

RYDES HILL PREPARATORY SCHOOL & NURSERY

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY



MISSION STATEMENT

IN OUR SCHOOL WE WILL TRY TO:

- ❖ Please God in the way we behave by loving one another and working to the best of our abilities.
- ❖ Think about the messages given by our Assemblies and Masses and talk to God as our friend each day, respecting others as they pray.
- ❖ Be a good example to others by being obedient and kind, using our strengths to help others who experience difficulties and accepting everyone in our school as an equal.
- ❖ Help to make our classrooms welcoming and happy places where we are kind and considerate and respect each other's property.
- ❖ Follow Jesus' example wherever we are.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

At Rydes Hill Preparatory School, our community is based upon respect, good manners and fair play. We are committed to providing a safe and caring environment that is free from disruption, violence and any form of harassment so that every one of our pupils can develop his/her full potential. We expect our pupils to treat members of staff with courtesy and co-operation so that they can learn in a relaxed; but orderly, atmosphere. All pupils should care for and support each other.

Rydes Hill Preparatory School prides itself on its respect and mutual tolerance. Parents/guardians have an important role in supporting Rydes Hill Preparatory School in maintaining high standards of behaviour. It is essential that school and homes have consistent expectations of behaviour and that they co-operate closely together. Acceptance of this policy forms part of our standard terms and conditions. This policy is available to parents of pupils and prospective pupils on request and for perusal in the school office during the school day. It is also available and known to all staff.

Bullying, harassment and victimisation and discrimination will not be tolerated. We treat all our pupils and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff and the school. Any kind of bullying is unacceptable. This policy applies to all pupils in the school, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The Objectives of the Policy are to ensure:

- All staff, pupils, parents and members of the Governing Body have an understanding of bullying.
- All teaching and non-teaching staff and members of the Governing Body should know what the school policy is and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school, at Rydes Hill, bullying will be taken seriously. Pupils and parents should know that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

“Bullying may be defined as: *Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group, either physically or emotionally*”.
Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools – DCSF Guidance.

Bullying, including cyberbullying, is the intentional hurting, harming or humiliating of another person by physical (including sexual), verbal and emotional means (by excluding, tormenting or spreading malicious rumours) and can involve Social Networking Sites (such as Bebo, Facebook and Myspace), emails and mobile telephones, used for SMS messages and as cameras. It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It can involve complicity that falls short of direct participation. Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and intimidatory.

Bullying, may involve actions or comments that are racist, sexual or sexist, homophobic, which focus on religion, cultural background, disabilities or other physical attributes (such as

hair colour, body shape or health conditions such as eczema). Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time and can involve everyone - pupils, other young people, staff and parents.

WHO ARE BULLIES?

- People who are trying to get attention
- People who may be having problems at home
- People who have themselves been bullied
- People who think they will impress others

WHY DO THEY BULLY?

- They enjoy the power
- They are insecure
- They are prejudiced
- They are jealous
- They are emotionally neglected

THE OCCASIONAL BULLY

The occasional bully can display kinder aspects of their character, but does resort to bullying when it suits. These bullies do share some of the same traits, but are difficult to classify because the bullying behaviour is not consistent and is often precipitated by some sort of crisis or by the bully 'having a bad day'. These children and young people can also be quite charming but often they:

- Are suddenly aggressive to peers, parents, teachers and siblings
- Act impulsively and regret it later
- Don't learn from their mistakes
- Wish to be in charge
- May be physically strong
- May be articulate
- May be manipulative
- May display other anti-social behaviours, such as throwing tantrums or yelling when things go wrong
- May, on the whole, have good self-esteem
- May be 'spoilt' by parents who cannot understand how their children could be bullying others because they are perfect at home where their every wish is granted.

These are characteristics we often find in children who bully occasionally. These children need firm, clear guidelines and established consequences to actions. We also teach them to empathise with other children.

