



Anti-Bullying Policy

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Introduction

Bullying, harassment and victimisation and discrimination will not be tolerated. We treat all our pupils and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff and the school. Any kind of bullying is unacceptable.

Children should be made aware of the difference between falling out with others and bullying.

Definition of Bullying

Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally or both. (DfE *“Preventing and Tackling Bullying”* Oct 2014, updated July 2017)

Bullying may be defined as the intentional hurting, harming or humiliating of another person. It can take the form of racial, religious, cultural, sexual, sexist, homophobic or special educational needs and disability related bullying. It could involve physical (including sexual) intimidation, verbal, cyber (including chat room, email, e-photos and text messages) and emotional means (by excluding, tormenting or spreading malicious rumours). It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It can involve complicity that falls short of direct participation. Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and intimidatory.

Bullying may involve actions or comments that are racist, homophobic, which focus on disabilities or other physical attributes (such as hair colour or body shape). Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time. It can cause serious and lasting psychological damage and even suicide. Harassment and threatening behaviour are criminal offences. We always treat it very seriously. It conflicts sharply with the school's policy on Equal Opportunities, as well as with its social and moral principles.

To wit, bullying on the basis of protected characteristics as defined by the 'Equality Act' 2010 is taken particularly seriously.

The Protected Characteristics are:

- a. Age
- b. Disability
- c. Gender reassignment
- d. Marriage and Civil Partnership
- e. Pregnancy and Maternity
- f. Race
- g. Religion or Belief
- h. Sex
- i. Sexual Orientation

Any pupil who feels threatened must be able to talk about their fears, confident in the knowledge that they will be taken seriously and the incident will be investigated, and the culprit/s dealt with.

Bullying may include:

PHYSICAL

Biting, hitting, kicking, scratching, spitting, pushing, physical threatening and the deliberate taking, hiding or damaging of belongings and sexual abuse

VERBAL

e.g. Banter, name calling/teasing, criticising, laughing, including references to homophobia, special educational needs and disabilities, racism, culture, anti-religion, sexist language, insults, writing unkind notes, threats or extortion. Racist, homophobic, transphobic or biphobic bullying can take the



form of offensive jokes and mimicry, wearing clothes with offensive slogans and promoting offensive literature

EMOTIONAL

e.g. being unfriendly, excluding from social groups, tormenting, being made the subject of malicious rumours, looks, ignoring, making fun of someone, making the victim feel inferior to other people

RACIST or RELIGIOUS

A range of hurtful behaviour, both physical and psychological, that makes a person feel unwelcome, marginalised, excluded, powerless or worthless because of their colour, ethnicity, culture, faith community, national origin or national status

SEXUAL, SEXIST or

includes any behaviour, whether physical or nonphysical, where sexuality is used as a weapon by boys or girls

TRANSPHOBIC

HOMOPHOBIC

targets someone because of their sexual orientation (or perceived sexual orientation)

DISABILIST

targets a young person solely based on their disability, this can include manipulative bullying where a perpetrator forces the victim to act in a certain way, or exploiting a certain aspect of the victims disability.

CYBER

“Cyberbullying involves the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others.” Cyberbullying can involve Social Networking Sites, like Facebook and Twitter, emails and mobile phones, used for text messages and as cameras.

Cyberbullying Preventative Measures:

The School:

- Expects all pupils to adhere to its rules for the safe use of the internet. Certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and our ICT Coordinators monitors pupils’ use
- May impose sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse of the internet.
- Mobile phones are not permitted in classrooms, public areas of the school, or where they may cause annoyance to others.
- The use of cameras on mobile phones are not allowed in school

Additional information on Cyberbullying can be found in ‘*The Schools E-Safety Policy*’]

It is important to remember that bullying can also be a combination of the above.

If you are being bullied

- Do not keep it to yourself, talk to a trusted adult in school about it
- Be honest, ask yourself whether your behaviour has upset others

The School will:

The Deputy Head will investigate every allegation of bullying referred on by a member of staff. Pupils, parents and staff are encouraged to discuss their concerns. Information is given to the Class Teacher and relevant staff. Pupils involved and any witnesses will be interviewed

- A full written record of the incident will be kept and further action will be taken as appropriate.



