PORTER CROFT
Church of England Primary Academy

Anti-bullying policy
Nominated Member of Leadership Staff Responsible for the policy: **Cath Thomas Headteacher**
Designated Safeguarding Leads: **Cath Thomas Headteacher** **Ellie Long Learning Mentor**
Named Governor with lead responsibility: **Claire Dawson**
Date written: **January 2018 reviewed 2024** **Date agreed and ratified by Governing Body :** **February 2018** **Date of next review:** **January 2025**
This policy will be reviewed <u>at least</u> annually, **and following any concerns and / or** **updates to National and Local guidance or procedures**

Anti-Bullying Policy

Guidance used for this policy
- **DfE guidance 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying ' - July 2017**
- **DfE statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' - 2023**
- **Church of England 'Valuing All God's Children' - Autumn 2017**
- **DfE Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff - November 2017**
- **Behaviour policy 2023 Porter Croft Primary**
- **PSHE curriculum Porter Croft Primary**
- **Project Evolve curriculum 2023**
- **Relationship policy 2023**
- **Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges 2021**
- **www.Gov.uk - January 2018**
- **www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk - January 2024**

School vision statement
To be a truly inclusive Academy community where the needs of all learners are met within a stimulating and challenging learning environment which is underpinned by Christian values.

Church of England vision statement
Church of England schools have at their heart a belief that all children are loved by God, are individually unique and that the school has a mission to help each child fulfil their potential in all aspects of their personhood: physically, academically, socially, morally and spiritually. Our aim is that all may flourish and have an abundant life. Schools have a duty to try to remove any factor that might represent a hindrance to a child's fulfilment. We want all pupils to willingly engage in a safe and welcoming environment.

Valuing All God's Children Autumn 2017

Definition
This definition of what bullying is has been provided by the Anti-Bullying Alliance:

'Bullying is the <u>repetitive, intentional hurting</u> of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an <u>imbalance of power.</u> Bullying can be physical, verbal, or psychological. It can happen face to face or online.'

- We recognise that bullying can take many forms and can affect any child. It is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups (for example on grounds of race & ethnicity, religion & belief, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, special educational needs, or disabilities, or

because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities). Bullying can be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

- However, we also recognise that incidents may occur between pupils, which may not be deemed as 'bullying' but still require support or intervention from trusted adults. These incidents may be referred to as 'relational conflicts' or falling out. Relational conflict differs to bullying in the fact that it is usually between individuals or groups who are relatively similar in power and status (a power balance), and the behaviours or incidents occur occasionally (not repetitive) or occur by accident (not intentional). Usually, following a relational conflict incident, pupils show remorse and there is a general willingness to make things right or to resolve the conflict.

- Not all relational conflict or falling out leads to bullying, but our school is aware occasionally some can, and we are mindful that unresolved bad feelings or relationship problems left unaddressed can be the start of a pattern of behaviour in which the intention becomes to cause harm or distress.

- Although bullying and relational conflicts can take place between individuals, we recognise that it often takes place in front of others (either physically or virtually), pupils who witness these incidents/behaviours are often referred to as 'bystanders'.

- Regardless of whether an incident or situation is deemed as 'relational conflict' or 'bullying', our school will address the situation and support the pupils to resolve any negative feelings. Our school will monitor children following a relational conflict to ensure that the situation has been resolved and does not escalate to bullying. Our school will challenge, address, and monitor any incidents of bullying, to ensure that it does not continue and that all pupils feel supported (this will include the target, the alleged perpetrator, any bystanders, and the wider school community).

Bullying behaviour

At Porter Croft Primary we consider the context within which incidents and/or behaviours of concern occur. We will consider the motivations behind the behaviours and will take into account the age and stage of development of the pupils involved. Our focus will always be the safety and welfare of all children involved.

Bullying behaviour may include, but is not limited to:

- Physical – pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching etc.
- Verbal – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, belittling
- Emotional – isolating others, tormenting, hiding books/belongings, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation, and coercion
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, exposure to inappropriate films etc.
- Online / Cyber – posting on social media, sharing photos, sending nasty text messages, social exclusion etc.

