

Ribblesdale High School - Anti-Bullying Policy

The Ribblesdale Way

Respect for each other and the school environment
Inspire others and set a good example
Be proud of your achievements and your school
Be kind, supportive and helpful
Invest in your future through hard work
Effectively communicate and show self-control

Anti-bullying Leads

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(Mr Lee can be contacted via the Clerk to the Governors, Mrs Smith at school)

The School Ethos and Policy Aim

Bullying destroys lives. Every year young people commit suicide and in nearly half of these cases bullying has been found to be a contributory factor (44% according to a Beatbullying UK Survey). Bullying can effect school attendance, wellbeing and pupil performance. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed, purposeful and secure atmosphere. Prevention is preferred to intervention and the school is committed to maintaining an ethos of mutual respect, where positive relationships are encouraged and individuals feel valued. The 'Ribblesdale Way' underpins this ethos and serves as a reminder for the whole Ribblesdale community of our shared values. Bullying behaviour of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to report it and feel confident that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to inform the staff. Staff must respond to these concerns with urgency and rigour to ensure each young person is adequately safeguarded. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying and everybody has the right to be treated with respect and dignity.

Objectives of this Policy

- All governors, teaching and support staff, pupils and parents to have a clear understanding of what bullying is
- All governors, teaching and support staff know what the school policy is on bullying, 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
- For pupils and parents to be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported
- To make it very clear that bullying behaviour will not be tolerated.

Defining Bullying

Bullying is an intentional act, by an individual or group, which is repeated over time, and causes physical or emotional pain or distress.

If a pupil feels upset by the actions of others they should let their feelings known. If bullying behaviour continues despite making it clear that they find this behaviour upsetting, then it should be reported so that school can take the appropriate action to protect the victim of bullying and to educate and sanction the perpetrator.

Bullying often involves an imbalance of power e.g. popularity, physical strength, age, group size etc. which can leave the victim of bullying feeling powerless and isolated.

Bullying can be perpetrated in different ways:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber all areas of internet, such as email, chat room misuse and social networking sites including inappropriate messaging, passing on messages or sharing of personal information mobile threats by text messaging & calls misuse of technology i.e. camera & video facilities. **It should be noted that cyber bullying is no less hurtful or harmful than other forms of bullying and is harder to escape.**

Some groups are more vulnerable than others and may become a target for bullies. Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted, has caring responsibilities, special educational needs or a disability. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case. Where vulnerable groups have been identified as being at increased risk of being bullied routine well-being conversations will be led by staff (half termly) to check that the pupils are feeling safe and secure.

It is not bullying when:

- There is no intention to hurt or harm i.e. behaviour is thoughtless or accidental
- There is a one off fight / argument between pupils of equal stature or strength
- There is a good reason why a student(s) cannot be included in a group activity.

If it is determined that there has not been a bullying incident, but a pupil's behaviour has nevertheless been inappropriate, the school's behaviour for learning policy should be followed.

Preventing Bullying

The school is committed to raising awareness of bullying issues by providing the pupils with learning opportunities throughout the curriculum, but particularly within the citizenship and PSHE. Assemblies, posters, competitions and special events will also contribute to preventing bullying and promoting the positive values that underpin daily interactions between members of the school community. The involvement of pupils in these initiatives is paramount – the anti-bullying strategy should be something done with pupils not for pupils. The pupils themselves will be actively encouraged to play a major role preventing bullying e.g. school council and peer mentors. There is also a genuine commitment to CPD for staff in order to raise awareness and equip staff with the skills and knowledge to deal with bullying sensitively and effectively. The school has invested in increasing staff supervision at breaks and lunch. All staff on duty outside must wear high visibility waistcoats. CCTV facilities have been extended to assist with monitoring corridors and outside areas.

Unacceptable Language

Many pupils engage in what they would term 'banter' and do not understand the emotional upset this causes. Below is a list of words which are unacceptable, in any circumstances, **when used as an insult or slur or in an unkind way**. There are clearly many similar words that are inappropriate and this section of the policy should be used as a guide and not as a definitive list. If pupils use these terms, they should be immediately challenged and a sanction imposed.

Gay	Puff	Whore
Retard	Bitch	Slag
Spaz (Spastic)	Nigger	Dick (Dickhead)
Lezzer (Lesbian)	Paki	Swot
Skank	Sket	Cunt
Twat	Slut	Slapper

How can pupils report bullying?

How can pupils report being bullied themselves or tell the school about their concerns for another pupil?

Ribblesdale encourages all pupils to report bullying whether directly involved or as a witness to a bullying incident.

Bullying can be reported by;

1. Telling a member of staff with whom the pupil feels comfortable to make a disclosure.
2. Telling a parent who should contact the relevant Pastoral Coordinator as a matter of urgency.
3. Sending an e-mail to stopbullying@ribblesdale.org with details of who is being bullied.
4. Putting an anonymous message in the school's 'Speak Out' box in Student Services. This box is checked daily by the Student Services receptionist and is multi-purpose so it would not be obvious when a report of bullying is being posted.
5. Telling a Peer Mentor who is trained to respond appropriately and other support – the 'Open Door' project.
6. Reporting bullying anonymously via Moodle.

Where it is determined that bullying **may** have taken place the relevant investigative procedures **must** be followed.

How can parents report bullying?