THE SCHOOL'S RESPONSE TO BULLYING

At Rydes Hill Preparatory School, we always treat bullying, including allegations of bullying, very seriously. It conflicts sharply with the school's policy on equal opportunities, as well as with its social and moral principles. Bullying can be so serious that it causes psychological damage, eating disorders, self-harm and even suicide, and, whilst bullying is not a specific

criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour.

SIGNS OF BULLYING

Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is being bullied include:

- Unwillingness to return to school
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually bad work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others
- Books, bags and other belongings suddenly go missing, or are damaged
- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary)
- Diminished levels of self confidence
- Frequent visits to the School Office with symptoms such as stomach pains, headaches
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class
- Choosing the company of adults
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact
- Difficulty in sleeping, experiences nightmares
- Talking of suicide or running away

Although there may be other causes for some of the above symptoms a repetition of, or a combination of, these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents and teachers.

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

We have put the following preventative measures in place in order to ensure that bullying does not become a problem which is associated with Rydes Hill Preparatory School:

- All new pupils (including our youngest pupils) are briefed thoroughly on the school's expected standards of behaviour. They are told what to do if they encounter bullying. We guarantee that whistle-blowers who act in good faith will not be penalised and will be supported.
- All new members of staff are given guidance on the school's anti-bullying policy and in how to react to allegations of bullying in their first week at Rydes Hill Preparatory School. They are required to read the school's policy as part of their induction. We use appropriate Assemblies to explain the school policy on bullying. Our PSHE programme is structured to give pupils an awareness of their social and moral responsibilities as they progress through the school. Pupils are supplied with an informational booklet on bullying (Appendix 1). The programme is structured to enforce the message about community involvement and taking care of each other.
- Other lessons, particularly PSHE, RE, Citizenship, highlight the issue of bullying and reinforce this message by teaching moral and spiritual values that show bullying to be unacceptable and by developing social skills. The use of creative learning through art, music, poetry, drama and dance develop understanding of feelings and enhance pupils' social and emotional skills.

- The use of Circle Time for EYFS pupils helps to develop social and emotional skills in such areas as empathy and the management of feelings.
- All our pupils are encouraged to tell a member of staff at once if they know that bullying is taking place.
- All reported incidents are recorded and investigated at once. We always monitor reported incidents. Written records of any incidents are kept securely by Mrs Jo Smith in order that patterns of behaviour can be identified and monitored.
- Staff are always on duty at times when pupils are not in class and patrol the school site, particularly areas where bullying might occur. They are trained to be alert to inappropriate language or behaviour.
- All pupils have access to a telephone helpline, enabling them to call for support in private.
- 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.

In addition to the preventative measures described above, Rydes Hill Preparatory School has developed specific measures in respect of cyberbullying.

- Seven types of categories of cyberbullying have been identified
 1. Text messaging
 2. Sending pictures/video clips
 3. Telephone calls
 4. Email messages
 5. Chat room messages
 6. Instant messaging
 7. Website – defamatory blogs, personal websites, personal space, on-line personal polling sites

These are discussed where appropriate and guidance given.

- Rydes Hill expects all pupils to adhere to its charter for the safe use of the internet.
- Rydes Hill offers guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and cyberbullying in PSHE lessons, which covers blocking, removing contacts from “buddy” lists and sharing personal data.
- Rydes Hill offers guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile telephone numbers and other personal details safe and not to divulge in emails or on the internet.
- The use of cameras on mobile phones is not allowed anywhere in the School or School grounds. Pupils are advised not to upload photographs to internet sites.

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH REPORTED BULLYING

If an incident of bullying is reported, the following procedures are adopted:

- The member of staff to whom it was reported or who first discovers the situation, will control the situation, reassure and support the pupils involved.
- He/she will inform the Pastoral Deputy Head, Mrs Jo Smith, using the School’s incident form, as soon as possible in order to enable patterns to be identified.

