

The Ryde School

Anti-Bullying Policy



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Anti-Bullying Policy

At The Ryde School we believe that all pupils have a right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without the fear of being bullied. We promote good behaviour. It is made clear that bullying is a form of anti-social behaviour. It is wrong and will not be tolerated.

We do not tolerate bullying, abuse or harassment of any kind. Bullying can be a blight on the lives of our children which inhibits full participation in education and learning, cultural, social and leisure activities. Whatever the reason, bullying is never acceptable and will not be tolerated at The Ryde School.

We believe all children and young people have the right to be protected from physical, emotional and mental violence; a right enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Children also have the right to learn, live, travel and play in a safe environment where they can thrive and achieve their full potential. We recognise that in order to achieve this, children have the right to be educated in an environment where they feel valued, respected and safe.

If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a TELLING school. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff, who will LISTEN and take action.

What is Bullying?

Definition: Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures).
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
- Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
- Homophobic because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality.
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.
- Cyber all areas of internet, such as email, social network sites and internet chat room misuse. Mobile threats by text messaging and calls. Misuse of associated technology i.e. camera and video facilities.

The following 3 points collectively help us to define bullying behaviour:-

1. Bullying is intentionally hurtful.

It is the deliberate, unjustifiable and unprovoked use of aggressive behaviour. It includes actions that cause physical, emotional or mental hurt to the victim and actions that violate another person's freedom and rights.

2. Bullying is a repeated experience.

Being bullied is the experience of persistent or repeated anti-social behaviour. However, occasionally there can be single incidents which constitute bullying because of the fear and intimidation that projects beyond that initial incident.

3. Bullying also involves an inequality of power.

The person/s being bullied find it difficult to reject or deal with the offending behaviour, or those involved in the bullying behaviour have power over the victim. Some power imbalances can be subtle or build up over time, but more common examples include that they are bigger/stronger/older, have more friends, are more established in the school or care less about the consequences of their actions. Bullying behaviour can involve individuals or groups.

Bullying is not:

It is important to understand that bullying is not the odd occasion of falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional trick or joke is played on someone. It is bullying if it is done several times on purpose.

Children sometimes fall out and say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise, although unkind, it is not classed as bullying. It is an important part of children's development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns or a childish prank. We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop skills to repair relationships.

Aims:

The aim of this policy is to prevent and deal with any behaviour deemed as bullying. We are committed to ensuring that the school community works together to create a happy, safe, caring and stimulating environment. The implementation of this policy

will create an ethos where bullying is regarded as unacceptable so that a safe and secure environment is created for everyone to learn and work in. All members of the school community have the responsibility to recognise bullying when it occurs and take appropriate action in accordance with the school policy.

Within The Ryde School we want:

- All children to feel safe to learn, play and enjoy the company of others.
- All children and adults to be treated fairly, with respect and dignity.
- All adults to feel happy and safe in the workplace.
- Everyone to listen carefully to what children and adults have to say and treat all accounts with due seriousness.

The school will set about doing this the following ways:

- The school will meet the legal requirements for all schools to have an anti-bullying policy in place.
- The school will work closely with other professional agencies, including The Anti-Bullying Alliance, to ensure that children stay safe as stated in the Children's Act 1989, the SEN and Disability Act 2001, and The Children Act 2004. (See appendix 1 for more detailed legal framework).
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents/carers will have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents/carers will know what the school policy is on bullying.
- Pupils and parents/carers will be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Whole school initiatives (staff training, assemblies, themed weeks etc.) and proactive teaching strategies (PSHE lessons etc.) will be used throughout the school to reduce opportunities for bullying to occur.
- A positive, caring ethos will be created within the school environment where everyone can work and express themselves free from fear of being bullied.

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school.
- Begs to be driven to school.
- Changes their usual routine.
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic).
- Begins to truant.
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence.
- Starts stammering.
- Attempts or threatens to run away.
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares.
- Feels ill in the morning.
- Begins to do poorly in school work.
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged.
- Has possessions which are damaged or “go missing”.
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully).
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises.
- Comes home starving (lunch has been stolen)
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable.
- Is bullying other children or siblings.
- Stops eating.
- Is frightened to say what’s wrong.
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above.
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone.
- Is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

What can you do if you are being bullied?

We want everybody to feel confident to report bullying whenever and wherever it happens, and get the help they need to feel safe again. If someone is bullying you, it is important to remember that it is not your fault and there are people that can help you. Tell someone you trust, giving them as many facts as you can (Who? Where? What? Why? When? How?).

All pupils know that if they are experiencing bullying they should tell their teacher or teaching assistant in the first instance. Should a pupil not feel confident in doing this the headteacher is always available to speak to pupils or they may choose another trusted adult.

What can you do if you see someone else being bullied? (The role the bystander)

Ignoring bullying is cowardly and unfair to the victim. Staying silent means that the bully has won and gives them more power. Bullies behaviour should be challenged e.g. I don't like you shouting, please stop. There are ways you can help others without putting yourself in danger, for example tell a member of staff as soon as possible or ask someone you trust about what to do.

