

ANTI-BULLYING
POLICY
including
ANTI-CYBER BULLYING

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Policy Document SP-01

RISE LEARNING ZONE

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Statement

Bullying is a conscious act which affects everyone involved. It can take place in any setting, including schools, in the home or the youth work sector. Therefore, there is a need for a concerted effort in order to challenge this behaviour.

This organisation will not tolerate the bullying of any member. This organisation consists of service users, parents/guardians/carers, management committee, youth workers, volunteers and other staff. We will actively support all victims of bullying and take appropriate action with the perpetrators as laid out in our grievance and disciplinary procedures. All perpetrators will incur sanctions, up to and including exclusion, relative to the seriousness of their behaviour.

Background

According to Every Child Matters (2003) and Youth Matters (2006), The Children's Act (2004), and The SEN and Disability Act (2001), Individuals have the right to feel safe as well as to enjoy and achieve. As RISE Learning Zone operates under these agendas it has a bullying policy and procedure. This covers actions to recognise, manage, prevent and raise awareness around bullying.

Aims of Policy

- To promote a secure, safe, happy and friendly environment free from threat, harassment and any other type of bullying behaviour.
- To take positive action to prevent bullying occurring.
- To show commitment to anti-bullying behaviour.
- To inform children and parents of this policy and to develop a positive partnership to help maintain a bully-free environment.
- To make staff aware of their role in fostering the knowledge and attitudes required to achieve the above aims.

Definitions

What is bullying?

Bullying is any incident perceived by the victim or anyone else as bullying.

This definition is designed to ensure that the school or youth organisation takes full account not only of what the victim says, but also the perceptions of those who have witnessed the incident, reported it or are aware of the circumstances.

This means that if any person feels that an incident is motivated by bullying then it should be recorded as such and, as with all incidents, properly investigated.

What does bullying look like, feel like, sound like?

In the main it consists of:

Physical – hitting, kicking, pinching, sexual assault, extortion, stealing, hiding belongings,

Verbal – name calling, mockery, insulting, making offensive remarks, sexual innuendo, threatening, and

Indirect – spreading unpleasant stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours, graffiti, defacing of property, display of pornographic, classist, disabilist, homophobic, racist or sexist material.

Who bullies?

Anyone has the capacity to bully. There are no completely reliable predisposition diagnoses. However those who perceive themselves as low status within a community, institution or group may use bullying in an attempt to artificially boost their status. Self-esteem is therefore a key factor in whether someone bullies or not. This puts equal opportunities and inclusion at the centre of all anti-bullying work in youth organisations.

Who is bullied?

Anyone can be bullied – young person, parent/carer/guardian, staff member or volunteer. People who suffer bullying are often perceived by others to be different. Sometimes the perceived difference is individual to that person – shyness, physical appearance, clothing and possessions, accent, perceived inappropriate behaviour. Frequently the perceived difference comes from assigning an individual to a group. Such bullying would then be designated as classist, disabilist, homophobic, racist and religious, or sexist.

People can be assigned or be a member of more than one group.

What is classist bullying?

In classist bullying, a person is targeted for representing a perceived class or socio-economic group. This not only impacts on the individual person, but on their families and others perceived to be from that same group.

Incidents may include:

- verbal abuse by name-calling, offensive mimicry,
- physical threats or attacks,
- defacing of property,
- graffiti,
- inciting others to behave in a classist way,
- mocking clothing and belongings,
- refusing to co-operate in work and play (refusing to sit next to someone).

What is disabilist bullying?

People with Special Educational Needs or disabled people may be less able or more reluctant to articulate experiences as well as others. However, they are often at greater risk of being bullied, both directly and indirectly, and usually about their specific difficulties or disability.

Incidents may include:

- verbal abuse by name-calling, offensive mimicry,
- physical threats or attacks,
- defacing of property,
- graffiti,
- inciting others to behave in a disabilist way,
- mockery of specific difficulty or disability,
- mockery of person's contributions to work,
- refusing to co-operate in work and play (refusing to sit next to someone).

What is homophobic bullying?

In homophobic bullying, a person is targeted for being perceived as a lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered (trans) person. People do not have to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans to suffer homophobic bullying. This bullying not only impacts on

the individual person, but on their families and others perceived to be from that same group. It may be based on gender stereotyping.

