

# **Poltair School**

## **Anti-Bullying Policy 2017**



**Policy written:** January 2017  
**Adopted:** February 2017  
**To be reviewed:** February 2018

**Policies that will need to be considered in partnership with this Anti-Bullying Policy:**

- **Safeguarding and Child protection Policy 2017**
- **Extremism and Radicalisation Policy 2017**
- **Staff Code of Conduct 2016**
- **Behaviour for Learning Policy 2016**
- **Cyber Bullying Policy 2017 (Proposed)**

**At Poltair School, pupils define bullying as:**

**“A deliberate action by an individual, or a group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally. This can take place in person or through the use of digital communication.” (Cyberbullying)**

*[Reviewed December 2016 by a student focus group]*

**Poltair School believes that its policy against bullying must be seen as an integral part of its whole School aims which are:**

- to provide a broad and balanced curricular experience leading to both academic achievement and an effective preparation for the skills and flexibility demanded by life after secondary school
- to educate all our students to their potential in a caring, constructive atmosphere in which there is mutual respect and positive student/teacher relationships
- to develop partnerships which encourage wide support, with help from and for students, staff, governors, parents and the wider community.

Our approach to bullying is a 'whole school' approach. We do expect everyone to act with courtesy and consideration to others at all times and to always try to understand the other person's point of view. Neither staff nor students will condone or ignore bullying of any nature and anti-social behaviour will not be tolerated. It is important to distinguish between bullying behaviour and an outright condemnation of the whole person. Bullying behaviour, over a period of time, is often an expression of inward distress, the passing on of negative behaviour, confusion about one's own worth or an extreme need to bolster self-esteem.

All members of the School will be encouraged not to accept bullying of any form and if they ever experience, see or suspect bullying is taking place to **ALWAYS** speak up and **TELL** someone. **ALL OF US WILL LISTEN** and **ALL OF US WILL ACT** by involving staff and/or student ambassadors.

#### **Our School will:**

- support staff to identify and respond to bullying
- make students aware that we listen and all bullying issues will be dealt with sensitively and effectively
- continue to work towards creating an anti-bullying culture
- ensure that parents/carers expressing concerns about bullying have them taken seriously
- learn from effective anti-bullying work elsewhere
- discuss, monitor and review incident of bullying

Poltair School recognises that in any large group of people there will always be some bullying and however undesirable, it needs to be recognised as a reality. Our policy of preventative intervention is intended to create a safer climate where we can maintain our friendly, caring, yet hard-working atmosphere and where all students can feel confident that, as an individual, they are important.

It has been agreed that in order to ensure that the school has a reasonable duty over bullying incidents, it needs to be defined what we will and will not deal with. As a school we will act upon any incidents that have a direct impact upon the safety and orderly running of the school. This will broadly be between the hours of 8:35 and 3pm, but will also include the journey to and from school or an instance where a pupil is wearing the school uniform. Even on these occasions, the school might deem the behaviour serious enough to escalate to the authorities straight away. We will always look to support and educate students where we can.

#### **OUR POLICY RECOGNISES THAT BULLYING CAN BE:**

- physical
- verbal
- mental
- 'cyber-bullying' (text, e-mail and internet) –See separate Cyberbullying Policy 2017 (proposed)
- racist, homophobic, sexist
- directed to vulnerable groups (children in care, young carers etc)
- or any combination of these areas

#### **OUR POLICY IS POSITIVE RATHER THAN PUNITIVE AND OUR AIMS ARE TO:**

- prevent bullying
- deal promptly with any incident of bullying if, and when, it occurs
- to promote self-esteem among all students, including the bullied and those who suffer from the need to bully
- encourage students to speak out and **TELL** if bullying is taking place
- encourage all students to help and protect others within the college

#### **OUR POLICY IS BASED ON TRUST BETWEEN STUDENTS & STAFF AND WILL:**

- raise awareness throughout the curriculum
- give students opportunities to talk about bullying in general (through our tutor programme/Morals and Ethics and other subject lessons/ assembly times)
- ensure that key areas of the School grounds, buildings and School transport are monitored by the students themselves as well as by adults.

