

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Ruskin Community High School is committed to providing a caring, friendly, physically safe and emotionally secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur all students should be able to report the incident and know that the problem will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

### WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is the wilful intention to hurt, threaten or frighten someone, by an individual or a group. Bullying can be physical or verbal and it can be carried out using technology and social media.

### PHYSICAL

- Physical assault, beatings and violent attacks including gangs.
- Kicking, punching, arm twisting, pushing.
- Flicking, poking.
- Messing about with, hiding or taking other people's belongings in order to upset them.
- Threatening with older brothers/sisters/friends.
- Sexual/homophobic/racial harassment.

### VERBAL

- Leaving people out.
- Name calling, e.g. using language that puts people down.
- Referring to family/home life/clothes.
- Teasing which gets out of hand.
- Sarcasm/saying nasty hurtful personal things.
- Stirring – encouraging others to fight.
- Sexual, homophobic and racial abuse.

### CYBER BULLYING

- Using texts, emails, photos, camera and video facilities or websites to cause distress to others.

### HOMOPHOBIC BULLYING

Evidence of homophobic bullying suggests that children and young people who are gay, lesbian or bisexual (or perceived to be) face a higher risk of victimisation than their peers. Homophobic bullying is least likely to be reported since disclosure may mean 'coming out' to teachers and parents before they are ready to.

**Cyber bully is** a 'method' of bullying rather than a 'type' of bullying. It includes bullying via text messages, instant messenger services and social network sites, email and via images or videos posted on the internet or spread via mobile phones. It can take the form of any type of bullying such as racial, sexual, homophobic, disability etc.

### WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO RESPOND TO BULLYING

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Victims must feel protected and supported. Bullies must be encouraged to change their behaviour and attitude towards bullying.

Schools have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

### OBJECTIVES OF THIS POLICY

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, students and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.

- All governors and teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All students and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Students and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated and parents will be contacted when bullying issues arise.

### **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
- doesn't want to go on the school / public bus
- 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 suicide or runs 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 dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money / 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.

### **PROCEDURES FOR STAFF WHEN BULLYING IS REPORTED**

1. Be available to the students(s).
2. Treat the information seriously.
3. Record the incident and be seen to do this.
4. Report the problem to Form Tutor, Year Achievement Manager, members of SLT team as appropriate. (see behaviour procedures for staff)
5. Parents may need to be informed and come to a meeting to discuss the problem.
6. In serious cases fixed term exclusions or permanent exclusion will be considered.
7. If necessary and appropriate the Police will be consulted and the school will work collaboratively with the Police if parents contact us for support.
8. A review will be needed in the future to see if strategies were successful. Close monitoring must take place.

### **ANTI-BULLYING CODE FOR STUDENTS**

Everybody has the right to enjoy each day free from intimidation, unkind actions or remarks, both in school and on the way to school. We must all help each other to be happy reporting **all** bullying.

## **Do you know anyone who is being bullied?**

*What should you do?*

1. Tell someone - Any adult in school especially your Form Tutor and Year Achievement Manager.  
A friend.  
A parent or somebody you can trust.
2. Show bullies that you don't like what they are doing. Don't be friends with them.
3. Help and support children you see are being bullied by telling an adult immediately.
4. Don't give bullies any reason to think you support them in their actions.
5. Put a note in the student drop box located outside the main school office

## **Are you being bullied?**

*What could you do?*

1. Tell an adult at school that you trust. Give us time to find out what is happening. If you are still unhappy, see the Year Achievement Manager.
2. Try not to show that you are upset (this is difficult).
3. Try to ignore the bully.
4. Walk away quickly and confidently (even if you are afraid inside).
5. Stay with your friends and say no to the bully. Do not try to buy the bully off with sweets, or given them money.
6. Try not to be alone where you could be bullied.
7. Put a note in the anti-bullying box.
8. Try to be proud of who you are. It is good to be an individual. There is nothing wrong with you.

### **OUTCOMES**

1. The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place.
2. In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered.
3. If possible, the students will be reconciled.
4. After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.
5. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour.
6. All incidents of recording bullying will have been addressed within one week of being reported.

### **PREVENTION OF BULLYING**

Through the PSCHE curriculum it is possible to look at what is bullying and who and why bullying takes place.

The bullying questionnaire is carried out using Survey Monkey at least once a year and all named students are interviewed by Year Achievement Managers and action carried out as necessary.

Levels of bullying will be monitored on a regular basis in the form of anonymous questionnaires. Lunch times and break times will be made safer by supervision and providing a range of activities for different students such as sport, the games club, the anti-bullying club, the library facilities being open and drop in clubs available.

Staff must be vigilant for signs of bullying remembering that it is carefully hidden and difficult to detect. Teaching Assistants and Intervention Co-ordinators are often in a position to hear and see bullying incidents and will take action.

Mobile phones are not allowed on display in school and if students are found using a mobile phone parents are asked to come and collect it from the student office. If this occurs on a Friday then we will return the phone at the end of the day on health and safety grounds, as it would mean the student was unable to contact parents etc., during the weekend.