



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY FOR RUSH COMMON SCHOOL

Introduction

In this policy as in all documents of Abingdon Learning Trust (“ALT”) any reference to Governors of Rush Common School or Trustees of Abingdon Learning Trust is a reference to the Board of Directors of Abingdon Learning Trust and any reference to the Headteacher of Rush Common School is a reference to the Chief Executive Officer of ALT.

Aims of this policy

The aim of Rush Common School is for every member of the school community to feel valued and respected, and for all persons to be treated fairly, inside and outside school, on the way to and from school and when it involves our school community. We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for each of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. This policy is designed to support the way in which members of the school can live and work together in a supportive way and aims to promote an environment where all feel happy, safe and secure.

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

All directors and teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.

All pupils and parents/carers should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.

Statement of Intent

1. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. 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.
2. We actively promote the role of the “bystander” to encourage pupils to report instances of bullying, in any form, when they witness it or become aware of it.
3. As a school we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents/carers should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
4. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives the Headteacher the power “to such an extent as is reasonable to regulate the behaviour of pupils when they are off the school site (which is particularly pertinent to cyber bullying)”.
5. Bullying will not be tolerated.

6. **Our school community:**

- Discusses, monitors and reviews our Anti-Bullying Policy on a regular basis
- Supports staff to promote positive relationships and identify and tackle bullying appropriately
- Ensures that pupils are aware that all bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively; that pupils feel safe to learn; and that pupils abide by the Anti-Bullying Policy
- Reports back to parents/carers regarding their concerns on bullying and deals promptly with complaints. Parents/ carers in turn work with the school to uphold the Anti-Bullying Policy
- Seeks to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere and utilises support other relevant organisations when appropriate¹.

What Is Bullying?

7. **Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.**

8. We also follow the SEAL definition of bullying with pupils: Bullying means that one child is **deliberately** (usually) using his or her **power** over another to make them feel bad. Bullying is not having a single argument or fight with someone. It isn't saying something bad to someone once when you are angry. Bullying goes on deliberately (on purpose) **over a period of time**.

9. Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the target of the bullying.

10. Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types of bullying including:

- Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Related to race, religion or culture: racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Related to special educational needs and/or disabilities
- Related to appearance or health conditions
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic and biphobic: because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Gender based
- Transphobic
- Sexist
- Young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances
- Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber: All areas of internet ,such as email & internet chat room misuse
- Mobile threats by text messaging and calls
- Misuse of associated technology: ie camera and video facilities

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

¹ Adapted from Bullying – A Charter for Action, DCSF

11. Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be the target of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.
12. Schools have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Discriminatory language

13. A culture where discriminatory language goes unchallenged is likely to be a culture where bullying is more prevalent. Due to this, discriminatory language is not acceptable and will be challenged ie. using language as "you're so gay" or "that's so gay" will not be accepted and will be challenged by staff.
14. How School may respond (taken from Stonewall - Challenging Homophobic Language):
 - A pupil makes a homophobic remark (or any other discriminatory language)
 - Tell the pupil that homophobic language is not acceptable in school. Explain that this language is offensive
 - The pupil continues to make comments, as does the rest of the class. Explain in more detail the effect of discriminatory/homophobic language and behaviour. Like racist language, this will not be tolerated
 - If continues, remove the pupil from the classroom and talk to them in more detail
 - Involve senior leaders. The pupil should understand the sanctions that will apply if they continue
 - Invite parents/carers to discuss the attitude of the pupil
 - Take time to explain to parents why this is part of the anti-bullying policy. All pupils should feel safe at school

Signs and Symptoms

15. 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 the young person/child who is doing the bullying)
 - 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 is 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 - dealing with an incident

16. Procedure:
 - Report bullying incidents to staff (preferably the pupil's class teacher)
 - The incidents will be recorded by staff using the School's Behaviour Incident Form.
 - Staff use "Checklist for Managing a Bullying Incident" (see appendix A) to assist how to respond to an incident
 - Parents/carers should be informed and may be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem
 - If a criminal offence has been committed, School will consider reporting the incident to the police or inform parents/carers of the target that they may want to do so
 - Consider what additional input is required to support pupils affected
 - Monitor the situation and review
 - Consider what further action is needed to reassure and meet the needs of those concerned.
17. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly. An attempt will be made to help the child who is doing the bullying change their behaviour.

Outcomes

18. The child/children doing the bullying will be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place.
19. In serious cases, internal exclusion or even fixed term exclusion will be considered.
20. If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.
21. After the incident/incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

Responding effectively to those who bully

22. The DCSF "Safe to Learn" Anti-Bullying guidance recommends that schools should "apply disciplinary sanctions to the pupil causing the bullying and ensure they learn from the experience, possibly through multiagency support".
23. Sanctions for bullying are intended to hold pupils who bully to account for their behaviour and ensure that they face up to the harm they have caused and learn from it. They also provide an opportunity for the pupil to put right the harm they have caused.

24. Sanctions need to be applied fairly, proportionally, consistently and reasonably, taking into account any special educational needs (SEN) or disability that pupils may have and taking into consideration the needs of vulnerable children.

Targets of bullying will be supported by School in the following ways. They will be:

- provided with the opportunity to speak to an agreed adult as needed
- offer the opportunity to take part in nurture groups (when possible)
- be supported by Rush Common's Anti-bullying Ambassadors (peer support)

Children who bully others will be supported by School. They will be:

- able to speak to an agreed adult, to have opportunity to reflect on their behaviour and actions
- be encouraged and supported to reconcile and rebuild relationships with others
- use resources such as "It's All About Me" and "I am?", which are designed for young people to complete to help with self-awareness, personal issues and to enhance the development of life skills.

