



James Rennie School

Anti-Bullying Policy

The aim of the anti-bullying policy is to ensure that pupils learn and staff work in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied.

Bullying of staff within their workplace of each other is covered within the School's *'procedure for dealing with complaints of bullying and harassment.'*

Bullying is anti-social behaviour and can affect everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will pupils be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available at schools.

Throughout this policy the term parent is used to mean a pupil's Parent, Carer or Guardian.

Statutory duties of schools

Head teachers have a legal duty under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among pupils and to bring these procedures to the attention of staff, parents and pupils. Under the Education Inspections Bill 2006 the duties are extended to include preventing/responding to bullying that happens outside school, where it is reasonable to do so. Schools also have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils (Education Act 2002) and to ensure that children and young people are safe from bullying and discrimination (Children Act 2004). Government guidance advises that the policy should also address the bullying of staff by pupils (Safe to learn DCSF 2007). Staff should also be mindful of the overarching safeguarding statutory guidance found within *Keeping Children safe in Education (2016)* – this links closely to our school safeguarding policies.

Scope of this policy and links to other policies

This policy includes:

- Bullying of pupils by pupils within school
- Bullying of and/or by pupils outside of school, where the school is aware of it
- Bullying of staff by pupils within or outside school
- Allegations about bullying of pupils by staff will be dealt with under the schools Safeguarding Policy.

This policy has links to the following school policies and procedures:

- Equality and diversity policy
- Behaviour for Learning policy
- Acceptable use of ICT policy
- Online/E-safety policy
- Safeguarding (child protection) policy as well linked policies and overarching statements

- Complaints procedure
- Whistle blowing policy
- Confidentiality Policy (and linked policies)
- Single Equality Plan

Definition

This can be seen in the School's Behaviour for Learning Policy as *'The planned direct harassment, singling out or discrimination of a person or group by another person or group, which may take the form of non-verbal, verbal, emotional or physical actions'*.

When a person's or group of people's conscious behaviour, over a period of time, leaves someone else feeling one or more of the following:

- Physically and/or mentally hurt or worried
- Unsafe and/or frightened
- Unable to do well and achieve
- Negatively different, alone, unimportant and/or unvalued
- Unable to see a happy and exciting future for themselves

When a person, or group of people, has been made aware of the effects of their behaviour on another person, and they continue to behave in the same manner, this is bullying.

If someone is made to feel like this, or if they think someone they know feels like this, it should be investigated. This should happen straight away as it can take a long time to build up the courage to tell. However, lots of things can make people feel bad, sometimes it depends on the situation we are in, and it is not always bullying so we think the following definition, adapted from one written by the Anti-bullying Alliance, is also useful:

Bullying is any behaviour by an individual or group that:

- Is meant to deliberately hurt (physically or emotionally) a person or people and is being carried out by an individual or group with that intention
- Happens more than once, there will be a pattern of behaviour, not just a one-off incident, involves an imbalance of power, the person being bullied will usually find it very hard to defend themselves. It can be:
 - Physical, e.g. kicking, hitting, taking and damaging belongings
 - Verbal, e.g. name calling, taunting, threats, offensive remarks
 - Relational, e.g. spreading nasty stories, gossiping, excluding from social groups
 - Cyber, e.g. texts, e-mails, picture/video clip bullying, Instant Messaging (IM)
- Where individuals or groups bully different people, this will be seen as a pattern of bullying behaviour and treated as such.
- This school recognises that bullying that is motivated by prejudice is a particular concern, for example racist, sexist and homophobic bullying and bullying related to perceptions about disability and/or special educational needs. All staff will be provided with appropriate training in equality and diversity, so that they are equipped to tackle these issues on a wider scale as well as in relation to bullying.

Challenges for our pupils and our school

It should be clear that our School takes all accusations of bullying seriously, however because of pupils learning and in some cases *fixed mind sets*, all accusations will need careful analysis before actions are taken.

