



Ribston Hall High School

Anti-Bullying Policy

Date of Policy: May 2023

Person(s) responsible: Headteacher

Date of next review: May 2025

"Providing safe and happy places to learn is essential to achieving school improvement, raising achievement and attendance, promoting equality and diversity, and ensuring the safety and well-being of all members of the school community." (DfE, 2007).

Statutory duties:

Headteachers have a legal duty under the School standards and Framework act 1998 to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among pupils and to bring these procedures to the attention of staff, parents and pupils.

Under the Education Inspections bill 2006 the duties are extended to include preventing/responding to bullying that happens outside school, where it is reasonable to do so.

Schools also have a duty to 'safeguard' and promote the welfare of pupils (Education act 2002) and to ensure that children and young people are safe from bullying and discrimination (Children Act 2004).

Government guidance advises that the policy should also address the bullying of staff by pupils ('Safe to Learn' DCSF 2007) (Coalition Government documents and law-equality Act 2010, Education Act 2011)

Ribston Hall's Statement of Intent

We believe that all forms of bullying are unacceptable as they are inconsistent with the ethos and aims of our school. Ribston Hall is committed to ensuring that all students have the opportunity to learn in a supportive, compassionate and tolerant environment.

Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to disclose to staff that they are being bullied and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed, will students be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available at school.

All members of the school community have a collective responsibility to be vigilant for incidents of bullying; staff must listen to all students reporting incidents of bullying and apply the procedures laid down in the Anti-Bullying Policy for investigating and dealing with bullying.

The School recognises the importance of dealing with the issue of bullying in a sensitive and values the role of the home-school partnership in dealing effectively with incidents of bullying.

The School actively ensures that our students are offered a 'voice' to support our awareness, understanding and development of Anti-Bullying practices and value the role played by the Student Council.

Teaching and learning is crucial to develop emotional literacy and explore human rights through the PSHE Programme, Wellbeing initiatives and Peer Mentoring Programme.

Definitions:

What is bullying?

Bullying is "Deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for the victim to defend him or herself" (DfE. publication Pastoral Care in Schools).

Bullying is in contravention of children's right to protection from all forms of violence, both physical and mental. It also infringes their right to education and to freedom from torture and inhuman and degrading treatment under the Human Rights Act 1998

Our Beliefs and Values With Regard to Bullying

1. We believe that all forms of bullying are unacceptable as they are inconsistent with the ethos and aims of our school.
2. We recognise the importance and value of dealing with the issue of bullying in a sensitive but open way within various areas of the curriculum.
3. The school has clearly stated the individual responsibilities of all members of the school community to be vigilant for incidents of bullying; to listen to all pupils reporting incidents of bullying and to apply the procedures laid down in the Anti-bullying Policy for investigating and dealing with bullying.
4. We value the role of the home-school partnership in dealing effectively with incidents of bullying.
5. We value the role played by the Student Council in giving our young people a "Voice" and keeping channels of communication open.
6. We value the teaching and learning in specific areas of the curriculum that develop emotional literacy and explore human rights e.g. PSHE Programme, Wellbeing initiatives and Peer Mentoring Programme.

Identifying and reporting concern about bullying

All concerns about bullying will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. Pupils who are being bullied may not report it. However, there may be changes in their behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absence or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting from school. All school staff will be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with this policy. Students who are aware of bullying ('bystanders') can be a powerful force in helping to address it and will be encouraged to do so in a safe way.

The school recognises that there are four main types of bullying which may occur:

- Physical e.g. hitting, pinching, throwing of implements to cause deliberate hurt.
- Verbal e.g.. name calling, taunting, intimidation and extortion
- Emotional e.g. gestures, looks, exclusion from friendship groups.
- “Cyber” abuse e.g. email. text messaging, photograph/video misuse etc.)

Taking Action

Students

Students should take the appropriate action if they are victims of or witness an incident of bullying.

