



Portsmouth Anti-bullying Strategy 2018 - 2020

November 2018

1. Introduction

Portsmouth's Anti-Bullying Strategy 2018-20 has been prepared to provide a framework for multi agency working in the City in order to tackle bullying in our schools and other settings for children and young people and to support the development, monitoring and evaluation of anti-bullying work. The strategy is a refresh of the strategy prepared for 2015-17.

Portsmouth is committed to safeguarding children and young people and recognises that they have a right to feel safe within their community and the right to feel safe from bullying and the fear of bullying.

Definition of bullying	
<p>In dealing with behaviour and bullying, it is important to understand the difference between rough play, a genuine accident, an angry remark and bullying. The table below provides a helpful distinction between bullying and what is referred to as relational conflict.</p>	
Bullying	Relational conflict
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Repeated, hurtful behaviour ○ Deliberate or intentional behaviour that causes physical or emotional harm ○ Imbalance of power ○ No remorse ○ No effort to solve the problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Happens occasionally ○ Accidental ○ Equal power ○ Remorseful ○ Effort to solve the problem

Bullying remains a significant concern - both for parents in terms of their children's safety and wellbeing; and for children and young people in terms of bullying incidents at school and the impact it has on the confidence and self-esteem and attendance and attainment at school.

In November 2018 the DfE published the report 'Bullying in England' providing an extension of a separate survey the Crime Survey for England & Wales does to record the experiences of young people aged 10 to 15. This included some additional questions around bullying. Key findings included (note - comparisons are made between March 2014 and March 2018):

- 1 in 6 young people reported being bullied in the previous 12 months
- Some groups were more likely to be bullied, these included: younger children aged 10 to 12; those of white ethnic origin; those with a long term illness or disability; those who received extra help at school; those living in the most deprived areas; those who had been suspended or excluded from school; those living in one adult households; and those living in rented accommodation.
- Verbal bullying was the common type of bullying (89% of those who said they had been bullied has suffered some kind of verbal bullying); followed by physical bullying (60%)
- No change to the proportion reporting cyber bullying (7%) with girls more likely than boys to state they had experienced cyber bullying

- The proportion who felt their school had dealt with bullying had fallen from 78% to 72%

Locally, during the summer term of 2017, Year 8 and Year 10 pupils in Portsmouth schools were questioned on their experiences of bullying as part of the “You Say” survey and were asked “How often have you been bullied in the past couple of months in the ways listed below?”

1. I was called mean names, was made fun of, or teased in a hurtful way
2. Other people left me out of things on purpose, excluded me from their group of friends, or completely ignored me
3. I was hit, kicked, punched, shoved around, or locked indoors
4. Other people told lies or spread false rumours about me and tried to make others dislike me
5. Other people made fun of me because of my body weight
6. Other people made sexual jokes, comments, or gestures to me
7. Someone sent mean instant messages, wall postings, emails and text messages, or created a website that made fun of me
8. Someone took unflattering or inappropriate pictures of me without permission and posted them online

62% of Year 8 boys and 71% of Year 8 girls said that they had experienced at least one of these types of bullying in the last couple of months. In Year 10, 60% of boys and 67% of girls had experienced at least one of these types of bullying in the last couple of months.

The survey also found that pupils 'currently concerned' or 'have been in the past but no longer concerned' about their weight are more likely to have experienced bullying (at least one type) than those pupils stating that they either 'never thought about it' or 'not concerned' about their weight or did not respond to the weight question (have you ever been concerned about your weight?).

Schools, colleges and other settings for children and young people, which deal most effectively with bullying are those which acknowledge it as a real and potential problem. They have policies in place which are known to staff, children, parents and carers. They have a range of strategies to establish a strong anti-bullying ethos and offer support and, where appropriate, clearly understood sanctions to children and young people who have bullied or who have displayed bullying behaviour.

In Portsmouth, there is now a strong emphasis on restorative practice in schools which is used to foster good relationships, resolve conflicts and bullying and develop empathy. Restorative approaches help to prevent bullying from taking place and to respond effectively to bullying incidents when they do occur.

2. Vision

We will work together to tackle bullying, so that children in Portsmouth feel safe, are free from bullying, harassment and discrimination. Bullying behaviour is not acceptable and it can be addressed and changed. Our work will include a focus not just on supporting victims but also the support we give to perpetrators and bystanders and the restorative approaches that can be adopted to reduce bullying.

In order to tackle bullying we must work together to ensure children and young people in Portsmouth are growing up in safe, secure environments where they are treated with respect, listened to, involved and encouraged so that they can develop healthily, emotionally and physically and make a positive contribution to society.

Bullying is harmful to children and young people and it is a threat to their safety. In order to keep children safe we must champion the philosophy that safeguarding children is everybody's business

While schools and other settings for children and young people are each responsible for dealing with bullying in their own context, we recognise that if bullying is to be successfully reduced, all must play a part. Tackling bullying is the responsibility of all who work with, or are responsible for, the children and young people in our care. Bullying is not just a school issue.

3. Guiding principles

Our guiding principles will inform our key priority areas for development and action.

We recognise that bullying can happen to anyone, in any setting. Whilst this strategy is aimed primarily at supporting all children and young people, the policies and procedures are also in place to protect and support staff and adults.