Identifying and reporting concerns about bullying

- All concerns about bullying will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. Pupils who are being bullied may not report it. However, there may be changes in their behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting from school. School teaching and ancillary staff will be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with this policy.
- Pupils who are bullying others also need support to help them understand, confront and change their behaviour.
- Pupils who are aware of bullying (bystanders) can be a powerful force in helping to address it and will be encouraged to do so in a safe way.
- All pupils will be encouraged to report bullying by talking to a member of staff of their choice
- Staff who are being bullied will be encouraged to report it to a colleague of their choice.
- Parents will be encouraged to report concerns about bullying and to support the school in tackling it. Trying to resolve bullying directly with pupils or their families can lead to problems escalating.
- Responding to reports about bullying in School

Recognising Additional Complexities at James Rennie School

With pupils complex learning needs at our School we recognise that our pupils need to be taught what a bully is; this is so they can recognise bullying but also so they do not make accusations of bullying where non exists (these accusations may be through misinterpretation or misunderstanding about the definition of bullying). Consequently all investigations should be undertaken with the upmost sensitivity – this extends through to talking to parents when explaining the nature of incidents.

This should be particularly prescient when understanding cases that involve young people with Autistic Spectrum Conditions, and fixed mindsets, where a difference of opinion may be perceived as bullying, and conversely actual incidents of bullying may not be understood especially if this elicits emotions that the individual may not be able to label or identify.

Some pupils with complex and profound learning needs it should be noted may exhibit aggressive behaviour towards individuals in these cases an understanding and analysis of their behaviour needs to occur rather than an assumption of bullying again these cases should be handled with the upmost sensitivity – this extends through to talking to parents when explaining the nature of incidents.

Mate hate / crime

This has become to be understood the process where someone will conspire to direct someone with a learning difficulty to commit an illicit action on their behalf with the individuals full understanding of the consequences for either themselves or others. If after investigation this has been found to be case the individual corrupting the individual should be seen as a perpetrator, whilst the individual that has been manipulated should also be seen as a victim and treated appropriately.

Understandably these cases are complex and will require careful consideration and investigation.

Reporting

All incidents of bullying will be recorded in the Incident log and reviewed by the Behaviour Review Group

Steps to be taken

The school will take the following steps when dealing with concerns about bullying:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, it will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been made aware of it. A clear account of the concern will be recorded and given to the head teacher .The head teacher will interview everyone involved and keep a detailed record. This will be held in line with the school's data protection policy/practice. Class teachers will be kept informed and if it persists the form tutor will advise the appropriate subject teachers
- Parents and other relevant adults will be kept informed
- Where bullying occurs outside school, any other relevant schools or agencies (e.g. youth clubs, transport providers) will be informed about the concerns and any actions taken.

Pupils and staff who have been bullied

Pupils and staff who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to be listened to and discuss the experience with a member of staff of their choice.
- Providing reassurance that the bullying will be addressed
- Offering continuous support
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence
- The use of specialist interventions and/or referrals to other agencies e.g. educational psychology, where appropriate
- Checking over a long term period (not just in the immediate time after an incident) that the individual is happy
- Investigating and reporting back to the individuals concerned with the necessary haste.

Pupils who have bullied will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened
- Discovering why the pupil became involved
- Establishing the wrong doing and need to change

- Establishing a pathway for the bully to understand, confront and change their behaviour
- Informing parents to help change the attitude of the pupil
- The use of specialist interventions and/or referrals to other agencies where appropriate
- Teaching what bullying is and what it means

The following disciplinary steps can be taken:

- Official warnings to cease offending
- Sanctions appropriate to an individual and their understanding – it should be noted that sanctions must be understood by the pupil and others to be in consequence of their actions and not as retribution
- Exclusion from certain areas of school premises
- Whilst not disciplinary step the *bully* will be offered supportive education as to why their actions have caused hurt
- Confiscation of mobile phones or denial of access to the Schools computer network, in line with our Acceptable Use (internet safety) policy
- Minor fixed-term exclusion (last resort)
- Major fixed-term exclusion (last resort)
- Permanent exclusion (last resort)

All steps must be understood in the context of the School's behaviour for learning and safeguarding policies.

