

PORTLAND HIGH SCHOOL

'Care, Support and Respect'



Anti-Bullying Policy

Mission Statement

At Portland High School, we are committed to the principle that all children have a right to an education which recognises their learning, emotional and social needs.

We aim to establish and develop the foundations for each pupil's life beyond school, through maximising attainment and celebrating achievement.

We aim to do so through an ethos of care support and respect.

Introduction

Bullying is an aspect of human behaviour that finds expression at all levels and in all spheres of society. Portland High School is not exempt from this. If we are to hold true to our aims then all members of the school community must challenge such behaviour.

It is widely recognized that bullying is the single thing that can cause most distress and apprehension for school pupils. A secure, supportive school environment helps to allay pupil concerns and helps them to have the confidence to address difficulties as they arise.

Types of bullying

Bullying can take many forms, at Portland we believe it is important to make pupils aware of all aspects and advise them on proactive strategies to prevent bullying and of the reactive strategies to deal with any bullying that takes place.

At Portland we recognise that Cyber, Racial and Homophobic bullying is becoming more prominent in society and we aim to educate our pupils fully in this aspect of bullying along with all other areas.

Prevention

Pupils will be supervised at all times. Staff are well informed of any conflicts inside or outside of school between pupils. Information, advice and encouragement to pupils will be displayed throughout the school.

An adult presence is provided in playgrounds at break times in terms of the Schools (Safety and Supervision of Pupils) (Scotland) Regulations 1990.

The concept of bullying and the ways in which it takes place is heavily addressed in Social Education and by visiting speakers arranged by our Home Partnership Officer.

Response

In dealing with accusations of bullying our primary aims are to reduce stress and modify unacceptable behaviour. We seek to identify the facts, resolve tensions and conflict and identify a positive way forward.

Disciplinary sanctions will be applied in all cases and especially when the bully refuses to acknowledge or moderate their conduct.

Advice for Pupils

At Portland we believe that nobody has the right to hurt other people by hitting them, kicking them, calling them names, spreading rumours about them or by doing anything else which is intended to be upsetting.

Bullies may try to justify their actions by saying that it is the victims fault for being different. They may try to pass it off as a joke or 'banter'. They may pick on someone who is tall or small, or fat or thin, or wears glasses, or has a different accent, or another religion, race, sexuality or is shy or clever, or good looking or disabled or... Any excuse will do, and if there is no real difference then the bullies will invent one.

Bullying involves some form of hurtful abuse of power.

- Name calling or abusive comments (Verbal assault)
- Ignoring and excluding others
- Pressurising others to behave in a particular way
- Damaging, stealing or extorting possessions
- Physical assault

What to do

- Talk to someone you can trust – class teacher, Mentor Teacher, ASN, anyone from the Management Team parent/carer, relative or friend.
- Tell them, or write down, what has happened and how you feel – be 100% honest even if you started something.
- Do something! Doing nothing can encourage the bullies.
- Try to have the strength to walk away. Show them it doesn't bother you!

What NOT to do

- Don't try to deal with the problem by yourself
- Don't believe the lies that bullies tell
- Don't use violence against the bullies
- Don't exaggerate – this makes people doubt your version – Always be truthful!

Working together

You do not have to be a victim of bullying to act. If you do nothing when you see someone is being bullied, then bullies may think that you approve of what they are doing. Part of the fun that bullies get comes from the reaction of bystanders. You can help by:

- Reporting all bullying behaviour
- Befriending other pupils
- Talking about bullying
- DON'T BE A BYSTANDER!

Advice for parents/carers

If you discover or suspect that a child is being bullied, then you must act even if the child or source of information wants you to do nothing.

Parents/carers should:

- Listen to your child – be patient and sensitive
- Try to agree a way forward with your child
- Make a note of everything you have been told
- Contact the school at an early stage
- Be honest and stick to the facts

And should not:

- Interrogate or increase the stress on an already anxious child
- Make promises you cannot keep – e.g. confidentiality
- Communicate your anxiety to the child

- Allow a situation to drag on – it may cause serious damage
- Exaggerate or jump to conclusions

Staff should:

Bullying towards pupils

- Re-enforce the Anti- bullying policy where necessary.
- Show a team and whole school approach to targeting any forms of bullying within school.
- Follow the school behaviour policy and rewards and sanctions system.
- Follow the appropriate procedure for school sanctions and consequences regarding incidents of bullying between pupils.
- Feel comfortable enough to tell a colleague about inappropriate behaviour they have witnessed towards pupils.
- Be accepting of concerns raised by colleagues about their behaviour towards pupils and take appropriate action to ensure it does not happen again.
- Be aware that the school is bound to provide a safe and secure environment for pupils where they feel happy and motivated to learn.
- Record any incidents or concerns on Seemis as a Pastoral Note or as a Behaviour Referral

Bullying towards staff

Bullying towards members of staff by other colleagues is a serious matter. Staff are entitled to come to work in a safe environment and feel happy and motivated to work to the best of their ability. Where a staff member feels they are subject to bullying they should:

- Speak to the member of staff regarding their concerns in a polite and professional manner.
- If necessary speak to their line manager.
- At all times follow the school grievance procedure.

Staff should be aware of any consequences that may arise as a result of discussing grievance procedures with other parties.

Formal and Informal Social Education, Mentor Time

Every pupil, regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, sexuality, disability or Additional Support Needs within this inclusive school has an entitlement to fulfil his or her optimum potential. To achieve this we believe the social and cultural aspects of education to be an important focus for all our pupils. Social Education (both formal and informal) and Mentor Time play a major part in their ability to achieve and learn and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experience of adult life.

Formal Social Education takes place in class and in discussion groups.

Informal Social Education refers to quality time spent developing Citizenship in a practical way: by sharing breakfast and lunch times with staff and/or fellow pupils, showing responsibility, in school and/or in the community.

Mentor Time discussions and activities often reflect this belief.

Safeguarding

This organisation is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, pupils, parents/carers, visitors and volunteers to share this commitment. A safer setting starts with safe individuals.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

This policy takes into consideration the following Articles:

Article 14 – Children have the right to think and believe what they want, and to practise their religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights.

Article 19 - Governments should ensure that children are properly cared for, and protect them from violence, abuse and neglect by their parents, or anyone else who looks after them.

Article 28 – All children and young people have a right to primary education, which should be free. Discipline in schools should respect children’s human dignity Young people should be encouraged to reach the highest level of education they are capable of;

Article 29 – Education should develop each child’s personality to the full. It should encourage children to respect their parents, and their own and other cultures.

Article 30 - Children have a right to learn and use the language and customs of their families, whether these are shared by the majority of people in the country or not.

This policy is available in other formats upon request.