- They should inform a member of school staff as soon as possible.
- The member of school staff will then pass on the information to the form tutor(s) and the Head of Year of those involved.
- The Head of Year will discuss the information with the Form Tutor and an investigation will be carried out.

Staff

School staff will respond in a timely manner to challenge any reports of bullying.

Staff will reassure students and help them to understand that:

- They have a right not to be bullied at school
- That they cannot – and are not expected to – deal with a bullying situation by themselves, and they are right to ask for help.
- That they need to speak out, and should trust school staff to take their concerns seriously and to support them.
- That they have a personal responsibility – to inform a member of staff, if they become a bully’s target, and to help and protect any other student who is bullied.

A member of staff who believes that they are being bullied or harassed, will be encouraged to report it to their line manager or another appropriate colleague.

Responding to reports about bullying:

A clear account of the concern will be recorded and logged on Cloud School by the member of staff that it is reported to.

An account from all parties involved will be taken during an investigation and again will be logged on Cloud School by either the form tutor or Head of Year.

Appropriate sanctions will be agreed between the Head of Year and Assistant Head for Pastoral issues and parents will be informed. These will be in line with the school behaviour policy but may include:

- Official warning to cease offending
- Exclusion from certain areas of the school premises or certain activities
- Detentions
- Referral to senior staff and/or external agencies
- Internal fixed term exclusion
- External suspension or permanent exclusion.

School staff will put strategies in place to monitor and support reintegration of students.

Teachers must also recognise the needs of the bully who will also require further monitoring and support. (A find your tribe approach may be used in the first instance - see later)

School staff must reiterate the school's stance on bullying and ensure that lines of communication are clear for both parties.

All staff are responsible for logging any incidents on Cloud School. (This is important to monitor any reoccurrence of bullying behaviour).

School staff who need additional support in dealing with a bullying incident should contact the Assistant Headteacher, for pastoral issues.

Find Your Tribe - Early Intervention

During induction to the school, pupils in Y7 will be introduced to the find your tribe pastoral programme. This programme is based on the Girls on Board approach (<https://www.girlsonboard.co.uk/>) and is not a method to replace dealing with serious cases of bullying, but will, in the first instance, provide a framework of dealing with bullying issues and challenging behaviour. At Ribston Hall, this approach will be utilised, where appropriate by staff trained in the approach. This will be initially in KS3, where the approach will be evaluated. The information below gives an overview of this approach:

“When girls fall out with each other at school it can be tough for the girls, but also for the teachers and parents who try to support them. Teachers report to us that they spend many hours a week trying to unpick the problems and issues that lead to relationship conflict between girls, but with only limited success. The problem is that the issues involved are very fluid and hard to express precisely. Girls in schools report to us that the things usually get worse when then the adults get involved in their friendship issues.

Unless there is specific wrong-doing or bullying taking place, *Girls on Board* replaces the ‘justice tools’ approach usually adopted by teachers to investigate conflict. A *Girls on Board* session bring all the girls in a school year group together to explore and re-enforce the key principles:

- All girls fear having no friends.
- Adults can only help in very limited ways.
- A girl without a friendship group is a problem for *everyone* because whichever group she eventually joins will be changed in some way by her arrival.

Once girls begin to see and understand that they *all* feel this way, then rifts between them naturally start to heal and they start to bond with each other again. Using the *Girls on Board* approach, teachers help the girls build healing empathy and then let that empathy do its work. *Girls on Board* sessions look at the dynamics of group sizes, different types of girls and behaviours, managing parent reactions and include role play.

The Girls on Board approach will not prevent girls from falling out, but it will help them sort out their own friendship problems and minimise the distress they might experience. It provides a vital vocabulary to make communicate more open, honest and effective and creates a robust framework for parents, so they feel reassured that issues are being dealt with effectively.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

The Assistant head for Pastoral Care will lead on the implementation of the policy and will ensure there are regular awareness raising activities for students such as assemblies. The policy will be reviewed every two years and amended accordingly.