- The Headmaster will be kept fully informed and parents of the victim and those of the bully may be asked to attend a meeting to discuss the problem
- Acknowledge that the reasons for bullying will vary from case to case, so it may not be appropriate to use the same strategies on every occasion. Our aim is for the bully to recognise and stop his/her behaviour
- Bully or bullied child/children will receive appropriate support

Prevention

We will be guided by the Non-statutory DfE advice 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (October 2014, July 2017)

In School we will be vigilant for signs of bullying and:

- will always take reports of incidents seriously
- reinforce the ethos of the school
- ensure all staff are aware of their legal responsibility to protect children and are aware of how to resolve and prevent problems through the use of whole Staff Training in house and through the use of outside providers including in relation to on-line bullying

We will use the curriculum whenever possible to help pupils to develop strategies to combat bullying-type behaviour through the use of:

- Anti-Bullying Week
- PSHEE lessons
- Circle Time
- Assemblies
- E-safety training
- Theatre group productions for whole school on 'Bullying'
- Tracking of playground incidents and reports
- School Council

Detection of Bullying

Bullying can take different forms. It is important that staff are vigilant at all times and that parents or relatives should be aware of the first sign of a child under pressure of this nature. It is common for children to hide their emotions and keep problems to themselves. This may lead to serious concerns in the long term.

Staff and parents should be aware for signs such as:

- The child is frightened to go to school
- Class work has deteriorated for no apparent reason
- The child becomes withdrawn
- Develops a nervous twitch or starts to stammer
- Becomes visibly distressed at odd times
- Loss of appetite
- Unexplained bruises, scratches etc
- Possessions go missing
- Refusal to say what is wrong for fear of recriminations
- Improbable excuses are given to explain any of the above



Tracking

The school uses a digital form to track bullying and to prevent future recurrences. This form highlights multiple incidents, high density areas or low-level actions that might indicate a larger undetected problem. This digital tracking supplements but does not replace existing procedures used to track and prevent bullying noted elsewhere in this policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

All members of the school community, children, parents and staff (teaching and non-teaching) have a responsibility for raising awareness of bullying behaviour.

Role of staff:

- Staff set a good example to pupils by the way they behave, speak and treat pupils, members of staff, parents and members of the public, in school and outside of school
- Staff share responsibility for pupil conduct both in and around the school and on all school activities
- Staff share in the responsibility for all pupils, not just those in 'my class'
- Staff shares responsibility in educating children, **including the aggressor**, in the ways of kindness, care and sensitivity towards the needs of others. Staff are encouraged to share the problems which arise from bullying and successful strategies of dealing with them
- Staff respond immediately and positively to any incidents
- Timely and up to date records of incidents must be made by all staff (Incident Form)
- Talk calmly and rationally to children displaying aggressive behaviour
- Use non-bullying methods of teaching
- Encourage children to talk to or confide in a member of staff about any instances that occur so that they can be brought 'into the open'. Development of responsibility in the child should be encouraged
- Children should know that making teachers aware of a problem is not 'sneaking' or 'telling tales' and should recognise it is a duty to report instances
- Make means of anonymous reporting methods available/accessible e.g. anonymous concerns/communication boxes.
- Retaliation should always be discouraged
- Any instance of bullying will mean that parents will be informed and disciplinary proceedings will be put in place

What lunch-time supervisors can do:

- Understand how serious bullying can be
- Ensure the playground is a safe and friendly place to be
- Help the children find an interest in the playground – individually or in a group, playing a game or talking
- Help organise games, teaching children new skills and rules where appropriate
- Intervene positively when behaviour is unacceptable
- Talk calmly and rationally to children displaying aggressive and bullying behaviour
- Join in games
- Timely and up to date records of incidents must be made by all staff (Incident Form)

What parents can do:

- Discuss the situation with the child
- Inform the school about any concerns or worries expressed by their child/children at home
- Encourage child to talk to a member of staff



- Encourage child to be honest and ask whether he/she has contributed to the situation
- Encourage the child to report any instances of bullying to a member of staff straight away
- Tell the child he/she should not join in with any bullying.

Procedures for Dealing with Bullying

If bullying is suspected, reported or observed it will be dealt with promptly by members of staff who will:

- Discuss the incident with the victim
- The member of staff to whom it was reported or who first discovered the situation will record details on the school '*Behaviour Form*' which creates a log of the incident [including whether any protected characteristic was involved] through the School Behavioural Form and inform the Deputy Head as soon as possible who will inform DSL if necessary
- The Deputy Head (or someone designated by the Head) will investigate the incident/s, interview all involved and record details on the Incident Form
- The victim will be spoken to and reassured that the School will deal with it sensitively but firmly
- The victim may be asked to write down their version of events
- If appropriate the perpetrator of bullying, together with all others who were involved, will be interviewed individually and may be asked to write an account of events.
- If they own up, implement constructive sanctions
- If they do not own up investigate further and take action
- Inform parents of the victim and perpetrator of the incident verbally or in writing and invite them to a meeting at school to discuss the matter. Their support should be sought and a way forward agreed
- The situation will be monitored by Teachers/TA's/LTS by observation in class and at Break and Lunchtime
- Designated Senior Lead for Child Protection will refer to appropriate agency if a Child Protection concern has been raised and there is reasonable cause to believe a child is suffering from or likely to suffer from significant harm, in line with Solihull's advice on the threshold for reporting bullying. We would then report any such instance to LSCB
- The Headmaster/Deputy Head will contact the Police if actions have criminal implications and inform the parents
- The incident will be recorded, signed and dated and kept securely by the Head
- A monitoring and review strategy will be put in place
- The complaint, if substantiated as a case of bullying, will be kept on record for 3 years.

