



# TRRS ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Roman Ridge School is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a secure atmosphere where bullying will not be tolerated. As outlined in our Behaviour Policy, bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school and we believe it is the responsibility of the adults in the school to enforce this. When bullying is reported we will liaise with parents, pupils and, if appropriate, others, to address the problem. If bullying does occur, all pupils and parents should know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

Aims of this Policy is

- To maintain and promote a positive and supportive culture among all pupils and staff throughout the whole school.
- To deter bullying behaviour, detect it when it occurs and deal with it on a case-by-case basis by counselling and/or disciplinary sanctions.
- To ensure that all staff, pupils and parents have an understanding of what bullying is.
- To ensure that all staff know what the school policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported.
- To be confident that all pupils and parents know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- To assure pupils and parents that bullying will not be tolerated and that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- To make all staff aware of areas of the school where pupils might be threatened and take appropriate action to reduce these threats.
- To ensure that pupils who engage in bullying behaviour know that they will be held accountable but also helped to modify their behaviour.

### **What Is Bullying?**

What some people call bullying others may think of as 'just a game'. Bullying takes many forms. It can be short-termed or continue for years. Bullying can be physical, or verbal, or even just a look. Bullying can be overt or subtle intimidation. BULLYING IS THE WILFUL, CONSCIOUS DESIRE TO HURT OR THREATEN, OR FRIGHTEN SOMEONE ELSE. To do this the bully usually has to have some sort of power over the victim, a power not always easily recognisable. The Roman Ridge School has a zero-tolerance policy on bullying of any kind and urges all members of staff ensure that every child feels safe from all forms of intimidation whilst in school. Tackling bullying is one part of making the school a happy place for everyone. Bullying is repeated behaviour which hurts intentionally or causes distress by taking unfair advantage of another person in some way, making him or her feel uncomfortable or threatened.

Bullying may be:

- Physical – hitting, kicking, pushing people around, spitting, or taking, damaging or hiding possessions.
- Verbal – name-calling, taunting, teasing, insulting, or demanding money.
- Exclusionary behaviour – intimidating, isolating or excluding a person from a group.
- General unkindness – spreading rumours or writing unkind notes, phone texts or e-mails.
- Cyberbullying – using the internet, mobile phones, text messages, photographs, e-mail, social networking sites (such as Facebook, Telegram, Discord and Twitter), etc to deliberately upset someone else.

Bullying may also be:

- Sexual – talking to or touching someone in a sexually inappropriate way.
- Sexist – related to a person's gender.
- Racial or relating to someone's religion, belief or culture.
- Related to a person's home circumstances.
- Disability – related to a person's disability, special educational needs, learning difficulty, health or appearance.

The nature of bullying:

- Deliberately hurtful (including aggression).
- Repeated often over a period of time.
- Difficult for victims to defend themselves.
- Not all bullying is deliberate or intended to hurt. Some individuals may see their hurtful conduct as 'teasing' or as 'a game' or 'for the good of' the other person. These forms of bullying are equally unacceptable but may not be malicious and can often be corrected quickly with advice and without disciplinary sanctions being imposed. A bully who does not respond appropriately to advice or sanctions would ultimately have to leave the school.

## Recognising the bullies

There is no unique collection of characteristics that add up to a bully. Pupils who bully others are not always easily recognised.

- Bullies can also be victims themselves.
- Bullies tend to have assertive, aggressive attitudes over which they exercise little control.
- Bullies tend to lack empathy; they cannot imagine what the victim feels.
- Bullies tend to lack guilt; they rationalise that the victim somehow 'deserves' the bullying treatment.
- It is difficult to get at the real facts about who bullies. They do not come in standard sizes. They are not recognisable stereotypes.
- Relying on stereotype definitions may prevent recognition of other forms of bullying.

## Recognising the victims

A stereotype exists here, too, of a weak, shy, small child – someone anxious, uncertain and 'different'. A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. A person may be vulnerable to bullying because of his/her age, physical appearance, nationality, colour, gender, religion, culture or disability, or because he/she is new in the School and appears to be uncertain or has no friends. He/she may also become a target because of an irrational decision by a bully. Parents and Staff should be aware of these possible signs. Victims may:-

- Be new to the school.
- Be different in appearance, speech or background from others.
- Exhibits low self-esteem.
- Demonstrate reactions when bullied (i.e. Tantrums, loss of control, becomes more nervous or anxious).
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic).
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence.
- Starts stammering.
- Attempts or threatens self-harm or runs away.
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares.
- Feels ill in the morning.
- Begins to do poorly in schoolwork.
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged.
- 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 and 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.

### **Responsibility**

It is everyone's responsibility to ensure, whatever the circumstances, that no one becomes a victim of bullying.

