ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Preamble to the Policy:

The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 requires maintained schools to have an Anti Bullying Policy. To comply with the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 The Human Rights Act 1998 and The Special Education Needs and Disability Act 2001.

It is a basic entitlement of all children taught at Porthcawl Comprehensive School that they receive an education free from humiliation, oppression and abuse in its various forms. It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher and Staff to ensure that the experience of education takes place in an atmosphere that is both caring and protective. Parents are entitled to feel confident that when they send their children to school that they will be safe and protected *in loco parentis.*

All staff, governors, pupils and parents should be aware of the negative effects that bullying can have on individuals and the school in general, and should work towards ensuring that pupils can work in an environment without fear. It is believed that bullying is a totally unacceptable form of behaviour. No member of the school community should be subjected to bullying or harassment by any other member of that community. The "Anti Bullying Charter" is included in the pupils' homework diaries and when appropriate bullying issues discussed in school council. Issues of bullying are included in areas of the PSE curriculum so that concerns can be openly shared and addressed. Pupils have been involved in the viewpoint online bullying questionnaire.

Policy:

The School will create:

- an environment in which children feel safe and are able to express themselves without fear or intimidation
- a co-operative ethos in which the school, the children and the parents work together to prevent bullying
- a curriculum through which children can be helped to gain personal qualities and self esteem needed to minimise the risk of bullying
- an atmosphere where bullying will be reported
- processes whereby children at risk can be identified and their needs responded to promptly and efficiently
- procedures to deal with incidents of bullying fairly and firmly

Aims:

- to demonstrate that the school takes bullying seriously and will not be tolerated

- to take measures to prevent all forms of bullying in the school and during extra curricular activities
- to foster an ethos of self and mutual respect throughout the school
- to support everyone in their actions to identify and protect those who might be bullies
- to demonstrate to all that the safety and happiness of pupils is enhanced by dealing positively with bullying
- to respond firmly to victims of bullying and to take immediate action
- to promote an environment where it is acceptable to tell someone about bullying
- to give help, guidance and support to the victim
- to encourage the bully to understand and overcome the causes of his/her behaviour
- to follow up regularly to check that bullying has not resumed
- to promote positive attitudes in pupils (including assertiveness training)
- to integrate the issues of bullying into areas of the PSE curriculum so that concerns can be openly shared and addressed.

Process:

Definition of Bullying: *"a wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten somebody either physically, verbally and mentally."*
This aggressive or insulting behaviour may be committed by an individual or a group, often repeated over a period of time that intentionally hurts or harms. It is difficult for victims to defend themselves against it.

Forms of Bullying: All members of the school community should recognise that the following can constitute bullying.

- physical assault
- name calling
- threatening anyone
- picking on people
- teasing and forcing people to do something against their will
- being unkind to people
- malicious gossip
- punching and jostling
- theft
- intimidation

- damaging someone's property
- violence and assault
- Extortion
- Sexual harassment
- Exclusion from groups

"What Constitutes Bullying?"

Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

Indications of those at risk from bullying may include: -

- lack of friends
- poor communication and/or poor co-ordination
- unusual physical characteristics
- volatile, sulky or tearful behaviour
- chooses to stay with adults
- isolation
- illness and absenteeism
- lateness
- unpopular families
- accents or racial differences
- vulnerability through special Education Needs or child protection issues

The signs that <u>may</u> signify that a pupil is being bullied include: -

- being frightened of walking to and from school
- being unwilling to come to school
- beginning to do poorly in school work
- displaying personality changes
- complaining of feeling unwell (frequently)
- having unexplained bruises and injuries
- having possessions destroyed or go missing
- showing reluctance to go into the playground
- refusing to say what is wrong, or giving improbable excuses to explain any of the above
- seeking the presence of adults

These signs and symptoms are for the whole school community of school staff, parents and students to act upon. All should be encouraged to respond and report where they have any misgivings about what they see.

The Headteacher will:

- ensure that all staff have an opportunity of discussing strategies and reviewing them
- determine the strategies and procedures
- discuss development of the strategies with the leadership group
- ensure appropriate training is available
- ensure that the procedures are brought to the attention of all staff, parents and pupils
- report annually to the governing body.

