



Approved by LGB	March 23
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Cycle	Annual

## Anti-Bullying Policy

Rushton CE First School will not tolerate any form of bullying. We believe that all children are special and should be allowed to develop and grow in a nurturing environment secure in the knowledge that they are cherished. We believe that pupils and staff have the right to learn in an affirming and safe environment which promotes positive personal growth and self-esteem for all.

### Rationale

Our aim is to provide a caring safe environment for all our children so that they can learn and play in a relaxed and secure environment. We take all incidents of bullying seriously.

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect and pupils who are bullying others need to learn different ways of behaving. We acknowledge bullying can happen from time to time, indeed, it would be unrealistic to claim that it does not. When bullying does occur, everyone should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively in accordance with our anti-bullying policy.

This school policy endorses the Church of England guidance on challenging homophobic bullying: Valuing all God's Children and the guidance Action Against Bullying on the Staffordshire website: <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Education/Learning-options-and-careers/Happiness-and-Wellbeing/Bullying/Bullying.aspx>

### Aims and Objectives of this Policy

The aim of this policy is to try and prevent and deal with any behaviour deemed as bullying. This policy endorses our inclusive, Christian ethos where bullying is regarded as unacceptable and there is a safe and secure haven for everyone to learn and work in.

Anti-bullying strategies are rooted within our framework of Christian values and beliefs. We ensure everyone feels valued and welcome at our school.

All members of the school have a responsibility to recognise bullying when it occurs and take appropriate action in accordance with the school policy. The school will:

- Foster a caring, supportive and inclusive ethos in which bullying is not tolerated.
- Include regular anti-bullying work within the curriculum.
- Encourage a 'telling' culture. All pupils will know what the school policy on bullying is and what they can do if bullying occurs.
- Treat all reports of bullying very seriously and record and report each one.
- Work in partnership with parents. Parents will be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

## **What is bullying?**

Bullying is any deliberate, hurtful, upsetting, frightening or threatening behaviour by an individual or a group towards other people. It is repeated over a period of time and it is very difficult for the victims to defend themselves. Bullying is mean and results in worry, fear, pain and distress to the victim/s.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional; being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures), ridicule, humiliation.
- Verbal; name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, making rude remarks, making fun of someone.
- Physical; pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, throwing stones, biting, spitting, punching or any other forms of violence, taking or hiding someone's things.
- Racist; racial taunts, graffiti, making fun of culture or religion.
- Cyber bullying
- Any unfavourable or negative comments, gestures or actions made to someone who is perceived to be 'different' in some way eg due to a disability or special educational need.

It is important to understand that bullying is done on repeated occasions and on purpose. It is not the odd occasion of falling out with friends, name calling, argument or when the occasional trick or joke is played on someone. Children often fall out when they are upset, and it is an important part of children's development to learn how to deal with friendship issues. All children must learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships.

## **Role of parents and carers**

We ask parents to look out for signs or symptoms of their child being bullied.

## **Signs or Symptoms**

Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- doesn't want to go to school
- changes their usual routine
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in schoolwork
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- 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 & 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.

At Rushton we are proud of our caring and nurturing atmosphere and all staff strive to develop a positive anti-bullying ethos by:

- Promoting equality and nurturing a sense of identity and belonging for all.
- Encouraging achievement and having high expectations of all pupils.
- Celebrating success in its widest sense.
- Promoting positive behaviour.
- Encouraging the active participation of pupils in decision making and school life.
- Working in partnership with parents/carers and the wider community.

When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly, caring and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be a part of their behaviour.

### **Curriculum**

Children through class work, PSHE lessons (Relationships), circle times, class and pupil council sessions and during or assemblies will be given regular opportunities to reflect on the issues surrounding bullying and will be offered opportunities to develop and practice skills for dealing with any incidents which might occur.

### **Cyber Bullying and Online Safety**

#### **Principles**

Becoming good digital citizens, being able to use technology safely and responsibly, looking after yourself and your peers, and participating in life online, must be a crucial part of modern education for all.

#### **Definition**

Cyber bullying is bullying via electronic means. This could be via a smart phone, computer, laptop, tablet or online gaming platform. It can take place on a range of online or mobile services such as text, email, social networking sites, video-hosting sites, messenger, photo sharing services, chat, webcams, visual learning environments and online games.