### **Procedures to Follow**

1. All staff should be aware of the signs and symptoms of bullying.
2. All staff who witness an incident should:
  - a. State clearly why the behaviour is unacceptable.
  - b. If necessary, separate the pupils.
3. Staff who are told of bullying by a bullied child, a parent or a child who has witnessed an incident should:
  - a. Take the matter seriously and be sensitive to the child.
  - b. Assure the child that he/she is right to tell and that everyone has the right to be safe.
  - c. Not promise to keep it a secret but assure the child that further action will be taken and that you will give support.
  - d. In the first instance, staff who witness or are told of incidents should report them to the Class Teacher/Form Tutor. Most issues can be dealt with at this level.
4. All cases of bullying should also be reported to the Sectional Head. The incident(s) will be recorded, and any necessary interventions will be implemented. This will be supported by a period of monitoring and review to ensure that the victim feels safe and that the bullying has ceased.
5. If necessary, the victim, alleged bully and any witnesses will be interviewed separately by the Sectional Head.

6. In cases of serious bullying parents should be informed and invited into school to discuss the problem.
7. It is important that information is communicated to relevant staff. As a minimum Class Teachers/Form Tutors of those involved should be informed and possibly involved in any strategies that are adopted.
8. Appropriate counselling will be provided to both the victim and the bully and different sanctions may be used depending on the nature of the incident. These will be age related. Primarily they are aimed at preventing further bullying and sending out a clear message that bullying at The Roman Ridge School will not be tolerated. One possible strategy is the “no-blame approach”:-
  - a. After the evidence is gathered all parties involved meet, and everyone will have an opportunity to speak without interruption.
  - b. It will be made clear that what has happened is not acceptable and must not happen again.
  - c. All parties should agree on what is acceptable behaviour.
  - d. Support should be given for both victim and bully.
9. If the matter cannot be dealt with at this level and severe and persistent bullying continues, extreme sanctions (i.e. suspension or expulsion) may be necessary. *See Behaviour Policy.*
10. Sectional Heads should follow up the incident later to check the issue has been resolved.
11. Legal aspects: A person who makes a physical or sexual assault on another, or who steals or causes damage to the property of another, commits a criminal offence for which there can be legal consequences outside the School. Bullying behaviour may also be regarded as threatening behaviour or harassment which can be either a criminal offence or a civil wrong.
12. In cases of cyberbullying,
  - Make sure the pupil knows not to retaliate or return the message.
  - Ask the pupil to think about what information they have in the public domain.
  - Help the pupil to keep relevant evidence for any investigation (e.g. by not deleting messages they’ve received, and by taking screen capture shots and noting web addresses of online cyberbullying instances).
  - Check the pupil understands simple ways to prevent it from happening again (i.e. by changing contact details, blocking contacts or leaving a chatroom).
  - Action to contain the incident when content has been circulated.
  - If you know who the person responsible is, ask them to remove the content.

- Contact the host (i.e. social networking site) to make a report to get the content taken down.
- Ask the pupil to tell you who they have sent messages on to.
- In cases of illegal content, consider contacting the police, who can determine what needs to be kept for evidential purposes.

## **Building And Maintaining an Anti-Bullying Culture at The Roman Ridge School**

Our expectation of all members of The Roman Ridge School community is that:

- Every pupil at The Roman Ridge School will uphold the Code of Conduct which is contained in the Behaviour Policy.
- Staff should model positive relationships and good behaviour should be praised and rewarded (as appropriate).
- A pupil or a member of staff who witnesses or hears of an incident of bullying will report it.
- A complaint of bullying will always be taken seriously.
- No one will tolerate unkind actions or remarks or stand by when someone else is being bullied.

### **Staff**

All staff will have regular training to enable them to recognise the signs and symptoms of bullying, how to deal with it and how to reduce opportunities for bullying to take place in school. Members of staff are vigilant at all times but particularly:

- Before, during and after lessons.
- In the queue – outside class, at lunch.
- During play times (i.e. snack/lunch break).
- At the end of the day.

Through their training and experience, members of staff are expected to promote an anti-bullying culture by:

- Celebrating achievement.
- Anticipating problems and providing support.
- Disciplining sensibly and fairly.
- Making opportunities to listen to pupils.
- Treating discriminatory words and behaviour as unacceptable.

- Fostering positive attitudes towards those with disabilities and towards ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic groups within and outside the School.
- Nurturing positive attitudes through the curriculum, both in and out of the classroom.

## **Pupils**

Pupils are informed and taught that bullying will not be tolerated in the School. They are encouraged:

- To celebrate the effort and achievement of others.
- To hold and promote positive attitudes.
- To feel able to share problems with staff.
- To turn to someone they trust, if they have a problem.
- Not to feel guilty about airing complaints.

## **Whole School**

We use the following platforms and tools to promote and maintain an anti-bullying culture in The Roman Ridge School:

- Personal, Social, Health & Economic Education.
- School-Wide Anti-Bullying Campaigns.
- Assemblies and Special Talks – discussions, activities, sharing of stories and news items relating to bullying and e-safety.
- Circle Time and Form Periods led by Form Tutors.
- Sectional Class Rep Meetings chaired by Student Committees.
- Online Bullying Report Forms on Teams.

## **Monitoring and Recording**

Information on incidents of bullying will be shared to staff with appropriate advice on the actions to be taken. All instances of bullying will be recorded by Sectional Head/Safeguarding Officer according to name/s, class/form, type of bullying, location, name of who reported it and any other factual information that may enable patterns of behaviour to be identified together with action taken. The Principal will monitor all records, interviews with pupils and the patterns that may arise from the collation of records.