- We believe that bullying is unacceptable and should never be tolerated.
- We recognise that we have responsibilities to children and young people who bully others, to help them address bullying behaviour
- We recognise that the earlier we are able to intervene the more likely we are to succeed in preventing distress and harm to children and young people experiencing relationship difficulties and bullying
- We consider reducing bullying as part of our duty to safeguard children and young people
- We recognise that addressing bullying can be complex; sometimes the same person can be both a victim and perpetrator; often children and young people are reluctant to report bullying
- We support and encourage restorative approaches to addressing bullying behaviour
- We promote equality, care, respect and co-operation and value diversity

4. Objectives

The key objectives of this strategy are to

- Create safe, supportive and healthy environments in which children can flourish and maximise their attainment
- Reduce the incidences of bullying and the fear of bullying among children and young people as part of our safeguarding responsibility
- Provide opportunities to empower a skilled workforce to address bullying issues confidently and effectively
- Share good practice and enable access to a range of flexible anti-bullying policies and tools to adapt to the needs of individual settings
- Evaluate any available bullying data to inform the development of appropriate local responses to emerging issues
- Ensure that children's and young people's voices are heard and supported in planning anti-bullying work
- Establish a culture and environment where bullying is universally regarded as unacceptable
- Work with parents and carers and ensure they understand what bullying is and the impact bullying can have on children and young people
- Ensure that diversity is a key driver in our planning and that policies and procedures are fair and equitable

5. Priority areas for action

Five priority areas for action have been identified:

Priority 1: communication and awareness raising

Communication within the Portsmouth Education Partnership, Children's Trust Board, Local Safeguarding Children Board, parents, children and young people and all our partners will be key to successfully implementing the principles and actions of the anti-bullying strategy. Keeping all stakeholders informed, including parents and children and young people, as to the progress of the anti-bullying strategy and its actions, will help to raise the profile and promote more effective working practices, as well as to allow for feedback and amendments to the strategy.

The strategy will seek to:

- Actively publicise and promote the anti-bullying strategy and the activities of all involved in anti-bullying work both to partners and the community as a whole
- Communicate key elements of the anti-bullying strategy to schools and agencies
- Plan opportunities such as national anti-bullying week to raise awareness, promote the strategy and profile existing best practice both locally and nationally through the media and other communication channels
- Celebrate achievements

The work will link to other areas of related work including the work of the Diversity in Education Group which has recently been established and the development of a PSHE Framework for Portsmouth which will be launched in 2019.

Priority 2: information, guidance and support to schools and continuous professional development

The Portsmouth anti-bullying guidance and resource pack for schools (3rd edition published in January 2018) has been well received both locally and nationally.

The continuous professional development of the workforce and key professionals working with children and young people will be of vital importance to enable staff to confidently deal with bullying incidents when required and to support those affected by bullying

The Strategy will seek to:

- Build on this work and extend the anti-bullying guidance to other settings and agencies, providing regular updates with local case studies of best practice
- Support schools and all agencies working with children and young people to further develop their policies and practice to prevent and effectively respond to bullying
- Disseminate / cascade information and resources to all schools and settings and develop and share best practice across the City
- Make available and co-ordinate accessible training for both staff (teaching and non-teaching) and governors

The strategy is closely aligned to the Restorative Practice Strategy and the Wellbeing and Resilience in Education Strategy. Together these provide a coherent approach and consistent messages to schools about the information, guidance, support and continuous professional development available.

Priority 3: collection and management of information and data

To ensure that anti-bullying policies in settings are working effectively and to help organisations identify patterns of bullying behaviour there must be mechanisms for monitoring, review and evaluation in order to provide the necessary information to assess and evaluate whether efforts to reduce and eliminate incidences of bullying and harassment are successful.

The strategy will seek to:

- Promote the application of effective systems and processes for reporting, information gathering, monitoring and evaluating to inform anti-bullying practice
- Provide city-wide data and information about bullying and specific types of bullying in order to inform partners about the scale and nature of bullying in the City and the effectiveness of the strategy

Priority 4: participation of children and young people

Children and young people have substantial insight into their experiences and those of their peers. They also have a sense of what works.

The Strategy will seek to:

- Support the participation of children and young people in policy shaping at all levels
- Seek regular and planned opportunities to promote the participation of children and young people in all aspects of anti-bullying work
- Use a range of mechanisms to consult children and young people such as annual surveys, conferences, school councils and youth groups
- Encourage and support young people to become involved in activities which impact positively on bullying behaviours
- Ensure effective consultation of young people and parents/carers in the development of the Anti-bullying Strategy
- Provide information to young people, parents and carers to help them deal with bullying when it occurs

Priority 5: focus on types of bullying

Over the past five years the Council and its partners have done a considerable amount of work to address the use of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language in schools and tackling this type of bullying. The Trans Inclusion Toolkit which was published in March 2018 is an example of this. Similarly a significant amount of work has been done on cyber bullying as part of the e-safety strategy, and more recently work has focused on forms of racist bullying which in part has been fuelled by Brexit. In 2019 the work will be extended to focus on bullying of pupils with SEND & long term illnesses and bullying relating to religious beliefs, the latter building on the guidance document for schools, published by Portsmouth SACRE, which deals with a range of issues around religious beliefs and worship.

The Strategy will seek to

- Build on and develop further the work on specific types of bullying including: cyber bullying; racist bullying; religious beliefs; SEND & long term illness; and homophobic, biphobic & transphobic bullying
- Annually complete Stonewall's Education Equality Index and encourage schools to sign up to Stonewall's School Champions Programme

6. Governance and resources

The work of the Portsmouth Anti-bullying Strategy 2018 – 2020 will be led by the Portsmouth Children and Young People's Anti-bullying Steering Group. The Steering Group will be accountable to the Portsmouth Safeguarding Children's Board via the LA Strategic Lead.

The resources available to the Local Authority to support and implement the strategy are very limited. The Local Authority will therefore seek to facilitate, co-ordinate and advise but will look to schools and other settings to implement the strategy as part of the work of the Portsmouth Education Partnership.