Incidents may include:

- verbal abuse by name-calling, offensive mimicry,
- physical threats or attacks,
- mockery of subject and career choice,
- defacing of property,
- graffiti,
- inciting others to behave in a homophobic way,
- mockery of a person's demeanour or way of speaking,
- mockery of person's contributions to work,
- refusing to co-operate in work and play (refusing to sit next to someone).

What is racist and religious bullying?

In racist and religious bullying, a person is targeted for being perceived as being a member of a different ethnic, cultural or religious, group. People do not have to be of that group to suffer racist and religious bullying. This bullying not only impacts on the individual person, but on their families and others perceived to be from that same or similar group. Inappropriate assumptions maybe made about some one's religion or belief because of their ethnic origin.

Incidents may include:

- verbal abuse by name-calling, offensive mimicry,
- pretending not to understand/using gibberish,
- physical threats or attacks,
- mockery of physical appearance,
- wearing of provocative badges or insignia,
- having racist leaflets, comics or magazines,
- defacing of property,
- graffiti,
- inciting others to behave in a racist way,
- mockery of a person's demeanour or way of speaking,
- mockery of person's contributions to work,
- refusing to co-operate in work and play (refusing to sit next to someone),
- mockery of dress, religious observance, dietary habits,
- mockery of country of origin.

What is sexist bullying?

In sexist bullying, a person is targeted for being perceived as being a member of a particular gender. This bullying impacts on the individual person and on all men and women.

Incidents may include:

- verbal abuse by name-calling, offensive mimicry,
- physical threats or attacks,
- inappropriate and uninvited touching,
- sexual assault,
- display of pornographic material,
- mockery of physical appearance,
- wearing of provocative badges or insignia,
- having sexist leaflets, comics or magazines,
- sexual innuendo,
- defacing of property,
- graffiti,
- inciting others to behave in sexist way,
- mockery of a person's demeanour or way of speaking,
- mockery of person's contributions to work,
- refusing to co-operate in work and play (refusing to sit next to someone),
- mockery of clothing,
- mockery of subject and career choice.

Whilst all the above constitute some manifestations of bullying, it should be remembered that an incident of bullying is anything that the victim or anyone else perceives to be such an incident.

What is Cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is a type of aggression defined by Childnet International as the 'sending or posting of harmful or cruel text or images using the internet or other digital communication devices'. The Anti-Bullying Association has identified seven types of cyberbullying, ranging from abusive text messages, emails and phone calls, to bullying in internet chatrooms, social networking sites and instant messaging:

- 1. Text messages** – unwelcome texts that are threatening or cause discomfort.
- 2. Picture/video-clips via mobile phone cameras** – images sent to others to make the victim feel threatened or embarrassed.
- 3. Mobile phone calls** – silent calls or abusive messages, or stealing the victim’s phone and using it to harass others, to make them believe the victim is responsible.
- 4. Emails** – threatening or bullying emails, often sent using a pseudonym or somebody else’s name.
- 5. Chatroom bullying** – menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in a web-based chatroom.
- 6. Instant messaging** – unpleasant messages sent as children conduct real-time conversations online.
- 7. Bullying via websites** – use of defamatory blogs (web logs), personal websites and online personal polling sites.

Cyberbullying is insidious, it can be conducted 24 hours a day, seven days a week, following children into their private space and outside school hours. It can be anonymous. The audience is large and can be reached rapidly. Unlike other forms of bullying, a single incident can be experienced as a multiple attack – a video posted to a website can be copied to many different sites. Bystanders can become accessories by passing on a humiliating message. Messages on social networking sites remain there to damage social life and friendships and, in the case of teaching staff, reputation and credibility.

Prevention

Children and young people’s behaviour is affected by the behaviour of the adults around them. Therefore we expect adults in an organisation to model respectful and courteous behaviour.

It is now a legal requirement to have an anti-bullying policy within schools and good practice for youth organisations.

In the promotion of the organisation’s anti-bullying work all pastoral and academic curriculum areas and all teachers, youth workers and volunteers will reflect the organisation’s equal opportunities policy and practice in all their work.

The organisation will develop partnerships with outside agencies such as the education and library boards youth service section, local voluntary groups, theatre in education projects, victim support and the police where appropriate, both to inform young people, youth workers, volunteers, and parents/carers/guardians of the issues and to give them support.