Police involvement

If it is believed an offence has been committed Police involvement may be appropriate, advice can be taken directly from the Police by calling 111 (non-emergency number), or through the Cumbria LSCB (0333 240 1727). It is essential that parents be kept informed if this at all stages.

Community Bullying

If families reporting bullying in their local community advice should be sought from either the Police (tel. 111 non-emergency number), Cumbria LSCB (0333 240 1727) or if appropriate the families social care team.

Pupils bullying staff

If a pupil is found to be bullying a member of staff, the same processes will be followed as if a pupil has been bullied; additionally the following measures may be considered

- Offering to counselling support through Westfield Health
- Contacting appropriate Unions for support
- Consideration of timetable adjustments
- Weekly catchup / mentoring with a member of the Senior Leadership Team

Parents

Most concerns about bullying will be resolved through discussion between home and school. However, where a parent feels their concerns have not been resolved, they are encouraged to use the formal Complaints Procedure.

Where a pupil is involved in bullying others outside school, e.g. in the street or through the use of the internet at home, parents will be asked to work with the school in addressing their child's behaviour, for example restricting/monitoring their use of the internet or mobile phone.

Referral of the family to external support agencies will be made where appropriate

Preventative measures

The school will:

- Raise awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in PSHE (Personal Social & Health education), form tutorial time, assemblies, SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) subject areas and informal discussion -as appropriate - in an attempt to eradicate such behaviour.
- Promote the *School Rule; We look after each other*
- Participate in national and local initiatives such as Anti-bullying Week and the work of seek to develop links with the wider community that will support inclusive anti-bullying education consider the use of specific strategies, for example peer mentoring, on a regular basis and implement them if appropriate, subject to available resources.

Promotion of this policy

The policy and methods for reporting bullying concerns will be promoted throughout the school, for example in information packs for new pupils and staff and through regular awareness raising activities with existing pupils and their families. Monitoring, evaluation and review a senior member of the school staff will be identified to lead on the implementation of the policy and act as the link person with the local authority. An annual report will be made to the governing body, including statistics about:

- the number of reported concerns
- monitoring information about the pupils involved motivations for bullying
- actions taken and outcomes

Statistical information will be provided to the local authority as required.

The school will review the policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness.

Consultation

This policy will be reviewed by Governors and the School Council. Due to the worrying nature of the content this will also be shared with parents to gain their trust and confidence over what is a sensitive issue.

Links to other Policies

This policy has links to following policies and school documentation

Behaviour for Learning Policy

Safeguarding Policy

Whistle blowing Policy (staff)

References

Websites

There are a huge number of websites dealing with bullying. The Anti-Bullying Alliance website — www.anti-bullyingalliance.org — has links to many of them. Websites to look out for include:

- www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying — to download the anti-bullying charter
- www.teachernet.gov.uk/bullying — includes lesson plans and advice on beating bullying
- www.childline.org.uk — offers support in setting up a peer support scheme through its CHIPS programme (ChildLine in Partnership with Schools). A ChildLine bullying diary can also be downloaded at:
- www.childline.org.uk/extra/bullyingindex.asp
- www.bullying.co.uk — provides help and advice for combating bullying
- www.kidscape.org.uk — gives children skills to keep themselves safe
- www.beatbullying.org and www.anti-bullyingalliance.org — to buy blue anti-bullying wristbands
- www.stoptextbully.com — advice on all forms of electronic bullying
- www.rtime.info — develops positive relationships between children through 'random pairing'
- To download SEAL materials, visit: www.teachernet.gov.uk/seal
- Arcuk.org.uk – mate crime

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Autumn 2016 to be updated autumn 2018 or sooner