



Anti-bullying Policy (2024-25)

Introduction

Ponteland Community High School has a longstanding commitment to equality of opportunity in general and the safety and wellbeing of the students in particular. These commitments are confirmed in our Equalities Objectives and various school policies including those for Safeguarding & Child Protection and Behaviour.

We intend that this policy helps to inform all stakeholders about what bullying is, how to report and record incidents of bullying, how to respond to bullying, strategies for preventing bullying and how the school can continue to work with all stakeholders on the development of a culture and ethos of anti-bullying.

We believe that education has a major role to play in combating bullying thereby enabling all young people to achieve their potential. We also believe that education must teach young people of the need for tolerance and to respect and celebrate differences in our local, regional, national and global communities.

It is within this context that the school has produced this policy and guidelines. By acting on its contents the school will meet its requirements in relation to the Human Rights Act 1998.

Purpose

This policy and guidelines aims to ensure that:

- Young people are given the opportunity to fulfil their potential
- All our students have the opportunity to learn and feel comfortable contributing in the classroom environment
- All our students feel safe and secure around the school and when travelling to and from school, and are comfortable engaging in extracurricular activities
- The formal curriculum encourages students to accept and appreciate each other's differences and respect and honour those differences
- Bullying is dealt with in a constructive and consistent manner, one likely to ensure that such incidents occur less often in the future

Definitions

Low Level

1.Verbal

- 1.1.Name-calling/insults
- 1.2.Gossiping/stirring/jokes/mimicry
- 1.3.Threats
- 1.4.Nuisance calls
- 1.5.Any unwanted verbal contact

2.Physical

- 2.1.Pushing/shoving/prodding/tripping
- 2.2.Damage to personal property or belongings
- 2.3.Any other unwanted low level physical contact

3.Emotional

- 3.1.Hostile glances
- 3.2.Laughing
- 3.3.Whispering
- 3.4.Ignoring/excluding
- 3.5.Hiding personal property
- 3.6.Pressurising/manipulating others, e.g. to do their homework

4.Cyber/Written

- 4.1.Text messages, emails, online messages
- 4.2.Any other on-line messenger services
- 4.3.Posters
- 4.4.Graffiti
- 4.5.Letters, notes

We recognise that, for some students, what is defined as low level in the policy is a serious issue and that persistence of any low level bullying becomes a high level offence.

High Level

1.Physical

- 1.1.Serious physical assault
- 1.2.Sexual assault
- 1.3.Stealing/deprivation of property

2.Emotional

- 2.1.Persistent verbal, physical or written bullying
- 2.2.Homophobic or racist bullying
- 2.3.Sexist language or behaviours

3.Cyber Bullying

- 3.1.When a child or teenager is threatened, harassed or targeted by another child or teenager using the internet, interactive and digital technologies or mobile phones. We treat this as seriously as any other form of bullying and take as many precautions against it as possible, e.g. computer security measures. In such cases, we would usually involve the police.

There can be many reasons for bullying to occur, amongst which bullying related to protected characteristics such as a student's age, disability, race, religion/belief, sex, sexual orientation and gender reassignment. In addition it can relate to other personal aspects such as appearance, accent,

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hair colour and home circumstances.

We expect staff and students to remain vigilant in looking for and listening out for any behaviours that meet the definition of bullying as listed above. We advocate individuals pass this information on to a trusted adult in school so the matter can be investigated and addressed promptly.

It must be noted that the school treats the possible bullying of its staff equally seriously, be this bullying of staff by students, parents or other staff.

Procedures

Students

If you are bullied, or are involved in bullying talk to:

- Your parents or a family member
- A teacher or other trusted adult in school
- The school nurse – Debbie Foreman
- A friend who could pass the information on for you
- A help-line

Teachers

What to do if someone comes to you:

- Be sympathetic
- Listen and let the student talk
- Try to establish the facts – a statement might be appropriate
- Make a note of any possible witnesses
- Discuss with the student the best way forward (see appendix 1)
- Inform the Form Tutor, Pastoral Manager or Pastoral Leader; make it clear whether it is for information or action
- If necessary seek advice from your Pastoral Leader or a Senior Leader
- If the student is adamant, do not take further action, unless the incident would qualify as a Child Protection concern, in which case follow the procedures by informing the school's:
 - Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Mrs L. Robinson, Asst. Headteacher
 - Deputy DSL: Mr J Greenshields, Deputy Headteacher

What to do as a member of staff if you observe an incident that caused concern:

- If necessary, intervene if you feel it is appropriate and try to ascertain names and events
- Deal appropriately with the incident by ascertaining and collating the immediate information
- Report the incident to the student's Tutor, Pastoral Manager or Pastoral Leader

What to do if you suspect someone is being bullied:

- If appropriate observe
- Speak to the student concerned
- Speak with some of the student's close friends
- Ask the student's other teachers to be observant
- Report it to the student's Tutor, Pastoral Leader or Pastoral Manager

Sanctions

According to the severity of the bullying the Pastoral Leader or Pastoral Manager, Senior Leader or Headteacher will implement sanctions (see Behaviour Policy).

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Any sanctions imposed on students for bullying need to be communicated to the parents of the perpetrators. Information and updates also need to be communicated to the parents of the victim, the main concern being always the welfare, feelings and safety of the victim. If appropriate the support of the Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) may be used to support the school and help inform the victim and the perpetrator of the issues around bullying.

Strategies for the prevention of bullying

Curricular Provision

In order to discuss and encourage cooperative behaviour amongst students and to continue to improve the learning climate, anti-bullying is focused on through tutor periods, assemblies, lessons and dedicated RSHE sessions. The following areas of focus on anti-bullying are implemented and discussed:

- Raising awareness of the different types of bullying
- Exploring responses to different types of bullying situations
- Raising awareness of the different types of help that are available
- Approaching racism through, e.g. the experiences of black footballers
- Displays in tutor rooms
- Summary of anti-bullying policy in planners
- Learning to interpret body language and facial expressions
- Review of school's anti-bullying policy

Reactive and Proactive Approaches to Bullying

The reactive approaches to bullying are covered earlier in the policy under **Procedures**. The proactive measures taken by the school include the Curricular Provision (above) and the following:

1. Assemblies on bullying and its detrimental effects on individuals and families
2. Small 'workshops' with chosen cohorts of students who have been involved in, or are likely to be involved in bullying, following information from partner schools
3. Individual viewing of the DVD "Cyberbullying and You" to educate and dissuade certain students from bullying
4. Information to students in tutor time and assemblies about acceptable types of playground play, dissuasion of 'rough' ball games, murder ball etc... during break and lunch times
5. Promotion of acceptance of others throughout the school curriculum to embrace inclusivity of all students (vulnerable students e.g. EAL, SEN, LAC, ethnic minority students, students with disabilities and young carers)
6. Information and guidance from the Community Beat Manager about the effects of bullying for both the victim and the perpetrator.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Two to three weeks after a bullying incident has been dealt with the student who was bullied will be contacted by the Tutor, Pastoral Manager or Pastoral Leader to make sure that there have been no further problems. If the incident was serious enough to require parental involvement, or if the problem was reported by the parents they will also be contacted by the relevant staff. The Anti-bullying Policy will be reviewed annually by teachers and students and formally reviewed by AC members every three years.

Reviewed and Revised: Sept 24
Reviser: Mr W Close-Ash
Next Review: June 2025

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