All areas of the youth organisation including toilets and outdoor facilities will be appropriately supervised.

Group gatherings within the organisation's environment and displayed material will consistently reinforce the equal opportunity and anti-bullying policies.

The organisation accepts that:

- every member of the youth organisation has the right to feel comfortable, safe, secure, equally valued and respected,
- every member of the school or youth organisation has the right to grow and change, free from prejudice, stereotyping, harassment and negative discrimination,
- every young person in the school or youth organisation has the right to equal access to a curriculum that meets their needs,
- learning and personal development is the entitlement and responsibility of every member of the school or youth organisation,
- every member of the school or youth organisation has the right to object to and/or reject language or behaviour, which is offensive and/or intimidating,
- every member of the school or youth organisation has the responsibility to treat others with respect,
- it is the responsibility of every member of the school or youth organisation to address and/or report all incidents of bullying.

Action

All members of the school or youth organisation will be alert to the possibility of breaches of the policy and take appropriate action. Young people who identify that the policy is not being followed will alert an adult they trust. This may be a youth worker or volunteer. The person who receives a report from a young person will take it extremely seriously and be seen to be doing so.

Staff have a particular responsibility in addressing all forms of bullying.

A failure to do so will be perceived as collusion.

All allegations of breaches of the policy will be investigated thoroughly and sensitively. If a teacher, youth worker or volunteer is unsure how to deal with an incident, he or she will seek advice from a designated person.

Bullying can be a crime, we may therefore choose to involve the police where appropriate.

Incidents and allegations will be investigated and the outcome recorded on the appropriate form. Feedback will always be provided to individuals who have made the allegations or complaint.

All incidents of bullying will be recorded and their frequency and type monitored. This information will be used to inform the development of the organisation's anti-bullying work.

Parents/carers/guardians are very important to the organisation and in particular they have much to contribute to our anti-bullying work. As part of the home/youth group contract all parents/carers/guardians will be asked to commit themselves to this policy.

The organisation, in return, commits itself to investigate any allegations of any form of bullying from parents/carers/guardians promptly and to feedback the outcome of such investigations. All incidents reported by parents/carers/guardians will be recorded.

The organisation will also discuss with parents/carers/guardians any incidents of bullying in which their child has been involved, either as victim or perpetrator.

Parents/carers/guardians, pupils, teachers, youth workers, volunteers and other staff members will be given clear procedures on how to report incidents.

The organisation will provide training to all staff on how to recognise and deal with bullying. We recognise that this must be done in a consistent and transparent manner.

It is the responsibility of **young people** to:

- refuse to accept that bullying is a normal part of life,
- speak out about incidents of bullying wherever possible,
- take some responsibility for the wellbeing of other yourself and other children,
- report incidents of bullying, either as a witness or victim.

It is the responsibility of **parents** to:

- be aware of the school or clubs' anti-bullying policy and practice,
- encourage the views of the policy and practices in a practical way,
- provide positive role models for children to aspire to,
- encourage non-violent behaviour and resolution of conflicts,
- take allegations of bullying seriously,
- maintain a sense of proportion,
- take steps to assure a bullied child that it is not his/her fault,

- try to accept, understand and help solve the problem if it is your child who is bullying,
- work together with the staff at the school or club to solve the problem,
- be aware that external conflicts are not the responsibility of the school/organisation to resolve,
- challenge incidents of bullying witnessed in school or in the wider community.

The appointed Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator in this organisation is:

Fiona Bourne

This policy will be reviewed regularly and revised as necessary in the ongoing process of development planning.

ANTI-CYBER BULLYING

1 Policy

Cyber bullying fulfils all the above, but in addition has other components to it and is dealt with further in this policy document. It is important to note that with technology and its uses developing rapidly, this document will need to be under constant review and will need to be consulted frequently to keep up to date.

1.1.What is cyber bullying?

Cyber bullying is the sending or posting of harmful or cruel texts or images using the internet or other (digital) communication devices.