Leadership Group will:

- be responsible for the day to day management of the policy and systems
- ensure that there are positive strategies and procedures in place to help both the bullied and bullies
- keep the Head and designated teacher informed of incidents
- arrange relevant staff training
- determine how best to involve parents in the solution of individual problems
- determine in consultation with heads of year how best to involve support agencies in the solution of individual problems

Senior and Heads of Year will:

- be responsible for ensuring that the school's positive strategies are put into practice
- Follow the school's procedure and deal with any incidents that are reported
- inform the appropriate member of staff if the problem is difficult for them to resolve or appears to be serious

Form Tutors will:

- be responsible for liasing with (Head of Year/Department?) over all incidents involving pupils in their form
- be involved in any agreed strategy to achieve a solution

- take part in the anti bullying programme in the PSHE and Citizenship course

All Staff Will:

- be vigilant in class, during tutorial time and while on duty so that bullying does not pass undetected, be watchful and observe relationships
- be punctual for lessons and when on duty
- report any complaint made by a pupil
- never bully, tease or be sarcastic to pupils and should not tolerate this from others in lessons
- make a referral to the designated teacher related to any Child Protective issues
- know the policy and procedures and deal with incidents according to the policy
- make children aware that they should report alleged incidents of bullying to any member of staff
- deliver through PSE the units designated Anti-Bullying and communicate the School's policy.

All Pupils Will:

- treat others with kindness, consideration and respect
- report any incidents of bullying either of themselves or others: -
  a) to a senior pupil, (senior pupils 'Childline Support Group' or the school council)
  b) to any members of staff, teaching or non-teaching as soon as possible e.g. form tutor, head of year, leadership team member, the duty officer.

All Parents Will:

- inform the school if they are aware of or suspect bullying is taking place
- encourage children to be friendly and tolerant to others and not be aggressive
- support the school if further action needs to be taken.

School Procedure for dealing with incidents of bullying:

- act promptly to investigate alleged incidents of bullying, but do not apportion blame. The victim and perpetrator(s) must be interviewed and explore their feelings and perceptions about the incident
- never disbelieve a complaint, say there's nothing you can do, or refer to 'telling tales'. We must encourage pupils to tell, to undermine the secret power of the bully
- ascertain the nature of the bullying, in particular if physical violence leading to injury has taken place
- show concern and support for the victim; try to calm the victim; attempt to reassure the victim and restore his/her confidence
- listen carefully and establish the facts and factors involved
- subject to the nature of the incident, discuss it in the context of helping the victim to overcome bullying him/herself
- gather evidence from third parties to verify or otherwise the incident as described by the victim
- interview the alleged bully and third party witnesses to verify or otherwise the incident as described by the former
- prepare a written report – *Cause for Concern* – and follow procedures that relate to the use if this document
- The Senior Head of Year/Head of Year will ask both parties to record the events in writing. A clear record of all discussions will be kept and placed in pupils' files. The strategy adopted will depend on the nature of the grievances
- The situation will be closely monitored and if there is any recurrence both parties will be referred to the police liaison officer/appropriate support agency who will work restoratively with them
- The parents/guardians of the pupils involved should be informed/asked to attend for interview as appropriate
- Staff will be asked to be positively aware of known victims and will be asked to help raise their self-esteem
- Where continued monitoring reveals that the problem has not been resolved the Head teacher should take action to find a solution which may result in a fixed term or permanent exclusion. In the event of any disciplinary action taking place, the Head teacher may inform the chairperson of governors and

the whole Governing Body if necessary through the disciplinary sub committee.

Action to be taken by the appropriate staff in the school:

Following a full investigation and explanation of the findings of the enquiry, the severity and frequency of bullying on the person or other persons will determine the action to be taken. Changing the attitude and behaviour of bullies will be part of the responsibility of the positive procedures used by the school. However, responsible staff should recognise that sanctions will also have to be used against bullies:

- severe reprimand, to include the witnesses who did not intervene (if appropriate)
- verbal Warning that future incidents will lead to other sanctions:
- placed on pastoral report
- detention
- inclusion
- exclusion
- permanent exclusion

Who to inform:

- inform Year tutor/ Senior Management. Inform colleagues if the incident arises out of a situation where everyone should be vigilant
- parents to be informed as soon as possible of the incident and outline the action taken by the school. Responses noted on causes for concern. Parents should be informed calmly, clearly and concisely and their support sought to prevent further incidents.

What you should avoid doing:

Do Not:

- be overprotective and refuse to allow the victim to help him/herself
- assume that the bully is at fault and has no case to answer
- keep the incident to yourself because you have dealt with it

- try to hide the incident from the parents of the victim or bully
- call in the parents without having a constructive plan to offer either side

The Role of Parents

Bullying in school is everyone's responsibility. All staff, pupils and parents should be aware that bullying exists and share a commitment to combat it and to make the school a happier place for everyone.