- Indirect – can include the exploitation of individuals such as 'false friendships', criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation, and radicalisation
- Prejudice-related – derogatory and discriminatory language and behaviour including that which is racist, sexist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disablist in nature. This language and behaviour may be directed towards people because of their sex, religion or beliefs, race/ethnicity/nationality; because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or trans, or are perceived to be, or have a parent/carer, sibling, or friend who is, because they have a learning or physical disability. Such language and behaviour are generally used to refer to something or someone as inferior.

There is no hierarchy of bullying, all forms of bullying are taken equally seriously and will be dealt with appropriately.

Our school understands that banter is an increasingly relevant part of discussions relating to bullying; however, it is important to acknowledge that banter is not inherently bullying, and it can be an important part of social bonding and friendships. At the same time, we know that some bullying in society is passed off as 'just banter', and we know that banter can quickly escalate to inappropriate or harmful exchanges and bullying.

Our school defines 'prosocial banter' as 'playful, typically funny, teasing between friends'. Prosocial banter can occur both online and offline and includes a range of behaviours that may be verbal, physical, or information/message sharing (online). Banter can include some of bullying behaviours set out in this policy document, so it is important to distinguish between shared positive social bonding and inappropriate banter and bullying. School staff will distinguish between banter and bullying by taking careful consideration of the *intention, content and topic* of reported incidents.

Where does bullying take place?
We understand that bullying is not confined to the school premises. Bullying can take place outside of school, on the journey to and from school and in the local community. Bullying may also take place online (this is sometimes referred to as cyberbullying).

We will offer support and guidance to pupils, parents/carers and families who have experienced any type of bullying whether this has taken place inside school, outside of school or online. We are committed to working with outside agencies where appropriate to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying.

Reporting bullying
We want pupils, parents/carers, staff, and visitors to confidently report bullying and know that their concerns will be taken seriously. We remain committed to supporting and safeguarding all children involved including the target, the alleged perpetrator, any bystanders/witnesses to the bullying behaviour and the wider school community.

Pupils, including bystanders/witnesses
We ask that all pupils report concerns of bullying or bullying behaviour to a member of school staff – this can be any member of teaching or non-teaching staff, including a class teacher, a TA, the Head

teacher, a lunchtime supervisor, or a member of the office team. We talk about trusted adults regularly in class and in assemblies to remind our pupils of who they can report concerns to.

The member of staff will listen to the pupil and make an initial note of their concerns, they will then discuss next steps with them and reassure them that they will be supported. The member of staff will make a formal record of the bullying report on the school's recording system CPOMs and other relevant members of staff will be alerted. The member of staff will directly alert the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead if the report is deemed urgent or if a pupil is considered at risk.

We understand that some pupils may find it difficult to tell a member of staff about their concerns verbally, we therefore have additional reporting mechanisms in place. Our school has a worry box in each classroom where the pupil can put their name/a brief note about their concerns/draw a picture of their concern – these worry boxes are introduced to the pupils at the start of the year and pupils are reminded of them regularly. We also ask pupils to fill in a 'I wish my teacher knew' form at the start of every half term and we audit pupils views three times a year.

Even if the behaviour/incident which has been reported is deemed 'not bullying' and is thought to be 'relational conflict', school staff will still support the pupils involved and help them to resolve any concerns using restorative practice.

Parents/carers
We understand that it can be very difficult for a parent/carer to be concerned or hear that their child has been the target of bullying, has experienced bullying behaviour or is an alleged perpetrator of bullying.
We ask that if parents/carers have concerns about their child experiencing or perpetrating bullying, that they contact a member of school staff. Initially we ask parents/carers to contact their child's class teacher (in person/via telephone call/via email/via learning platform) to explain their concerns. The class teacher will take an initial note of the concerns but may ask to schedule a meeting to allow for more time to discuss the concerns in detail. Following the report and/or the meeting, the teacher will make a formal record of the bullying report on the school's recording system CPOMs and other relevant members of staff will be alerted. The member of staff will directly alert the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead if the report is deemed urgent or if a pupil is considered at risk.