There are seven categories of cyberbullying:

- Text message bullying involves sending unwelcome texts that are threatening or cause discomfort.
- Picture/video-clip bullying via mobile phone cameras is used to make the person being bullied feel threatened or embarrassed, with images usually sent to other people. 'Happy slapping' involves filming and sharing physical attacks.
- Phone call bullying via mobile phone uses silent calls or abusive messages. Sometimes the bullied person's phone is stolen and used to harass others, who then think the phone owner is responsible. As with all mobile phone bullying, the perpetrators often disguise their numbers, sometimes using someone else's phone to avoid being identified.
- Email bullying uses email to send bullying or threatening messages, often using a pseudonym for anonymity or using someone else's name to pin the blame on them. Chat room bullying involves sending menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in a web-based chat room.
- Bullying through instant messaging (IM) is an Internet-based form of bullying where children and young people are sent unpleasant messages as they conduct real-time conversations online (i.e. MSN, Bebo, etc.).
- Bullying via websites includes the use of defamatory blogs (web logs), personal websites and online personal polling sites. There has also been a

significant increase in social networking sites for young people, which can provide new opportunities for cyberbullying.

It is important to note that many aspects of cyber bullying outlined above are illegal under UK law, and the School has the right to read e-mail and other electronic communications and take action because of information obtained in this way.

RISE Learning Zone's view on cyber bullying is that we will take action to prevent cyber bullying wherever possible and take action to stop such bullying as does occur, whenever we are involved however peripherally.

1.2. Policy Aims

- To ensure that there is a clear procedure to follow which deals with incidents of cyber bullying and that this is made explicit to staff, pupils and parents.
- To prevent cyber bullying by providing opportunity for discussion by learners and staff within the our programme of pastoral care.
- To ensure that all learners have access to an adult to whom they may talk in confidence in the knowledge that something will be done immediately to redress the problem and that the matter will be handled discreetly and sensitively.
- To make the unacceptable nature of cyber bullying and the consequences of any repetition clear to the cyber bully and his/her parents/guardians.
- To follow up each incident so as to ensure that the victim is given as much support as possible and also to prevent a recurrence of the behaviour.
- To make clear to parents of both victims and cyber bullies the actions which are being taken by us, the reasons for doing so and the extent of the support which parents can offer to reinforce those actions.

Procedures

GUIDANCE FOR STAFF

If you suspect or are told about a cyber-bullying incident, follow the protocol outlined below

Mobile Phones

- Ask the pupil to show you the mobile phone.
- Note clearly everything on the screen relating to an inappropriate text message or image, to include the date, time and names.
- Make a transcript of a spoken message, again record date, times and names.
- Tell the pupil to save the message/image.
- Inform a member of the appropriate Pastoral Leader and Senior Staff and pass them the information that you have.

Computers

- Ask the pupil to get up on-screen the material in question.
- Ask the pupil to save the material.
- Inform the appropriate Pastoral Leader and Senior Staff and pass them the information that you have.
- Normal procedures to interview pupils and to take statements will then be followed particularly if a child protection issue is presented.
- Breaches of the schools Responsible Use Policy (RUP) will result in disciplinary action in line with the school's behaviour management policy. Any staff breach of the school's RUP will be dealt with by the appropriate disciplinary action.

GUIDANCE FOR PUPILS

- If you believe you or someone else is the victim of cyber-bullying, you must speak to an adult as soon as possible.
- Do not answer abusive messages but save them and report them.
- Do not delete anything until it has been shown to your parents/guardian or a member of staff (even if it is upsetting, the material is important evidence which may need to be used later as proof of cyber-bullying).
- Do not give out personal IT details.
- Never reply to abusive e-mails.
- Never reply to someone you do not know.
- Stay in public areas in chat rooms.

GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS/CARERS/GUARDIANS

It is vital that parents and the school work together to ensure that all pupils are aware of the serious consequences of getting involved in anything that might be seen to be cyber-bullying. RISE Learning Zone informs parents of the cyber-bullying policy and the procedures in place to deal with cyber-bullying.

- Parents can help by making sure their child understands the school's policy and, above all, how seriously RISE Learning Zone takes incidents of cyber-bullying.
- Parents should also explain to their children legal issues relating to cyber-bullying.
- If parents believe their child is the victim of cyber-bullying, they should save the offending material (if need be by saving an offensive text on their or their child's mobile phone) and make sure they have all relevant information before deleting anything.
- Parents should contact us as soon as possible. A meeting can then be arranged with the appropriate staff member
- If the incident occurs off our premises, we reserve the right to take action against bullying which spills over into our day.