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## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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This policy relates to all sections and activities of the school and its pupils, e.g. Senior School, Junior School (including EYFS), Wrap Around Care, Offsite Activities and School run Holiday Activities or Clubs. The policy also applies to incidents involving our pupils out of school hours.

It should be read in conjunction with the following School policies:

- Behaviour Management
- Child Protection (Safeguarding)
- E-Safety and Pupil Acceptable Use of ICT
- Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

This policy has been drawn up with regard to the following documents:

- DfE 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' 2013 (last updated 2017)
- DfE 'Approaches to Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Research into anti-bullying practices used by schools to prevent and tackle bullying, including case studies' 2018
- DfE 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' September 2023
- DfE 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023' 2023
- Equality Act (2010)

### 1 AIMS

1.1 Through the operation of this policy, the School aims to:

- Maintain and drive a positive and supportive culture among all pupils and staff throughout the School.
- Ensure that all pupils are free to enjoy a stimulating education and exciting co-curricular opportunities that are free from the fear of being bullied and from opportunities to act with bullying behaviours.
- Deter bullying behaviour, detect it when it occurs, and deal with it on a case-by-case basis by informal counselling/staff mentoring and/or disciplinary sanctions and, if necessary, by expulsion.
- Comply with the School's duties under the Equality Act (2010).
- Promote equality and the creation of a learning community free from intolerance, discrimination and bullying. We are clear that ethnicity is a protected characteristic and we support the Black community in the struggle against racism and have zero tolerance of any form of bullying relating to racism.

1.2 Red House School is committed to providing a supportive, caring and safe learning environment for all pupils. Everyone has a part to play in the prevention of bullying, including staff (teaching and non-teaching), pupils and parents.

1.3 The School recognises that bullying occurs in all educational establishments and that Red House is no exception. Everyone should recognise that bullying is anti-social behavior; it is unacceptable and is, therefore, not tolerated within the school.

1.4 Bullying incidents involving our pupils outside school will be investigated as we understand the impact this may have on school life.

### 2 OBJECTIVES

2.1 Our objectives are:

- All governors, teaching and support staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors, teachers and support staff should know the School's procedure on bullying and follow it when reported.
- All pupils and parents should know the School's procedures on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported if bullying is reported.

2.2 The essential elements of bullying are that it may be repeated over time and intentionally hurts another

pupil or group physically or emotionally.

**2.3** It is often motivated by prejudice against a particular group, for example, on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, and SEND.

**2.4** It may occur directly or through cyber technology (social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email) and it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

### **3 DEFINITION OF BULLYING**

**3.1** The Department for Education (DfE) defines bullying as 'behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally'.

**3.2** This definition highlights the fact that bullying can be by an individual or group against another individual or group. It is commonly accepted that bullying is deliberately hurtful (including aggression); causes feelings of distress, fear or loneliness in the victim; is difficult for victims to defend themselves against (as there is an imbalance of power). Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against certain groups, for example on the grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, sexuality, special educational needs and disability, or because a child is adopted or is a carer.

**3.3** Some of the different types of bullying include:

- Emotional (being unfriendly, threatening looks/gestures, tormenting such as hiding belongings, deliberately betraying former confidences to humiliate or isolate another pupil).
- Physical (pushing, hitting, shoving, any form of physical violence).
- Verbal (name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, etc.).
- Cyberbullying includes all forms of bullying involving the internet, social websites, chat rooms, mobile phones, email, text messages, photographs, etc. The School has a separate policy on cyberbullying and E-Safety (see the E-Safety and Pupil Acceptable Use of ICT Policy).
- Sexual and sexist (unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments or those which are sexist (related to a person's gender or gender reassignment)).
- Exclusion (deliberately ignoring and refusing to allow someone to join in).
- Interference with possessions (hiding, stealing and destroying belongings).
- Bullying on the basis of perceived racial, religious or cultural differences.
- Bullying on the basis of a person's special educational needs, learning difficulty, disability, health or appearance.
- Homophobic bullying, i.e. related to a person's sexuality.
- Bullying on the basis of a person's gender identity.
- Bullying on the basis of a person's intellectual or other ability.