#### **OUR POLICY WILL REQUIRE A CONSISTENCY OF APPROACH WHICH MEANS THAT:**

- all incidents will be initially investigated by Subject/Form Tutors or Year Teams who will take any necessary action including contacting parents and monitor the success of such action
- any subsequent or particularly violent incidents will be reported to Head of Year and/or Senior Leaders of the school, as appropriate.
- there may be a referral to a student counsellor and this referral may then result in the establishment of a mentor in the form of a student 'Anti-Bullying Ambassador'
- there may be a referral to outside agencies for support (e.g. counselling/youth worker or other)

#### **OUR POLICY WILL BE MADE CLEAR TO THE FOLLOWING GROUPS:**

- **staff** - teaching/non-teaching
- **students**
- **parents / Carers**
- **governors**
- Others connected with our school, e.g. School Transport drivers, neighbours etc.

Our policy will be continually monitored by the whole school community and will be reviewed and updated. It should be read in conjunction with 'Possible Signs of Bullying' and 'Action Guidance Notes' which follow.

#### **POSSIBLE SIGNS OF BULLYING**

##### **OBSERVATION:**

Parents and Teachers are in ideal positions to be able to observe changes in a student's behaviour, which may indicate that they are being subjected to bullying, **so look out for:**

- Items of clothing, property, Schoolwork, etc. that are damaged or lost more often than you would consider to be normal
- Frequent injuries to the child (bruises, cuts, etc.)
- Withdrawal, which may lead to low participation in School and other activities, isolation or self-harm
- Those who spend a lot of time in their bedroom, possibly crying; who find it difficult to sleep, wet the bed or have nightmares. Teachers within School may be aware that the student always appears tired
- Educational attainment being slowly or suddenly reduced
- A reluctance to go to school. Parents may not even be aware of this as the student could be playing truant. It may only be noticed by the School through absenteeism showing up on the School attendance or lesson register. School staff should be alert to those students who register at the start of a session but then fail to attend the actual lessons later
- Poor self-esteem, which inhibits students from forming positive relationships, leads to feelings of worthlessness and betrayal, and causes some to lower their expectations and standards of work

- Anxiety and depression, which can lead to intermittent and long-term absence from school, physical illness or psychosomatic complaints
- Request to be accompanied going to and from school, or to go by a different route. If this is longer than the previous one, it could well indicate that bullying has been occurring along the previous route.
- The child comes home hungry. This could be due to a Bully demanding their 'dinner' money. School staff may notice a student who always stayed for lunch no longer does so
- Money in the house or school going missing
- Depression in the student. Reluctance to eat or play normally. Student appears generally unhappy, miserable, moody and/or irritable
- The student who suddenly starts self-harming
- The student who threatens or attempts to commit suicide

Taken individually, or even collectively, the above may not be due to bullying, but a combination of even some of these signs could be a good reason to suspect it. If a student is showing signs of, or is experiencing ANY of the above, it can be an indication that all is not well, the student is not happy and therefore, whatever the cause, it should be investigated.

## **POLTAIR SCHOOL'S ANTI-BULLYING SUPPORT**

### **Anti-Bullying Ambassadors**

Poltair School believes in student leadership through all year groups, evidenced by the Leadership Pathways. As part of this initiative, a body of students will be given the responsibility to become 'Anti-Bullying Ambassadors'.

The role of an ambassador will include:

- Promotion of Anti-Bullying messages
- Regular meetings to discuss current issues, explore support and provide updated advice to students and parents. This can be through Spotlight, The Anti-Bullying Online Hub, Text or email communication, Letters or through social media.
- Working across year groups, 4 ambassadors in each year group, 2 boys and 2 girls.
- Badges will help to identify.
- An ambassador base will be allocated to ensure there is a place that students can go to report bullying.
- A selection of ambassadors will be available during published break & lunch times.
- Ambassadors will receive training to help give valuable advice and guidance.
- Ambassadors will be the eyes and the ears around the school

Ambassadors will not:

- Try to resolve issues themselves
- Become involved in conflicts
- Communicate with any parents about issues in school (staff will do this through official means)

### **Anti-Bullying Online Hub**

The school website has a specific page dedicated to giving information, advice and guidance about bullying. It will also have a link to be able to report bullying to a relevant member of staff.