Parents should watch out for signs that their child is being bullied or is bullying others. Parents, carers and families are often the first to detect symptoms of bullying. Common symptoms include:

- being frightened of walking to and from school
- doesn't want to go on the school/public bus
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- begins truanting
- becomes anxious, withdrawn, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens self-harm or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- asks for dinner money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually lost
- comes home starving (money of lunch stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what is wrong
- Feels ill in the morning
- being unwilling to come to school
- displaying personality changes
- complaining of feeling unwell (frequently)
- having unexplained bruises and injuries
- having possessions destroyed or go missing
- showing reluctance to go into the playground

- refusing to say what is wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above points

Parents should ask their child about school, progress being made and any friends they have. They should not dismiss negative signs. If they are worried, they should contact the school straight away.

Parents of a Bullied Child should: -

- talk to the child calmly about it and reassure the child that telling them about it was the right thing to do
- make a note of what the child says/keep a diary of events, times and places and what was said
- explain that the child should report any further incidents to a teacher or other member of staff straight away
- make an appointment to see the child's form tutor as soon as possible
- try to boost the confidence by getting them to join clubs
- advise their child to stay with groups of children
- encourage the child to be assertive by saying "no" or "leave me alone" in a loud voice.

Parents of a Child who may be bullying others should: -

- talk to the child and explain that bullying is wrong and makes others unhappy
- show the child how to join in with others without bullying
- make an appointment to see the child's form tutor or year tutor as soon as possible, explain the problem and discuss how the school and the parents together can stop the bullying
- talk to the child regularly about how things are going at school
- give the child lots of praise and encouragement when they are being kind and considerate to others
- punish the child if he/she continues to bully.

Advice to Bullied Pupils

If bullied a pupil is advised to: -

- try to stay calm and look as confident as they can
- be firm and clear; look the bully in the eye and tell them to stop
- get away from the situation as quickly as you can
- tell an adult what has happened straight away
- tell the "Childcare Support Group".
- tell their family
- take a friend with them if they are scared to tell an adult by themselves
- use the support services in school
- not blame themselves for what has happened
- use the 'bully box'

When the victim talks to an adult about the bullying he/she should be clear about: -

- What has happened to him/her?
- How often it happened?
- Who was involved?
- Where it happened?
- Who saw what happened?

Strategies for School

Porthcawl Comprehensive School ensures that 'anti-bullying' issues are included in the following: -

- Information in the school handbook
- Information in pupil's homework diaries
- Work on anti-bullying is in role play and in drama lessons
- Included in the PSE curriculum
- School counsellor who works on self-esteem and assertiveness
- The Pastoral Team work together on problem solving and resolution of conflicts
- School website
- Curricular delivery

Advice to Bullied Pupils / The Role of Parents

Useful advice can be found in **DfES** non-statutory guidance **Bullying – Don't Suffer in Silence – An Anti-Bullying Pack for Schools (64/2000).** The pack gives guidance on whole-school policies, pupils' experiences, finding out about bullying in school, strategies to combat bullying, working with parents, beyond the classroom, and advice for pupils, parents and families along with case studies and advice on materials.

The **National Assembly for Wales** has published similar guidance, with some useful extra topics: **Respecting Others: Anti-Bullying Guidance** is available from: pupil Support Division, Cathays Park, Cardiff CF10 3NQ: Tel: 02920 826897 or fax 02920 801044: Email: Rachel.pass@wales.gsi.gov.uk

OFSTED has also published a report on bullying in schools- **Bullying: Effective Action in Secondary Schools HMI 465 –** following a survey of secondary schools and LEAs. It includes pupils' accounts of bullying and their views on how it might have been prevented. It offers advice to secondary schools on how to set about tackling bullying: Government advice and model policy on www.teachernet.gov.uk
A Website to help bullied pupils: www.pupilline.net

The **Countering Bullying Unit at the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff,** has an extensive set of resources, and established the **National Resource Centre for the Study of Bullying:** Tel:02920 416781 Fax: 02920 416986
Email: mjthomas@uwic.ac.uk www.uwic.ac.uk (enter 'Countering Bullying Unit')

Kidscape gives advice on child safety policy, runs a Helpline for parents and children-Tel 0845 1 205204 and organises free one-day sessions for bullied children.