**3.4** Any behaviour that a reasonable bystander would say was intended to hurt or upset the victim is wrong and could constitute bullying, including complicity that may fall short of participating directly in the bullying. It is no justification that the perpetrator says or believes the victim is not hurt by his or her actions and/or words.

**3.5** Bullying is often carried out in subtle ways which are not always easy to detect: a bully can use a look, word or gesture to a victim to signal an intended threat or insult. Some pupils are adept at changing a bullying situation into an apparently harmless one if an adult approaches. This reinforces the need for the victim or bystanders to come forward to report bullying, and for staff and parents to be alert to the symptoms of bullying.

**3.6** Although the definition of bullying includes a repetitive element, the School will be vigilant about seemingly isolated incidents which can form a pattern or the development of an asymmetrical power relationship.

**3.7** No form of bullying will be tolerated by the School. Bullying is harmful to the person who is bullied, to those who engage in bullying behaviour and those who support them; it can, in some cases, lead to lasting psychological damage and even self-harm.

**3.8** Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal and civil laws that apply to threatening behaviour and harassment for which there can be consequences outside the School. Misuse of electronic communications could also be a criminal offence, for example it is an offence to send an electronic communication (such as a text message or e-mail) to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety.

**3.7** Sometimes pupils feel hurt or upset because they have fallen out with a friend or have been teased. This is not the same as bullying.

**3.8** Bullying:

- Is deliberately intended to hurt or humiliate.
- May involve a power imbalance which makes it hard for the victim to defend his or herself.
- Is usually, but not always, persistent.
- Often involves no remorse or acknowledgement of the victim's feelings.

**3.9** School staff are ready to help and support pupils who have fallen out with friends, but such situations will not be treated in the same way as a case of bullying. However, the strategies we use may be similar because we acknowledge that, over a period of time, the impact on the pupil may be the same and the situation could become bullying if it escalates.

## **4 PREVENTING BULLYING**

**4.1** The School aims to prevent bullying from becoming established. This is achieved by establishing a whole school ethos of good behaviour, mutual respect and consideration, as well as a culture in which bullying is not tolerated and where it is seen as the responsibility of all members of the school community to report any instances of bullying:

- Pupil Councils, on both the Junior and Senior sites, provide a forum where girls and boys are encouraged to raise general issues of concern.
- Diversity and inclusivity are championed and celebrated and the School takes a proactive role in educating pupils and other members of the school community in issues around equality.
- The curriculum is used as a vital means of raising awareness in our pupils and educating them about how to manage feelings associated with bullying. Specific anti-bullying issues are addressed in PSHE, RSE, Assemblies, Circle Time and taken up by Form Teachers, subject teachers and pastoral leads.
- All members of the School community are encouraged to have high expectations and model how to behave towards each other.
- The School has developed a culture in which the vulnerable are protected and incidents which might demonstrate prejudice or intolerance are tackled and addressed, for example, challenging inappropriate or prejudicial language.
- The School educates pupils and all members of the School community about how to keep themselves safe when online or when using any form of social media so they understand about how to prevent themselves becoming victims of cyberbullying.
- All pupils must sign up to the School's Acceptable Use Agreement, which makes it clear that cyberbullying is unacceptable. This message is regularly reinforced in lessons and pastoral sessions. We also both filter and regularly monitor pupils' online activity.
- The School makes it clear that all incidents of cyberbullying or bullying of any kind that occur off the school premises but have an impact on the classroom environment or relationships between pupils will be pursued with the same seriousness as bullying occurring within school.
- The School also makes it clear to all that there are effective procedures for reporting, investigating and tackling bullying, and encouraging pupils to report instances of anything they perceive to be bullying.
- The School makes it as easy as possible for pupils who are victims of bullying are able to talk to someone they trust and obtain help and support:
  - There is a strong pastoral team which is dedicated to pupil welfare and wellbeing and who are experienced in dealing with bullying issues.
  - Appropriate staff training in all aspects of care is arranged across the School to ensure that all those with responsibility have the necessary skills to deal with cases of bullying.
  - The School Counsellor supports individuals in need.

## **5 PROCEDURES WHEN BULLYING HAS BEEN REPORTED**

**5.1** All staff, parents and pupils recognise the need to be alert to any signs of bullying. They are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders. They are very aware of the importance of anti-bullying procedures and have clear guidelines to support them in dealing with bullying when it occurs. Staff awareness is raised through training and, when identified, action is taken to reduce the risk of bullying at times and places where it is most likely to occur. Parents are encouraged to monitor online behaviour and report any bullying concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) or the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL).