We ask that parents/carers come directly to the school with their concerns rather than discussing them with other members of the school community in person or online.
Our school remains committed to supporting pupils and their families in all instances of bullying and relational conflict and will respond to reports promptly. Even if the behaviour/incident which has been reported is deemed 'not bullying' and is thought to be 'relational conflict', school staff will still support the pupils involved and help them to resolve any concerns.
We will endeavour to ensure that all parties are kept informed of progress and any developments, but we will also need to show due regard to GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations). This may mean, at times, that we are not able to provide or share information or updates.

School staff
Our staff work closely with our pupils and therefore may notice a change in a pupil's behaviour or attitude that might indicate that something is wrong before receiving a report from a pupil or a

member of the school community. If staff have any concerns about a pupil's welfare or are concerned that a pupil is displaying behaviours that may show they are the target of bullying or perhaps perpetrating bullying, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told.

We ask that staff report their concerns to a Designated Safeguarding Lead. The member of staff receiving the report will take an initial note of the concerns and will then make a formal record of the bullying report on the school's recording system CPOMs and other relevant staff members will be alerted. The member of staff must directly alert the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead if the report is deemed urgent or if a pupil is considered at risk.

Visitors

We ensure that all visitors to our school are aware of our Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures and which staff member they should report any concerns to (the member of staff may differ depending on the purpose of the visit e.g., supply teacher, governor, external agency etc.).

We ask that if a visitor to our school has any concerns about bullying behaviour that they have witnessed, or been told about, that they report their concerns at the earliest opportunity in person to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead. We ask that visitors report their concerns in person by the end of the school day. For example, it would not be appropriate to wait until the following day or leave a written note with concerns. The member of staff receiving the report will take an initial note of the concerns and will then make a formal record of the bullying report on the school's recording system CPOMs and other relevant staff members will be alerted. The member of staff will directly alert the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead if the report is deemed urgent or if a pupil is considered at risk.

Responding to bullying

We keep records of all reports of bullying on our CPOMs system. These records are analysed every term by the SLT and this information is shared with governors during the Safeguarding and Premises, Mental Health committee meetings. Information is also shared with staff when required.

Our staff use a contextual approach to safeguarding and each incident will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

- Talk to all pupils involved in the reported incident – this may include the target, the alleged perpetrator, and any bystanders/witnesses, using the restorative practise guidance
- Talk to the parents (of the target and/or the alleged perpetrator)
- Implement appropriate sanctions in accordance with our school's behaviour policy. These sanctions will be graded according to the seriousness of the incident, but will send out a message that bullying is unacceptable
- Discuss the report/incident/case with other agencies and organisations when appropriate and make referrals to those organisations when appropriate
- Liaise with the wider community if the bullying is taking place off the school premises (e.g., the Police, District Council etc.)
- Keep in touch with the person who reported the incident/behaviour to inform them that action has been taken – this may include a pupil, a parent/carer/guardian, a member of staff or visitor, or another member of the school community. We will endeavour to ensure that all parties are kept informed of progress and any developments, but we will also need to show

due regard to GDPR. This may mean, at times, that we are not able to provide or share information or updates.

- Implement a range of follow-up support/interventions appropriate to the situation (this may include informal or formal restorative work with the target and alleged perpetrator, solution-focused meetings, individual or group work with the target, individual or group work with the alleged perpetrator, individual or group work with any witnesses/bystanders, group work with the wider-school community etc.)
- Monitor the effectiveness of actions taken and reassess/take more actions if appropriate
- Liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead if there are safeguarding issues or concerns

If a parent/carer is not satisfied with our school's actions, we ask that they follow our school's complaint policy and procedures. This is available online from our school website and on request from the school office.

Strategies for preventing bullying

We are committed to the safety and welfare of our pupils, and therefore we have developed the following strategies to promote friendly and positive behaviours and discourage bullying behaviours. Throughout the academic year, the effectiveness of these strategies is reviewed, and the variety of strategies may be expanded to address specific concerns or meet the needs of all members of our community.