Where parents wish to raise the issue of bullying, initial enquiries should be directed to the relevant Pastoral Coordinator. A record of the discussion will be kept for future reference. Concerns should be dealt with quickly to demonstrate the school's commitment to tackling bullying. The parental disclosure should trigger the investigative procedures. It is important the school maintains a dialogue with the parent until the issue has been satisfactorily resolved. In the unlikely event of a parent being unhappy with the school's response the school's complaints procedure should be followed.

How can staff report bullying?

Where staff witness behaviour which has any of the hallmarks of bullying, they should intervene immediately and talk to the pupil to establish what has happened. If the pupil claims that he/she is not being bullied, the details of what has been witnessed should still be passed to the Pastoral Coordinator,

as a matter of urgency, for their consideration and to build the big picture. Many pupils who are being bullied are reluctant to report it.

How can visitors report bullying?

If a visitor witnesses bullying they should discuss it with the member of staff they are visiting. The member of staff should then pass on the information to the relevant Pastoral Coordinator.

Managing Incidents

- Any disclosure by a pupil **must** be taken seriously. It is not for that member of staff to decide if the disclosure is worth passing on
- Staff members should listen carefully and avoid interrupting or asking leading questions. In the case of a student telling a staff member that he/she is telling them in confidence, it should be explained that you want to help and may have to pass on information to key members of staff in order to do this (see confidentiality policy)
- Where there is alleged bullying and a possible threat to the pupil the member of staff **must** first ensure the physical safety of the victim. This could necessitate the pupil being escorted by a member of staff, to the relevant Pastoral Coordinator
- On arrival at the Pastoral Coordinator's office the procedures should be explained quietly and calmly to the victim, including telling the pupil that evidence will be kept on file
- The pupil should write down his/her account with dates, times, places and names if possible using the standard student statement pro-forma
- The pupil should be asked what he/she would like to happen next in order that his/her wishes can inform the decision making process
- The investigation should then take place. Perpetrators and witnesses should be interviewed and statements taken
- In the case of serious incidents, advice should be sought from the relevant Year Leader / linked member of the Senior Leadership Team. However, where there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm' the school's DSL (or backup DSL) should be informed as a matter of urgency and the child protection procedures followed
- If allegations are sufficiently supported by the evidence contact should be made with the parents of all involved including the victim. Parents should be advised how their actions might help the situation
- If it is established that bullying has occurred, a school sanction should **always** be imposed. The level of sanction should be proportionate to the act of bullying and should take into account any previous acts of bullying. This will help to demonstrate the school's commitment to tackling bullying. Explain to all pupils involved what the school's actions will be, including any intervention strategies and allay any anxiety where possible
- The details should then be logged on SIMS in 'behaviour management' including school actions against perpetrators and victim support. Only Pastoral Co-ordinators should log bullying incidents following a detailed and rigorous investigation.

Follow up

Provision for ongoing support for the victim **must** be made in all cases where bullying is identified. Pupils should be placed on the vulnerable pupils list, by the Pastoral Coordinator, to increase staff awareness and vigilance. The Form Tutor, after being notified by the relevant Pastoral Coordinator, will make follow up checks the next day, after one week and one month later. These enquiries should be made in private, using the 'green slip' system, usually following a registration session. If further disclosures are made these should be reported to the relevant Pastoral Coordinator immediately. When

completed the 'green slip' should be returned to the Pastoral Coordinator who will sign the pupil off and remove them from vulnerable pupils list.

Sanctions, intervention and support for pupils exhibiting bullying behaviours

In order to modify bullying behaviours Ribblesdale High School will employ a wide range of sanctions / interventions. These may include:

Letters of apology / personal apologies

Detention

Isolation

Senior Leadership Seclusion

Peer / Adult mediation

Break and lunchtime restrictions for perpetrators

Restorative justice / processes

Parental meetings

Fixed term exclusions

Circle time

Anger management support

Counselling

Permanent exclusion

Liaison with Police / Safer Travel leading to fixed penalty notices / bus exclusions

Support for victims of bullying

Support for the victim is paramount. The pupil's Form Tutor is a key point of contact but further support may be required from a Pastoral Coordinator, School Counsellor, Year Leader and SLT. The following options should be considered and applied appropriately, with the consent of the victim:

Befriending

Peer / Adult mediation

Access to supervised 'safe havens' e.g. A1 games club, LRC, LC and D block computer club

Circle time

Self esteem building courses

Adult counselling

Enhanced adult vigilance

Moving form / curriculum groups

Appendix 1 – What happens when bullying is reported?

When a report of bullying is received by the school it should always be taken seriously and passed to the relevant Pastoral Coordinator.



The Pastoral Coordinator will listen to the pupil's explanation of what they are experiencing and decide whether an investigation into the alleged bullying is required.



Is the pupil at significant risk of harm?



No – the alleged bullying will be investigated in school asap. The victim of alleged bullying would immediately receive support.



Yes – the matter should be reported to the school's DSL as a matter of urgency and child protection procedures followed.



If the alleged bullying is supported by evidence parents of all children involved should be informed, an appropriate sanction should be given to the perpetrator.



Ongoing support for the victim. The pupil will be placed on the vulnerable pupils list so staff can be vigilant with regard to safeguarding. In addition, they will be placed on the green slip monitoring system with the Form Tutor. If bullying is repeated the monitoring period will be extended.



Ongoing monitoring and re-education of the perpetrator of bullying. Pastoral Coordinators will place perpetrators of bullying under close monitoring. When pupils do not accept that they need to change their behaviour or engage in further bullying the school will intervene appropriately e.g. counselling, behaviour contract or punitive sanctions.