

Anti-Bullying Policy

Rossall School believes that all pupils have the right to learn and develop in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Bullying is not identified as a problem in the school. This policy has been drawn up with regard to the DCSF Guidance Safe to Learn Embedding anti-bullying work in schools. The policy is given to staff and boarders and is part of the training given to new staff. It is available to parents on the school website or as a hard copy from Reception.

Aims and Objectives

- It is a statutory requirement that all schools have an anti – bullying policy. The Education Inspections Act (2006) places a legal duty on schools to make provision for measures to tackle all forms of bullying.
- The Children’s Plan: Building Brighter Futures (2007), emphasises the importance of tackling bullying in schools and the community
- Bullying exists in all walks of life, not just schools or certain types of schools. It is wrong and results in pain and distress to the victim and can directly affect other people, not just bullies and victims.
- The victim’s response at the time of a bullying incident, e.g., appearing to laugh along, is not a reliable indicator as to whether behaviour may be deemed to be bullying.
- We recognise that, at times, pupils’ behaviour can be thoughtless rather than deliberate.
- Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves

Types of bullying

Bullying can include a number of different behaviours:

- Emotional - being actively unfriendly, excluding, tormenting
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any violence
- Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Religious – being singled out because of your religious beliefs
- Cultural - bullying based on prejudice and difference
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually orientated comments
- Homophobic - because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- Disability – targeting pupils with physical or learning difficulties
- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber - Internet misuse through offensive website postings, e-mail and instant messaging. Misuse of mobile phones through text messaging, camera and video facilities, etc
- Property - damage to or hiding or another’s property
- indirect - spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups

The seriousness of bullying

Bullying causes psychological damage and can lead to suicide in more serious cases. Research suggests that to regard bullying as a straightforward discipline problem is no longer acceptable. Pre-emptive discipline could make the problem worse. It could reinforce the bully's perception of their esteem among his/her peer group, and exacerbate his/her and their antagonism towards the victim. It is important that a bully is helped to see the hurt he/she inflicts on his/her victims and made to understand that his/her behaviour cannot be tolerated. In the long term if a bully is able to get away with his/her bullying he/she is likely to continue to bully in later life.

It is important to state that anyone can be bullied but that no one deserves to be bullied. Whatever the reason, a victim must be helped and protected. The victim needs to be assisted to develop the personal resources they need in order to overcome the difficulties they are facing.

Procedures to follow in the event of bullying

We seek to prevent bullying by promoting a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable. Research suggests that one of the most effective deterrents of bullying is peer attitudes and responses. Pupils are encouraged to remove themselves from situations and to report incidents in which they are concerned that bullying behaviour is occurring.

- The school will deal promptly with any concerns over bullying and will involve parents where appropriate. In responding to concerns over bullying, our first response will always be to gather the relevant information in a calm and objective manner before deciding from an informed position the best intervention(s) to secure the desired outcome
- The bully and the victim will normally be interviewed separately and most serious cases are referred to the Headmaster.
- Records of bullying or suspected bullying will be maintained to ensure any repeated or patterns of behaviour may be identified
- Where bullying has been identified and intervened against, we will continue to monitor the situation for a suitable time period
- Appropriate support will be given to the victim and counselling will be available to both bully and victim if appropriate
- Serious cases of bullying may result in suspension or exclusion. Persistent bullying will result in exclusion
- Our pupils are encouraged to tell a member of staff at once if they know that bullying is taking place.
- In very serious cases, and only after the Headmaster has been involved, it may be necessary to make a report to the Police or to the Social Services. However, it is the policy of Rossall School to attempt to resolve such issues internally under the school's own disciplinary procedures, unless the matter is of such gravity that a criminal prosecution is likely.

Staff awareness and training

- The school will ensure that all staff are aware of this policy and its contents and are trained to identify and respond to incidents of bullying. Whenever possible staff receive training through INSET
- It is the responsibility of the Deputy Head to monitor the incidence and occurrence of bullying within the Senior School and to keep the Headmaster informed as appropriate
- As either part of an investigation into alleged incidents of bullying behaviour, Rossall reserves the right to search belongings and confiscate items and materials perceived to be offensive.
- Rossall also reserves the right to confiscate/ban individual pupils from using or carrying mobile phones and other media devices in School either as part of an investigation of an alleged bullying incident or as a response to an incident.

Limiting the opportunity for bullying

- The School is patrolled during break and lunch periods.
- At least one member of the house staff should be regularly present in each of the houses during these periods.
- It is the School's intention to minimise areas of the site that might facilitate bullying behaviour. Open areas where there is high public visibility are an effective deterrent. All areas of the Senior School site and the location of reported incidents are checked and monitored regularly.
- In boarding houses, there are strong teams of tutors supporting the Houseparents, who act *in loco parentis*. The informal house environment is important in reinforcing a pupil's standards and values, providing the opportunity for friendly, informal discussion of matters of concern to the individual pupil outside the formal classroom.
- We encourage close contact between the Houseparents and parents/guardians, and would always make contact if we were worried about a pupil's well-being.
- Our Medical Centre and all of our boarding houses display advice on where pupils can seek help, including details of confidential help lines and web sites connecting to external specialists, such as Childline, NSPCC, Get Connected, Samaritans.
- All pupils have access to a telephone helpline, enabling them to call for support in private.
- We provide leadership training to our Monitors which specifically covers the importance of offering support and assistance to younger and to vulnerable pupils.
- We have banned initiation ceremonies designed to cause pain anxiety or humiliation.
- We reserve the right to investigate incidents that take place outside school hours, on school visits and trips and that occur in the vicinity of the school, involving our pupils

- We welcome feedback from parents and guardians on the effectiveness of our preventative measures.
- All staff should be sensitive to changes in behaviour, moods, and be aware of absenteeism.
- It is the responsibility of all staff to refer any pupil over whom problems may be sensed to the appropriate Tutor, Head of Year, Designated Senior Person or to the Deputy Head.