Prevention

25. We will use KIDSCAPE methods for helping children to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:
- writing a set of school rules
 - signing a behaviour contract
 - writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying
 - reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly
 - making up role-plays
 - having discussions about bullying and why it matters
 - focussed anti-bullying week.

Liaison with parents and carers

We will:

- ensure that parents/carers know who to contact if they are worried about bullying
- ensure parents/carers have access to information about bullying and how they should support their child. The pupil version of our Anti-bullying Policy (drafted by our School Council) is available on request and distributed to all new parents/carers
- make information available which includes spotting the signs of bullying
- ensure parents/carers know where to access independent advice about bullying as available from www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/anti-bullying
- work with parents/carers and the local community to address issues beyond the School gates that give rise to bullying
- invite parents/carers to be part of Rush Common's Anti-Bullying Forum.

Involvement of pupils/students

We will:

- regularly canvass children and young people's views on the extent and nature of bullying
- use Rush Common Anti-Bullying Ambassadors as role models and to reflect pupil voice
- ensure students know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying
- ensure all students are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying
- involve students in anti-bullying campaigns in schools

- publicise the details of help lines and websites
- offer support to students who have been bullied
- work with students who have been bullying in order to address the problems they have
- ensure the anti-bullying leaflet (drafted by our School Parliament) is reviewed and updated by pupils

If parents/carers are not satisfied with the School's response, a more senior staff member/the Headteacher should be contacted. There are also independent sources of support as detailed below.

HELP ORGANISATIONS:

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)

0808 800 5793

Children's Legal Centre

0845 345 4345

KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline (Mon-Fri, 10-4)

0845 1 205 204

Parent line Plus

0808 800 2222

Youth Access

020 8772 9900

Bullying Online

www.bullying.co.uk

Visit the Kidscape website www.kidscape.org.uk for further support, links and advice.

Disability Discrimination Statement

It is unlawful to discriminate against disabled pupils. A person is considered disabled if they have a mental or physical impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

A school discriminates if:

- it treats a disabled pupil or prospective pupil less favourably than another for a reason related to their disability and without justification.
- it fails, without justification to make reasonable adjustments which require the school to think ahead, anticipate the barriers disabled pupils may face and remove them before a disabled pupil is placed at a substantial disadvantage.

Review of this policy

The Board of Directors, through its Pupil Support and Welfare Committee, review the Policy annually. It may however review the Policy earlier than this if the government produces new regulations, or if it receives recommendations on how the Policy might be improved.

Approved by the Pupil Support and Welfare Committee of the Board of Directors of RCAT on November 2016

Signed: R Parsonson

(Chair of Board of Directors)

Signed: J Stevenson

(Acting Headteacher)

Date for Review: November 2017

Checklist for Managing a Bullying Incident**NB: Follow the interview guidelines for all parties – see page 2**

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1. Young person tells you he/she is being bullied or incident is observed	
2. Report to a responsible member of staff	
3. Record incident following Oxon guidelines	
4. Ensure that an appropriate adult meets with the target of the bullying. Follow interview guidelines and record.	
5. Listen to other young people who may have observed the incident. Follow interview guidelines and record.	
6. Ensure that appropriate adult meets with the young person alleged to be responsible. Follow interview guidelines and record.	
7. If there is evidence or admission of bullying, issue appropriate sanctions following anti-bullying policy and behaviour policy. If you are using a restorative approach provide opportunity for young person to reflect and consider how they might make amends.	
8. If no bullying has taken place, or there is insufficient evidence, consider what further action is needed to reassure and meet the needs of those concerned	
9. Inform the target of outcomes and actions taken. Keep them informed throughout. Provide on-going support	
10. Inform the young person responsible of outcomes and actions taken, Keep them informed throughout. Provide on-going support	
11. Contact the parent/carers of the target of the bullying. Inform them of the incident and offer appropriate support. Keep them informed throughout.	
12. Contact the parent/carers of the young person responsible for the bullying. Inform them of the incident and offer appropriate support. Keep them informed throughout.	
13. Where a criminal offence has been committed, consider reporting the incident to the police or inform parents of the target that they may want to do so	
14. Consider what additional input is required in terms of: proactive work to address prejudice or promote diversity, work with class or year group, assembly, individual or group work with young people concerned, referral to outside agencies etc.	
15. Monitor the situation and review with all parties to ensure the bullying has stopped.	
16. Review how successful your approach has been. What additional preventative measures need to be in place?	

Guidelines for interview with all parties

- Allocate sufficient time to listen
- Take the incident seriously and reassure them
- Take steps to make sure they feel safe.(particularly target and young people who may have observed the incident)
- Offer confidentiality (with usual child protection exceptions)
- Listen to the details of what happened and record.
- Consult the target about how the incident should be dealt with as far as is appropriate. NB informed choice is an essential part of any restorative input involving the young person responsible.

- Consult the young person responsible about how they might make amends. NB Informed choice is an essential part of any restorative work.
- Inform and consult parents/carers of both parties about management of the incident including offer of appropriate support. Ensure that you label the behaviour not the child.
- Keep everyone informed of the outcomes of action and discussions

Importance of monitoring and review

- How effective was your response?
- Has the bullying stopped?
- Does the target feel safe?
- Did the behaviour of the child doing the bullying change?
- What did we learn?
- Are current systems for responding effective?
- Do we need additional preventative measures in place?