Threshold for reporting bullying to an external agency

In all cases of bullying, cyber-bullying and bullying outside of school staff must follow the school's reporting procedures and ensure the Deputy Head (also the DSL) are aware of such incidents. In any extreme cases the Headmaster and Deputy Head will decide whether it is appropriate to take the matter further and report the incident to outside agencies such as the LADO, police or children's social care.

The victim/s will be supported by:

- The offer of an opportunity to discuss the incident with a member of staff
- Reassurance that further bullying will not be tolerated
- Being given ongoing support and encouragement
- Extra supervision designated to the pupil/s for a period of time deemed necessary to protect the welfare of the child/ren

Guidance on advice to the victim/s:

- Involving other pupils or friends may not help



- Report future fears, incidents to an appropriate adult immediately
- Reconciliation or avoidance should be considered

The perpetrator will be helped by:

- Discussing what has happened with the Deputy Head or person appointed by the Head
- Discovering why the pupil became involved and why bullying took place
- Establishing that wrong-doing has occurred and that the behaviour needs to change
- Being given the opportunity to discuss cause of behaviour
- Involving the parents and staff to assist in bringing about change in attitude and conduct of the pupil

Guidance on advice to the perpetrator:

- Behaviour is not acceptable
- Is recognised as 'intention to cause distress'
- Serious sanctions may follow
- Reconciliation or avoidance should be considered

Guidance on advice to parents:

- Keep the School and staff informed by asking the child to tell the teacher or inform the School as soon as possible
- Be assured that the School will do its best to resolve the situation
- The parents of the bully are asked to explain to their child that what he/she is doing is wrong and makes other children unhappy

Records of Bullying Incidents

- All incidents of bullying or suspected bullying will be recorded and monitored by the Deputy Head
- Records are monitored regularly to enable patterns to be identified
- The complaint, if substantiated as a case of bullying, will be kept on record for 3 years.

The following disciplinary steps can be taken:

- official warnings to cease offending
- withdrawal of free time
- exclusion from certain areas of school premises
- minor fixed-term exclusion
- major fixed-term exclusion
- permanent exclusion

Although it is important to have sanctions in place, at Ruckleigh, we focus on celebrating good attitude and behaviour.

Training and useful documentation:

- Regular review and update of policy with staff
- Workshops to discuss and share strategies and good practice
- Individual/whole school inset training courses
- DCSF Guidance: *Safe to Learn: embedding anti-bullying work in schools*
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying, October 2014
- The Prevent Duty, June 2015
- Equality Act 2010



Appendix A: Advice on Good Practice for those dealing with Bullying

The School aims to:

- a. involve parents to ensure that they are clear that the School does not tolerate bullying and are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being bullied. Parents must feel confident that the School will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issue in a way that protects the child. The Parents must then be encouraged to reinforce the value of good behaviour at home.
- b. involve pupils so that they understand the School's approach and are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders.
- c. regularly evaluate and update our approach to take account of developments in technology, for instance updating 'acceptable use' policies for computers.



d. implement disciplinary sanctions: the consequences of bullying should reflect the seriousness of the incident so that others see that bullying is unacceptable.

e. openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexuality. Also children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities, may well have particular issues that need to be understood. The School will also teach children that using any prejudice-based language is unacceptable.

f. use specific organisations or resources for help with particular problems: draw on the experience and expertise of anti-bullying organisations with a proven track record and / or specialised expertise in dealing with certain forms of bullying.

g. provide effective staff training as anti-bullying policies are most effective when all staff understand the principles and purpose of the School's policy, its legal responsibilities regarding bullying, how to resolve problems and where to seek support.

h. work with the wider community such as the police and children's services where bullying is particularly serious or persistent and where a criminal offence may have been committed. The School will also work with other agencies and the wider community to tackle bullying that is happening outside school.

i. make it easy for pupils to report bullying so that they are assured that they will be listened to and incidents acted on. Pupils should feel that they could report bullying, which may have occurred outside school, including cyber-bullying. E-safety will be addressed in ICT and PSHEE lessons. All pupils and staff are required to sign and follow the appropriate Acceptable Use Policy.

j. create an inclusive environment: create a safe environment where pupils can openly discuss the cause of their bullying, without fear of further bullying or discrimination.

k. celebrate success, which is an important way of creating a positive school ethos around the issue