- The member of staff will calmly explain the range of disciplinary measures that are potentially involved.
- The victim will be interviewed on his/her own and asked to write an account of events.
- The bully, together with all others who were involved, will be interviewed individually and asked to write an immediate account of events.
- The incident should be recorded on a school incident form and signed and dated before it is given to the Pastoral Deputy Head who is responsible for keeping all records of bullying and other serious disciplinary offences securely in a locked cabinet in his/her office.
- The Pastoral Deputy Head will inform the tutors, of both the bully/bullies and the victim[s] as soon as possible. In very serious incidents, the Headmistress should be informed.
- The alleged bully will be interviewed at a later stage by a member of the pastoral team, separately from the victim, and it will be made clear why his/her behaviour was inappropriate and caused distress. He/she will be offered guidance on modifying his or her behaviour, together with any appropriate disciplinary sanctions as set out in the school's Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions Policy (P16); for example, detention, withdrawal of privileges or suspension. In particularly serious and/or persistent cases, the bully should expect permanent exclusion as set out in our Exclusions Policy (P2).
- The parents/guardians of all parties should be informed and invited into school to discuss the matter. Their support should be sought.
- A way forward, including disciplinary sanctions and counselling, should be agreed. This should recognise that suitable support is needed both for children who are being bullied and for pupils who bully others, as well as dealing with appropriate disciplinary measures in accordance with the school's Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions Policy.
- A meeting involving all the parties, with close staff supervision, could be helpful in developing a strategy for all concerned to close the episode.
- A monitoring and review strategy will be put in place.
- In very serious cases, and only after the Headmistress 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 Rydes Hill Preparatory 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. The school may exclude a pupil, either temporarily or permanently, in cases of severe and persistent bullying and in the event that the support put in place for the bully does not result in the modification of behaviour to an acceptable level.

EYFS CHILDREN

Even the youngest children are encouraged to behave towards each other with kindness and consideration. They have to learn to look after their own possessions and to respect other's possessions. We expect them to be honest, helpful and polite, and to work hard and to listen to others. They should respect everyone and learn to value differences and diversity. Mrs Patricia Bryson, the Head of the Nursery Department, is in day to day charge of the management of behaviour in the Nursery Department.

We explain to children why some forms of behaviour are unacceptable and hurtful to others. The use of Circle Time enables EYFS pupils to develop social and emotional skills in such areas as empathy and the management of feelings.

We rarely need to impose sanctions but sometimes we may remove a treat for hurtful behaviour. Occasionally, a child may be sent to see the Headmistress, Mrs Stephanie Bell, who will explain the inappropriateness of a particular action; but such instances are rare. Parents are always informed verbally by a member of Nursery staff, when any sanction or reproof is needed, and in cases of repeated instances of hurtful or inappropriate behaviour, they will be invited into the school to discuss the situation with their child's Teacher and the Head of the Nursery and to agree a joint way of handling the difficulty.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Parents and pupils are encouraged to use our complaints procedure (available on request from the School Office and summarised in the Parent Handbook) if they feel that their concerns about bullying (or anything else) are not being addressed properly. Parents of EYFS children should be aware that they have the right to refer a complaint directly to Ofsted, if they are unhappy with the way in which their complaint has been handled. Details may be obtained from the School Office and the Ofsted contact details may be found in the Parent Handbook.

IMPROVING THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT – Taking Action

At Rydes Hill we:

- Organise staff supervision in the playground and around the School buildings in order to remove opportunities for bullying.
- Review the physical design of the School buildings, particularly 'blind spots' where bullying could take place.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT – Raising Awareness of Staff

At Rydes Hill we:

- Ensure that the anti-bullying policy is reviewed at least once a year by Governing Body and staff and that information on legal responsibilities is given to all staff – teachers, support staff, temporary staff and gap year students.
- Ensure that the anti-bullying work and policy are covered in the induction programme for new staff.
- Ensure that staff are clear about their responsibility to resolve pupils' problems; know the sanctions and behaviour management strategies (see P16 Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions Policy) and where to seek support; have the requisite knowledge and skills for preventing bullying and repairing harm; understand the needs of vulnerable pupils, including disabled pupils, those with SEN or those with caring responsibilities;
- Know the procedures for referral; know the procedures in relation to safeguarding and liaison with multi-agency teams.

