



RIDGEWOOD
SCHOOL

Student Anti-Bullying Policy

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1. Introduction

Ridgewood is committed to working with students and parent/carers to provide a learning environment that is secure and supportive so that all students can develop academically and socially.

We aim to create an environment where all members of the school community feel safe, respected and valued. All students have a right to be protected from others who may wish to harm, degrade or abuse them. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school.

Bullying may be verbal, physical or psychological. In fact, any action which makes a child feel uncomfortable, insecure or threatened may be defined as bullying.

The school disapproves of bullying in all its forms and considers it a most serious offence. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. All staff take the lead in creating a climate in which students will report immediately any bullying incident in the expectation that it will be dealt with urgently and firmly. Parents have an essential role to play in counteracting bullying. Where bullying is clearly established, parents of both victim and perpetrator will always be contacted and the school will seek to involve them in securing solutions.

2. Aims

- To create an environment where bullying is not tolerated
- To encourage students to work well, develop good relationships and offer each other mutual support and respect
- To ensure that all students are aware of their rights and responsibilities and know how to seek help if those rights are being violated
- To raise awareness and equip students to deal with bullies through PDP time , PSHCE lessons, assemblies, pastoral team members and peer support
- To ensure a consistent approach to all bullying issues
- To review and monitor the effectiveness of our anti-bullying policy annually

3. What is bullying?

“Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.”

There are five recognised features of bullying:

- **It is deliberate, hurtful behaviour;**
- **It is repeated over a period of time;**
- **It is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves;**
- **It is difficult for those who bully to learn new social behaviours;**
- **Those who bully have and exercise power inappropriately over others**

This can be:

- Physical – pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, any form of violence, threats
- Verbal – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing

- Emotional – tormenting, threatening ridicule, humiliation, exclusion from groups or activities. Racist – racial abuse, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact, abusive comments
- Damage to property or theft - demanding possessions, money, deliberately damaging belongings
- Homophobic – taunts, graffiti, gestures relating to the sexual orientation of a person
- Cyber – sending threatening or abusive text messages, emails or images. Writing abusive or negative things about people on social media

Signs of being bullied:

- Unwillingness to come to school
- Withdrawn, isolated behaviour
- Complaining about missing possessions
- Refusal to talk about problems
- Being easily distressed
- Damaged or incomplete work
- Regularly feeling ill
- Work not completed to usual standard
- Setting off for school particularly early or late
- Tearfulness, depression
- Change in student behaviour or confidence
- Change in appearance

4. Responsibilities

It is everyone's responsibility to stop bullying. Each group has individual responsibilities that must be adhered to if bullying is to be tackled effectively.

What to do as a student

- Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied and it is wrong
- Try not to show that you are upset. It is hard but a bully thrives on someone's fear
- Stay with a group of friends, there is safety in numbers
- Be assertive – make it clear that you want the bullying to stop
- Walk away and report the bullying to an adult or peer straight away
- Be proud of who you are and what you stand for
- If you know that someone else is being bullied – take action – tell an adult
- Be sure to speak to your Tutor/Pastoral Leader/BfL Team
- Complete an anti-bullying form – this can be completed in PDP time, with a member of staff

What to do as a parent/carer

- Be aware of signs of bullying in your child
- Talk to your child about their school day
- If you feel that your child may be a victim of bullying inform the school immediately - use the 'Contact Us' button on the school website
- Reassure your child that there is nothing wrong with him or her and it is not his or her fault that they are being bullied
- Make sure that your child is not afraid to ask for help at the School

What the School will do

- Take all bullying problems seriously
- Investigate incidents as thoroughly and promptly as possible
- Ensure that bullies and victims, in the first instance, are interviewed separately
- Wherever possible obtain information from witnesses
- Keep records of reported incidents on the School Management Information System – Anti-bullying Tracker – checked daily by the pastoral team including DSL
- Encourage the bully and the bullied to agree a resolution
- Implement appropriate sanctions
- Inform parents/carers of bullies and bullied of serious incidents
- Provide a clear strategy for managing future incidents
- Promote a zero tolerance of this issue within the student and staff body

Governing Body

- Ensure that the school has an Anti-Bullying Policy and that it is regularly reviewed and updated accordingly
- Ensure that there is a member of the Senior Leadership Team that has specific responsibility for anti-bullying monitoring,

5. Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy is monitored and evaluated through regular pastoral reviews and through consultation with the Governing Body and the School student council.

The following performance indicators are used to evaluate the policy within the context of the pastoral support given to all students and staff.

- Behaviour on the School site
- Levels of punctuality and attendance
- Evidence of self-discipline
- Good manners and consideration for others
- Levels of suspensions
- Police referrals
- Referrals through the pastoral support programme for agency involvement
- Feedback from student council, anti-bullying ambassadors and parental questionnaires
- Student bullying button on Frog
- Student Anti Bullying questionnaires each term
- Safeguarding surveys through PSHCE Lessons

6. What are our strategies for prevention of bullying

All staff will clearly state that bullying is unacceptable behaviour at Ridgewood School. Teasing and other 'minor' incidents should be discouraged. We will actively promote tolerance and respect for difference and diversity.

- Assemblies
- Tutor group activities during PDP Time
- PSHCE programmes across KS3 and KS4
- Displays around the school site

- School council and anti-bullying ambassador discussions
- Peer Mentoring support
- Liaison with external agencies
- Appointing student anti-bullying ambassadors and providing them with training
- Duty staff to monitor student's behaviour
- Lunchtime supervisors to monitor students during social time
- Delivery of restorative practice
- Delivery of anti-bullying programmes
- Pastoral team to complete safeguarding qualifications
- Termly Anti-Bullying Form – all students complete anti-bullying form that is signed to say if bullying has taken place
- The Deputy Headteacher and pastoral teams to regularly monitor, analyse and review data on bullying. These reports are communicated to the Governing Body via the Headteacher's Report. SIMS will enable the consistent logging and monitoring of direct and indirect bullying and on-line safety.

7. Sanction against Bullying

A range of approaches should be used available so that each case is dealt with individually, rather than in a mechanistic manner. The early involvement of parents is important.

Possible courses of action are:

- Loss of privileges e.g. banned from clubs or trips
- Sanctions, detention, Star Centre referral, fixed term suspensions (escalating according to seriousness. This may result in permanent exclusion)
- Involvement with external agencies
- Daily report, to monitor positive and negative behaviours
- Subject displacement, or Star Centre/Link referral
- Contract, code of conduct between those involved (with consequences clearly outlined)
- Support group approach
- Restorative support /mediation may be used in order to reach an amicable solution (for low level incidents)
- Formal warnings may be issued.

8. How do we ensure that people are aware of the Policy?

- Formal acceptance by the Governing Body
- This policy will be issued to staff and made available to staff, parents and students on the school website.
- Students will be made aware of the Governors' acceptance of the policy, thereby advertising the policy to all and made available to staff/parents/on the school website. Aspects of the policy are delivered: by means of the PSHCE programme, PDP Time and via assemblies. All students receive an anti-bullying guidance at the start of the academic year. This will then be revisited during PDP Time
- Parents will be informed via the Prospectus, letters and the Safeguarding Area of the website.
- Lunch supervisors will be informed.