#### **Procedures**

- Pupils learn online safety education through the curriculum eg ICT lessons, assemblies.
- All pupils and staff know what cyber bullying is and its potential.
- Parents/carers are made aware via a range of communications that pupils have a responsibility in their use of ICT.
- We will always respond immediately to reports of cyber bullying.
- The positive use of technology is promoted as the key to preventing its misuse.
- Our safeguarding policy, online safety and AUP policies reflect school response to cyber bullying.

#### **Responses to cyber bullying**

- Support the young person
- Reassure they have done the right thing to come forward
- Inform the parents

- Work closely with the person to move ahead
- Advise on next steps- save evidence and don't retaliate
- Help pupils on how to improve online safety eg how to block people/increase privacy settings
- Investigate the incident
- Work with the person displaying the bullying behaviour
- Be always aware of the legal framework of cyber bullying.

### **Encouraging a 'telling' culture**

We recognise how difficult it can be for pupils and parents to act on bullying and how bullying thrives on fear and secrecy. The key messages for pupils are:

- If you are being bullied, tell someone. Don't suffer in silence.
- If you see someone being bullied, tell an adult immediately.
- Don't think that it's OK to be a 'by-stander', this can give the impression that you think that bullying is acceptable when it never is.

### **Dealing with Incidents**

Staff treat all reports of bullying very seriously. They will take a calm problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour reported by either staff, pupils, parents/guardians. In any incident of bullying, the teacher will speak separately to the pupils involved, to get both sides of the story. All interviews will be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned.

We will try to establish:

- Which pupils were involved?
- The nature and the extent of the bullying and where it was taking place.
- The effects on the person(s) being bullied.
- The nature of the relationship between the perpetrator(s) of the bullying and those experiencing it.
- If there were any triggers to the behaviour.
- The support and disciplinary measures required to try to resolve the difficulty.
- If the incident is deemed as serious, statements are taken from pupils and recorded on MyConcern.

Our priority is to restore a sense of safety and wellbeing in the person who has experienced the bullying and to encourage better behaviour from those who have perpetrated it. Most incidents will be resolved quickly and with limited intervention, other incidents may be more complex and demand a certain level of skill and expertise. Some incidents of bullying may require support from professionals within the Education Service e.g. Behaviour Support, Educational Psychologists etc.

Any serious incidents of bullying are recorded on MyConcern. Parents will be informed by the teacher dealing with the incident at the end of the school day, or sooner should the incident require immediate intervention.

### **Sanctions**

When responding to a particular incident we will consider:

- The age of the individuals involved.
- The nature of the incident.
- Whether there are any behavioural/learning needs which could affect an individual's behaviour towards others.

- Whether the individuals have been involved in any previous incidents.
- The duty of care to all pupils and staff.

In the first instance, when bullying has been confirmed, the bully is counselled and a sanction is enforced, which reflects the seriousness of the incident e.g. reprimand, withdrawal of privileges, verbal or written apology. In exceptional circumstances, bullying may result in exclusion from school.

### **Involving Parents/Carers**

Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be a perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's class teacher immediately.

Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school.

We will inform parents/carers of any incidents of bullying we are investigating. After an incident of bullying has been confirmed we will ensure that parents/carers know:

- The steps that will be taken to resolve the incident.
- The progress towards a satisfactory conclusion.

### **Staff Development**

All members of staff will have access to advice and staff development as necessary, within the resources available. The school is developing a Mental Health and Wellbeing strategy to support pupils, staff and the wider school community and staff will be supported training in mental health first aid to support anyone dealing with mental health difficulties, including the effects of bullying.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation of the policy**

To ensure this policy is effective, it will be regularly monitored and evaluated. It will be reviewed on an annual basis.

### **Sources of further information:**

Kidscape 020 7730 3300 (general enquiry number) [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)

Childline 0800 1111 (helpline for children) [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

Parentline Plus 0808 800 2222 [www.parentlineplus.org.uk](http://www.parentlineplus.org.uk)

Anti-bullying Alliance 0207 843 1901 [www.anti-bullyingalliance.org](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org)

NSPCC 0808 800 5000 [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)