STRATEGIES FOR TEACHERS

- Watch for early signs and symptoms or behaviour that a pupil is being bullied.
- Those on duty at lunchtimes and break times must be vigilant.
- Deal with incidents immediately and report to the class teacher and, as appropriate, the Head of Early Years, Deputies or Headmistress.

- Never ignore a child who reports an incident, which he or she thinks is bullying.
- Encourage children to communicate with their class teacher or a significant other, if they find the subject difficult to talk about.
- The teacher must always give support to the child who is being bullied and counselling should be given to both victim and bully by the Class Teacher or member of the Senior Management Team (SMT).

STRATEGIES FOR VICTIMS

(These will also be discussed and explained in Class by the Class Teacher)

- First of all to understand that ‘not telling’ is playing by the bully’s rules and we want you to tell.
- Tell your parents and/or a member of staff.
- Identify the person, places and times when bullying takes place.
- Until the situation is resolved, is it possible to avoid these circumstances?
- Write to your teacher if it is difficult to talk about.
- Do not buy the bully off with presents or money.
- Do not just ‘put up with it’ as it will become worse.

STRATEGIES FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

- Encourage your son/daughter to talk about their day asking questions as appropriate.
- Being sensitive to any unusual behaviour in your son/daughter such as a reluctance to attend school, feeling ill regularly, or not completing work to their normal standard.
- Informing your son/daughter’s Class Teacher immediately if you feel your son/daughter may be a victim of bullying. We want to know as soon as possible, even if it is a false alarm.
- Give reassurances to your son/daughter if they are being bullied by telling them, for example, they are not in the wrong and encouraging them to ask for help.
- Reminding your son/daughter of the school policy concerning bullying and the support they will receive from staff.

SUPPORT

At Rydes Hill we support the victims in the following ways:

- By offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with their Class Teacher or another teacher if they choose.
- Discussing the incident(s) with the victim’s parents/guardians.
- Taking steps to ensure that they feel safe again and helped to rebuild confidence and resilience.
- By offering continuing support when they feel they need it.
- They will not be excluded from school; even if it is thought it would be to their benefit.

At Rydes Hill we support the bully in the following ways:

- The person who has been named as being a bully will be invited to put forward his or her view point to senior staff.
- The person doing the bullying will be given support to develop his or her emotional skills and knowledge so that he or she learns how to behave in ways which do not cause harm in the future.

ORGANISATIONS FOR HELP

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| • Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) | 0808 800 5793 |
| • Children’s Legal Centre | 0845 345 4345 |
| • KIDSCAPE Parents’ Helpline (Mon-Fri, 10.00am-4.00pm) | 0845 120 5205 or
www.kidscape.org.uk |
| • Parentline Plus | 0808 800 2222 |
| • Youth Access | 0208 772 9900 |
| • Bullying Online | www.bullying.co.uk |
| • Beat Bullying | 0845 338 5060 or
www.beatbullying.org |

REFERENCES

DCSF Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools 2007

“Where You are NOT Alone” www.bullying.org

“Child Protection and New Technologies” by Childnet International www.childnet-int.org

“Guidance on e-strategies for schools, including technological bullying: www.schools.becta.org.uk

Kidscape Anti-bullying policy for schools

Mrs S Bell, Headmistress

Dated: July 2009

Reviewed: July 2010

Reviewed: October 2010

Reviewed: October 2011

Review Date: October 2012

Appendix I – Rydes Hill Anti-Bullying Booklet for Pupils “Say No to Bullying”