Prevention through education

Rossall seeks to educate pupils about how to interact effectively and positively. We aim to produce a safe and secure environment where all pupils can learn without anxiety and where we minimise opportunities for bullying.

Pupils are encouraged to co-operate with each other, form positive relationships and question behaviour which discriminates against others. They should also learn to listen to others at the same time as demonstrating an appropriate degree of assertiveness.

To combat the culture of silence, a culture of being prepared to tell is encouraged. Tutor time is used to encourage amongst other things that any pupil being bullied should speak to his parent, Tutor, Year Head, Houseparent, the Chaplain or any other trusted adult about it. Serious consideration will be given to the topic within the framework of peer group pressure in Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE). Training of school monitors will also address bullying and encourage the culture of being prepared to tell. Assemblies will, from time to time, focus upon it.

A number of other subjects offer openings to examine questions of oppressive behaviour and equality. For example, through literature pupils may explore the emotional impact of isolation or abuse. History can help pupils to understand intimidation and persecution.

Bullying beyond Rossall School

Schools are not directly responsible for bullying off their premises and this can be a difficult area to manage. However, boys are encouraged not to suffer in silence. The bullying may be by pupils at the School, pupils at other schools, or people not at school at all. Where a pupil reports bullying off the school premises, there a number of responses that may be appropriate:

- Contact with the local police
- Contact with the relevant transport provider about bullying on buses and trams
- Contact with Heads of other schools
- Alternative routes to School
- Talk to pupils about how to avoid or handle bullying outside the school premises

Cyberbullying

"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." Bill Belsey, <http://www.cyberbullying.org/>

Cyberbullying can involve Social Networking Sites, like Bebo and Myspace, emails and mobile phones, used for SMS messages and as cameras.

Rossall School:

- Expects all pupils to adhere to its charter for the safe use of the internet. Certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and our IT Department monitors pupils' use.
- May impose sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse of the internet.
- Adheres to the BECTA guidelines regarding E-teaching and the internet.
- Offers guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and cyberbullying in PSHE lessons, which covers blocking and removing contacts from "buddy lists.
- Offers guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details safe.
- 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 is not allowed in washing and changing areas, [or in the bedrooms of boarding houses].

The role of parents

Rossall acknowledges the role played by parents in ensuring that instances of bullying are reduced. It is clearly helpful where parents are able to support the values and measures represented within this policy and to discuss relationships, incidents and concerns in the same light.

- Parents, who are concerned that their children may be being bullied, or may be a perpetrator of bullying, should contact their form tutor, Year Head or Houseparent immediately. We advise against contacting other parents to sort out matters.
- If parents are not satisfied with the response they should contact the Deputy Head or the Headmaster.
- A parent who is dissatisfied with the way the school has dealt with a bullying incident can follow the Complaints Procedure.

Related Policies

- Behaviour Policy (including Discipline and Exclusions)
- Special Education Needs (SEN) and Learning Difficulties Policy

- Disability Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy

Further information, guidance and support

1. "Don't suffer in Silence" Comprehensive anti-bullying pack for schools and teachers promoted by the DfES (Now DCSF).
<http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/DfES%200064%20200MIG479.pdf>
2. "Safe to Learn: Embedding Anti-Bullying Work in Schools"(DCSF guide)
<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/doc/11907/Summary%20-%20Safe%20to%20Learn.pdf>
3. "Bullying": An ISC Child Health and Wellbeing Working Party Guidance Update Five
<http://www.antibullying.net/adultsinschools.htm> - Source of anti-bullying support for school communities)
4. "Where You are NOT Alone" <http://www.bullying.org/>
5. <http://www.cyberbullying.org/>
6. "Child Protection and New Technologies" by Childnet International
7. <http://www.childnet-int.org/>
8. Safe to Learn Tackling Cyberbullying
<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/tacklingbullying/>
9. "Guidance on e-strategies for schools, including technological bullying"
http://schools.becta.org.uk/index.php?section=is&catcode=ss_to_es_pp_ob_03&rid=14905
10. Ofsted "Reference Guide to the key standards in each type of social care service inspected by Ofsted" (Reference 080117)
[http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Forms-and-guidance/Browse-all-by/Other/General/Reference-guide-to-the-key-standards-in-each-type-of-social-care-service-inspected-by-Ofsted-for-inspections-from-1-August-2008/\(language\)/eng-GB](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Forms-and-guidance/Browse-all-by/Other/General/Reference-guide-to-the-key-standards-in-each-type-of-social-care-service-inspected-by-Ofsted-for-inspections-from-1-August-2008/(language)/eng-GB)
www.boarding.org.uk

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