There will be useful links to services that can help and a range of useful mobile device applications (APP's) that can help students and parents keep themselves safe.

## Parent feedback groups

Parents will be asked to come in as part of regular feedback sessions regarding bullying and the way this is dealt with. By working together, school and homes can ensure that bullying is not tolerated.

## Pupil questionnaires and Leaver questionnaires

Students and school leavers will be asked to give their views on a regular basis in order to gather feedback about student experiences and perceptions of bullying and the systems in place to deal with this.

## Tracking and Intervention

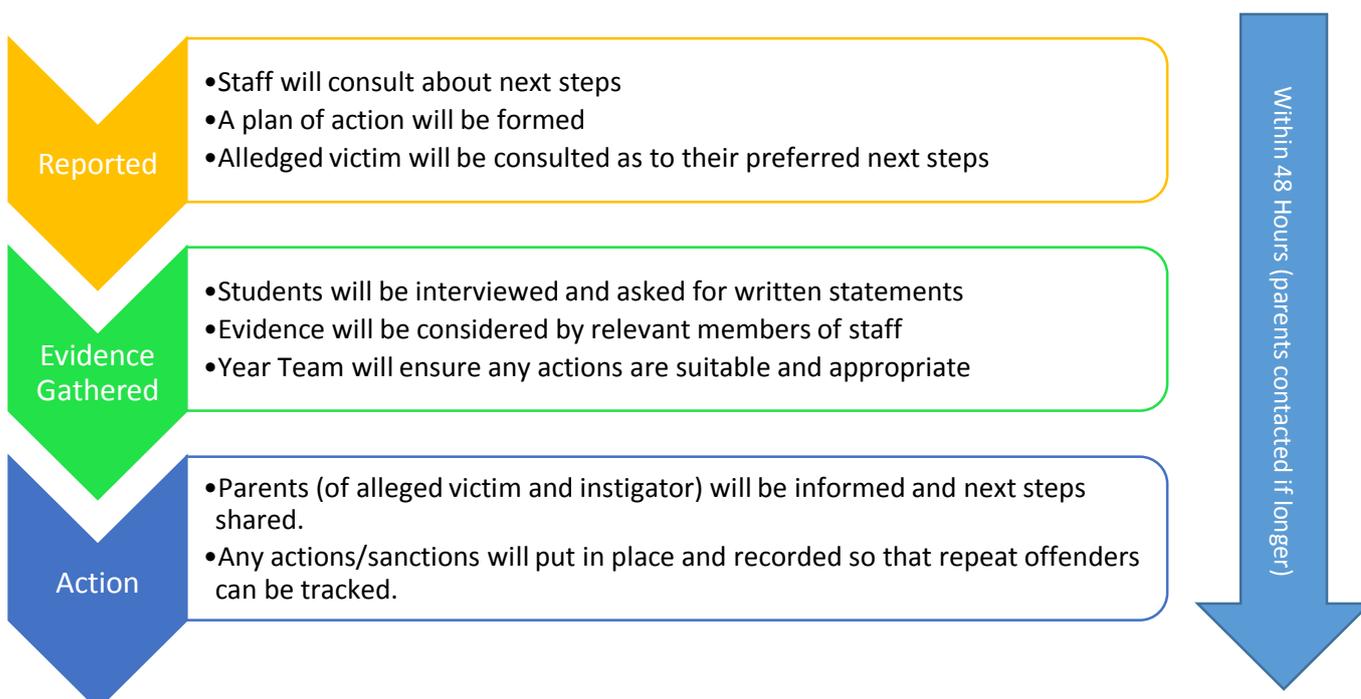
Poltair School will log ALL bullying incidents and the details relating to this. Regular fortnightly reports will be analysed by Year Team Leaders in order to intervene where patterns emerge, with individuals, groups or indeed where a certain type of bullying needs intervention through our tutor programme, assemblies or other curriculum provision.