The following step by step procedures will be followed in all cases:

- Initially, staff will listen and speak to all children involved about the incident separately.
- Appropriate action will be taken quickly to end the bullying behaviour.
- Appropriate advice will be given to help the victim.
- Staff will reinforce to the bully/ies that their behaviour is unacceptable and they will be given a warning. The bully/ies will be asked to genuinely apologise for what they have done.
- Work will be done with the bully/ies (for example with the learning mentor or in circle times) to help him/her/them understand and change his/her/their behaviour including investigating the underlying reasons as to why they are bullying.
- In serious cases e.g. when threatening behaviour is involved, parents will be informed and invited into the school to discuss the problem. This meeting will be with the Headteacher and/or Deputy head teacher.
- After the incident has been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.
- Should the bullying continue the Head teacher may make a decision to exclude the child. The parents then have the right to appeal to the Governing Body and the HCC.
- Appropriate records will be kept of all incidents.

Prevention

Whole school initiatives and proactive teaching strategies will be used throughout the school to develop a positive learning environment with the aim of reducing opportunities for bullying to occur.

These include:

- All stakeholders will promote a shared ethos and culture.
- Promoting and following the 5 Words of Wisdom and Secrets of Success.
- Setting up circle of friends support network to support individuals experiencing difficulties.
- Reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly.
- Using drama and role-play activities to help children be more assertive and teach them strategies to help them deal with bullying situations.
- Raising awareness through assemblies, work in PSHE lessons and classroom discussions.
- Making national anti-bullying week a high profile event each year.
- Raising awareness of the different types of bullying.
- PSHE Jigsaw programme of study to address bullying issues.
- E-safety presentations and workshops in school.
- Childline presentations and workshops in school.
- Interventions put in place to support individuals.

In addition, staff need to feel safe in order to help make the children feel safe.

Staff are aware of procedures to follow in such an instance or they can contact their union for advice and support.

Procedures for reporting and dealing with bullying incidents

At The Ryde School all staff will respond calmly and consistently to any allegations and incidents of bullying. They will be taken seriously and dealt with impartially and promptly. All those involved will have the opportunity to be heard. Staff will protect and support all those involved whilst allegations and incidents are investigated and resolved.

Help Organisations

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)	0300 0115 142	www.ace-ed.org.uk
Childline	0800 1111	www.childline.org.uk
Family Lives	0808 800 2222	www.familylives.org.uk
KIDSCAPE	020 7823 5430	www.kidscape.org.uk

Appendix

ROLE OF PARENTS/CARERS

All schools are likely to have some problem with bullying at one time or another. Parents/carers have an important part to play in our anti-bullying policy. Watch out for signs that your child is being bullied, or is bullying others. Parents/carers and families are often the first to detect that a problem exists. Don't dismiss it. Contact the school immediately if you are worried.

We ask parents/carers to:

- a) Look out for unusual behaviour in your children – for example, they may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, not complete work to their usual standard, become withdrawn or particularly quiet.
- b) Always take an active role in your child's education. Enquire how their day has gone, who they have spent their time with, etc. Care must be taken to ensure that this does not become intrusive or an interrogation of daily actions.
- c) If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the school immediately. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- d) If a child has bullied your child, please do not approach that child, or their adult, in the playground or involve an older child to deal with the bully. Please inform school immediately.
- e) It is important that you advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse!
- f) Tell your child that it is not their fault that they are being bullied.
- g) Reinforce the school's policy concerning bullying and make sure your child is not afraid to ask for help.
- h) If you know your child is involved in bullying (either as a victim or a perpetrator of bullying), please discuss the issues with them and inform school. The matter will be dealt with sensitively and appropriately.

Discourage your child from using bullying behaviour at home or elsewhere. Show them how to resolve difficult situations without using violence or aggression.

IF YOUR CHILD HAS BEEN BULLIED

- Calmly talk with your child about his/her experience.
- Make a note of what your child says, particularly who was said to be involved; how often the bullying has occurred; where it happened and what has happened.
- Reassure your child that he/she has done the right thing to tell you about the bullying.
- Explain to your child that should any further incidents occur he/she should report them to a teacher immediately.
- Make an appointment to see your child's class teacher.
- Explain to the teacher the problems your child is experiencing.

WHEN TALKING WITH TEACHERS ABOUT BULLYING

- Try to stay calm, bear in mind that the teacher may have no idea that your child is being bullied or may have heard conflicting accounts of an incident.
- Be as specific as possible about what your child says has happened, give dates, places and names of other children involved.
- Make a note of what action the school intends to take.
- Ask if there is anything you can do to help your child at the school.
- Stay in touch with the school; let them know if things improve as well as if problems continue.

IF YOU FEEL YOU NEED MORE SUPPORT

- Check with the school Anti-Bullying Policy to see if agreed procedures are being followed.
- Make an appointment to discuss the matter with the Headteacher.
- You can then follow the school complaints procedure if you feel the matter has not been dealt with correctly.