



Portadown College

Anti-bullying Policy 2010

ANTI – BULLYING POLICY

Rationale

Portadown College is completely opposed to bullying. It is entirely contrary to the values and principles we work and live by. All members of the College community have a right to work in a secure and caring environment. They also have a responsibility to contribute, in whatever way they can, to the protection and maintenance of such an environment.

Mission statement

Our aim is to promote a positive, caring atmosphere in which individual self-discipline can develop and to create a community with shared values and a sense of collective responsibility. This in turn arises from positive interpersonal relations between all members of the College community.

Objectives

- Students have a right to be taught in an environment that is free from intimidation and fear.
- The needs of the victim are paramount.
- The needs of the perpetrator will also be considered and addressed.
- Portadown College will not tolerate bullying behaviour.
- Bullied students will be listened to.
- Reported incidents will be taken seriously and thoroughly investigated.

Definition

Bullying is a repeated act of aggression, causing embarrassment, pain or discomfort to someone. It can take a number of forms: physical, verbal, making gestures, extortion and exclusion. It is an abuse of power. It can be planned and organized, or it may be unintentional. It may be perpetrated by individuals or by groups of students.

However, bullying is often the wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone else. It can take several forms –

- Physical violence such as hitting, pushing or spitting at another pupil.
- Interfering with another student's property, by stealing, hiding or damaging it.
- Belittling another student's abilities and achievements.
- Threats, which may include demanding money or possessions.
- Psychological/verbal – name-calling, sarcasm, teasing, writing hurtful notes, sending hurtful text messages, emails, use of web-sites etc.
- Emotional – excluding someone, racial taunting, threatening or rude gestures.
- Cyberspace.

PARTICIPATION & CONSULTATION PROCESS

- Raising awareness at parents evenings
- Surveys and questionnaires distributed to students, parents and whole school staff.
- Monitoring, evaluation and review of this policy will be carried out on an ongoing basis.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL STAKEHOLDERS

Our staff will:

- Foster in our students self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others.
- Demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our students.

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

Students are encouraged to speak to a member of staff if they are being bullied. Year 11 students familiarize themselves with the Code of Conduct in their PD induction and this policy is discussed.

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH INCIDENTS OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

We recognise the fact that bullying exists in all schools but that even if it is only present to a small extent, the suffering created may be out of all proportion to the number of students affected. Consequently we regard bullying as a totally unacceptable part of College life and aim to promote an environment where it will not occur. The College's Code of Conduct and behaviour policy are based on ideas of consideration for others and the belief that every member of the College community is equally valued and has an important role. If this is followed, condemnation of bullying is both implicit and explicit.

If bullying occurs – Students must be willing to:

- Say they are being bullied – tell a teacher or any other member of the College staff.
- Ignore the bully if possible and do not reveal that they are upset, as this will encourage more bullying.
- Stay with friends in a “safe” environment.

Students encountering a bullying case or incident should:

- Not join in.
- Not watch as this will only encourage the bully.
- Tell an adult – reporting bullying is not “tale-telling”.
- Make the bully aware that his/her actions are not acceptable.

Parents can help to combat bullying by:

- Taking an active interest in their child's College and social life.
- Encouraging the child to talk about his/her feelings.
- Informing the College when bullying is suspected and keeping a written record if it persists.
- Advising their child to report the bullying to a member of the College staff.
- Praising their child, making it clear that there is nothing wrong with him/her which justifies bullying.
- Encouraging the child to develop a sense of humour and a way of “throwing back” any taunts.
- Discouraging the child from hitting back.

- Notifying the police where bullying occurs outside College.
- Contacting, if sufficiently confident, the parents of the bullying child.
- Allowing time for the situation to change.

Incidents of bullying which are brought to the attention of the staff will, in the first instance, be reported to the Pastoral Year Head and will be carefully and thoroughly investigated.

- Steps will be taken to support and respond to the needs of both bullied and bullying students.
- Records will be kept of incidents and passed to the Vice Principal in charge of Behaviour Management for filing.
- Action taken may include:
 - Contacting parents/guardians of all pupils concerned in the bullying incident.
 - Feedback to those concerned when the incident has been thoroughly investigated.
 - Sanctions in line with those outlined in the College code of conduct may be applied.

TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

All teaching staff will be made aware of policy document and kept up to date through INSET.

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years. Monitoring will be conducted by SMT and PYHs on an ongoing basis.