## REPORTING BULLYING

**If you suspect your child is being bullied please use the following methods:**

- Inform your child's form tutor through a telephone call or an email
- Use the 'Online Bullying Reporting Form', found on our website Anti-Bullying Hub [www.poltairschool.co.uk](http://www.poltairschool.co.uk)
- Contact a Year Team Leader for your child:
  - Year 7- [ladams@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk](mailto:ladams@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk)
  - Year 8- [cprice@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk](mailto:cprice@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk)
  - Year 9- [cprice@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk](mailto:cprice@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk)
  - Year 10- [gowens@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk](mailto:gowens@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk)
  - Year 11- [cfoster@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk](mailto:cfoster@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk)
- Talk to your child and ask them to report to their tutor who will, in turn, liaise with the Year Team to help resolve the issue.
- Encourage your child to report to a relevant member of staff (preferably during a break or lunch time)

## WHAT WILL HAPPEN WHEN BULLYING IS REPORTED?



## POSSIBLE OUTCOMES:

- **Mediation:** This is encouraged by the anti-bullying alliance as a very effective way to deal with bullying issues. A member of staff will arrange a supervised meeting between the alleged victim and the alleged instigator, this will be led by the member of staff and any conflicts discussed.
- **Meeting:** A meeting could be arranged to discuss the bullying with parents of alleged bully. Actions can be varied.
- **Behaviour contract:** A contract could be signed by all parties which ensures expectations are clear.
- **Removal of privileges:** The student can have privileges removed. For example: The restriction of their free times (Break and Lunch time)
- **Sanctions/Actions:** An appropriate sanction issued in relation to our 'Behaviour for Learning' policy. This will be decided by the school based on the evidence provided.
- **Referrals to external agencies:** We might feel the need to engage external agencies for support in adjusting the behaviours. For example: a youth worker or family support worker. When bullying relates to matters which cause concerns about extremism, the school might refer the matter to the Multi Agency Referral Unit, The Prevent Team or the Police.
- **Exclusions:** Repeated instances of bullying will result in Fixed Term Exclusions from school. These are very serious sanctions which will remain on the student's permanent record.
- **Governor Behaviour Panel:** The student and parents will be invited to a meeting with the Headteacher and a panel of governors. This will be to avoid further exclusions and ensure the bullying stops before any further serious harm is done.
- **Managed Move:** If issues persist, the school would look to try and secure a transfer to another school for a 'fresh start'. This would be at the discretion of the Headteacher only.
- **Permanent Exclusion:** If the matter is of a very serious nature or persistent, the student will be at risk of permanent exclusion.

*These are here as a general guide, there are often other methods which need to be employed on a case-by-case basis. All instances of bullying differ and a flexible approach is needed to ensure we get the best possible outcome. All actions will be discussed with the parents of the victim and the bully.*

## SUPPORT AGENCIES:

**We recommend the following services for parents and children to access support with bullying issues.**

**Anti-bullying Alliance** - the alliance brings together over 60 organisations into one network with the aim of reducing bullying. Their website has a parent section with links to recommended organisations who can help with bullying issues  
**[www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)**

**Kidscape**  
**[www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)**  
02077303300

**Childline** – advice and stories from children who have survived bullying  
08000 1111

**Bullying on line**  
**[www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)**

**Parentline Plus** – advice and links for parents **[www.parentlineplus.org.uk](http://www.parentlineplus.org.uk)**  
08088002222

**Stonewall** - the gay equality organisation founded in 1989. Founding members include Sir Ian McKellen.  
**[www.stonewall.org.uk](http://www.stonewall.org.uk)**

**Cyberbullying.org** - one of the first websites set up in this area, for young people, providing advice around preventing and taking action against cyberbullying. A Canadian based site [www.cyberbullying.org](http://www.cyberbullying.org)

**Chatdanger** - a website that informs about the potential dangers online (including bullying), and advice on how to stay safe while chatting [www.chatdanger.com](http://www.chatdanger.com)

**Think U Know** - the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP), has produced a set of resources around internet safety for secondary Colleges [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

**Know IT All for Parents** – a range of resources for primary and secondary Colleges by Childnet International. Has a sample family agreement [www.childnet-int.org/kia/](http://www.childnet-int.org/kia/)