The strategies we use include, but are not limited to:

- **Active school council**
- **Healthy Minds Champions - playground buddies**
- **Six steps to well-being strategy**
- **Taking part in Anti-Bullying week annually (November)**
- **Taking part in Safer Internet Day annually (February)**
- **Robust PSHE curriculum for all year groups**
- **Online safey curriculum – Project Evolve**
- **Themed days to promote equality and tackle prejudice – Good to Be Me Day and Passport to Porter Croft**
- **Opportunities for pupils to share their voice and opinions – through surveys etc.**
- **Inclusive displays throughout the school with a diverse range of work, photographs etc.**
- **Inclusive toys and books throughout the school raising awareness of and celebrating differences**
- **Positive Play / ELSA support / Lego therapy / counselling for identified students**
- **Specific initiatives for identified individuals or groups**
- **Parent information board and area on the school website**
- **Parent events**
- **Regular staff training and development for all staff (including lunchtime supervisors and staff who support our before and after-school clubs)**
- **All staff model expected behaviour**

- **Restorative practice**

Pastoral care
The Learning Mentor is able to offer 1:1 and small group support to children experiencing bullying and also to those involved in bullying. Support provided follows the principles of Restorative Practice, as outlined within this policy.

Restorative Practice
Whole school CPD Summer 2017. This strategy has been implemented in school since September 2017.
The Restorative Justice Council said:

A report published by the Department for Education gave whole-school restorative approaches the highest rating of effectiveness at preventing bullying, with a survey of schools showing 97% rated restorative approaches as effective.

An independent evaluation of restorative justice in Bristol schools found that restorative justice improved school attendance and reduced exclusion rates.

The following information has been written by the ABA's restorative practice partner, Restorative Thinking Limited - a social enterprise providing innovative restorative justice/practice prevention and intervention programmes, training, consultation, wrap-around support and evaluation with Primary and Secondary Schools, Children's Centres, Youth Justice Services and Criminal Justice Services (Prisons, Probation Services) and Police and Crime Commissioners.

Restorative practice and ways of thinking are now developing and growing in many primary and secondary schools. Experience and evidence at local and national levels has shown that restorative processes have a positive impact in changing school cultures, especially with regard to attendance and behaviour, when embedded in a wider restorative milieu, and within clear school improvement strategies.

Equally, school improvement strategies are enhanced by the use of restorative processes, not least through the fundamental drive of restorative work to build relationships and community amongst the adults and not just the pupils. Restorative processes also make challenge and support explicit in everything that happens in a school. This explicit challenge and support drives and underpins real change in a school. This consistency is something that is often absent from schools that are struggling to meet expected outcome targets around behaviour, achievement and attendance.

A school making a conscious decision to become restorative also opens a door to a new mindset and culture shift. It focuses on positive relationships and collaborative teaching and learning, with

classrooms developing as communities. It means that teachers and pupils commit to looking at positive alternatives to reactive punitive behaviour solutions (e.g. exclusions), because they are confident that the matter is being dealt with in a clear and explicit way, understood and endorsed by all.

Restorative practice is a proactive way of working WITH people, not doing things TO them, not doing things FOR them and NOT being neglectful and doing nothing at all (Wachtel and McCold, 2001, p.117). They seek to increase the opportunities for dialogue at every level.

Questions to ask;
- **What happened?**
- **How did it make you feel?**
- **Who was affected? and how?**
- **What can you do to make things right?**

Trauma Informed School

We are committed to ensuring that our school develops and implements a Trauma and Mental Health Informed Approach to education to ensure that all of our pupils develop and sustain positive mental health and resilience to engage fully in life and learning in school and out in the wider community. It is our aim to create an environment of safety and comfort that has strong, positive and supportive relationships at its heart.

Our priority is to ensure psychological and environmental safety first, as this is the foundation that everything else depends on. Through a trauma informed approach, our focus is not only on the physical environment but the relational environment. It requires emotionally available adults (EEAs) who can provide essential calming and containing of our pupils, their parents/carers, other agencies and each other when they are overwhelmed by an event, a situation or their feelings.

It is essential that our response to distress and challenging behaviour is supportive and focusses on how best to support the person to relate to the world and each other in a healthier and more productive way, rather than employing punitive sanctions that are detrimental to the child's future development and learning of self. To best support our pupils, we need to acknowledge that behaviour is a form of communication and is, as a result, of an unmet need, adverse childhood experience (ACEs) or their neurocognitive or neurochemical profile.