complaints Policy. Online misdemeanours by adults toward pupils/staff will be logged and potentially escalated.

11. Monitoring of incidents

We will measure the effectiveness of this policy is monitored in a number of ways:

- The number of incidents / alleged incidents in our behaviour log.
- Pupils' perceptions of bullying in school, through pupil surveys, structured discussions in class and circle time.
- Improvement in attendance and / or academic performance of pupils involved in bullying incidents.
- The comments made by parents, visitors and other people connected with the school.
- The Inclusion manager and welfare team will evaluate the behaviour policy and review numbers of incidents, repeated incidents by particular children who are now cause for concern, areas of school that are a concern, year groups that appear to have more incidents.
- Pupils are happy and confident.

The Governors will receive termly reports on bullying incidents, including location, repeat involvement, and any protected characteristic patterns.

12. Evaluation of the policy

We use data and feedback from pupils, staff, parents and governors to review the policy and procedures. To evaluate the effectiveness of the policy we consider the following questions:

- Does the policy give clear messages to all members of the school community about prevention, intervention procedures and practice?
- Do procedures and practices work effectively?
- Are intervention techniques appropriate and effective?
- Are all members of the school community fully aware of the policy?
- Are parents' / carers' responses increasingly positive and supportive?
- Has the policy prevented and / or reduced bullying behaviour, conflict and aggression?

As an agenda item on the Full Governor Body meetings, incidents of bullying and the actions taken to resolve these are discussed three times per academic year.

This policy is reviewed alongside the Relationships and Behaviour Regulation policy.