**5.2** Red House School aims to make pupils feel that they can and should tell anyone about bullying and that everything possible will be done to resolve the problem. To this end, anti-bullying is part of the Pastoral Curriculum delivered through PSHE, RSE, Circle Time, Tutor Time, Life Skills, assemblies, subject areas and co-curricular areas as appropriate.

**5.3** Bullying events may be identified in several ways:

- Disclosure to a member of staff by the individual being bullied.
- Disclosure to another pupil by the individual being bullied.
- Witnesses to specific bullying events.
- Suspicion of bullying based upon the indicating factors.

**5.4** In all cases an allegation of bullying will be treated in a serious, open-minded and fair way, and will be investigated immediately and thoroughly. Bullying on protected characteristics is taken extremely seriously.

**5.5** On hearing or suspecting bullying behaviour, a member of staff should first respond quickly and sensitively by offering advice, support and reassurance to the alleged victim, then make a written record of what has happened on CPOMS and pass on the information immediately to the appropriate Class Teacher or Key Stage Coordinator in the Junior School, or the form tutor or Head of Year in the Senior School. It is not possible for a bullying incident to be kept confidential; however, the action to be taken will be discussed with the victim at every stage.

- 5.6** An appropriate member of staff will be appointed to speak the alleged victim(s), aggressor(s) and witness(es). All pupils will be permitted to tell their version of events without comment upon the nature of the behaviour described. Written records will be kept of all discussions on CPOMS.
- 5.7** If it is clear that there has been a misunderstanding that does not require further investigation or disciplinary action to be taken, this will be explained sympathetically to the alleged victim(s) and the alleged bully(ies) will be guided on how to modify his/her behaviour so that the misunderstanding does not occur again. The situation will be monitored.
- 5.8** If it is believed that bullying has taken place, the Head of the Junior School, Deputy Head and Head of the Senior School and the Head should be informed, and they will decide on the appropriate course of action. This may include additional investigation taking place and pupils may be interviewed. Again, all pupils will be permitted to tell their version of events without comment upon the nature of the behaviour described. Written records of interviews will be made on CPOMS.
- 5.9** The parents of the pupils involved will be informed by the Head of the Junior School (Pre-Nursery to Year 5) or by the Deputy Head (Head of the Senior School) (Years 6-11) if it is established that bullying has taken place and further action is required.
- 5.10** In serious cases, the action required may include further investigation in accordance with the School's Behaviour Management Policy.
- 5.11** If there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, the incident will be treated as a child protection concern and advice will be sought from relevant external agencies.
- 5.12** If at any stage there is a concern that a pupil has suffered or is at risk of suffering significant harm, including the risk of self-harm, a report must be made to the DSLs in accordance with the School's Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy and the procedures in that policy will be followed.
- 5.13** Where bullying behaviour has taken place, the range of actions to be taken by the School will vary but the main objectives will be to bring bullying incidents into the open and to agree strategies to help resolve the problem.
- 5.14** Actions will include one or more of the following:
- Providing support and advice for the victim, including support from the School Counsellor, Wellness Ambassadors and external services where appropriate.
  - The victim will be closely monitored by a nominated adult who will work in partnership with the victim's parents.
  - Providing support to the bully to help him/her understand the effect of his/her action upon the victim and to modify his/her behaviour, including support from the School Counsellor and Wellness Ambassadors, where appropriate.
  - This may also include clear instructions on expectation of behaviour going forward and a warning or final warning.
- 5.15** Consideration given to the motivation behind the bullying behaviour and whether external services should be used to tackle any underlying issues of the bully which contributed to the bullying behaviour. Any concerns about risk of harm will be dealt with in accordance with the School's Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy.
- 5.16** Disciplinary action against the bully in accordance with the School's Behaviour Management Policy. In cases of very serious bullying or persistent bullying, a pupil may be required to leave the School permanently in accordance with the above-mentioned policy.
- 5.17** Informing other staff of the matter on a need to know basis and monitoring the position for as long as necessary, working with parents as necessary.
- 5.18** Moving the bully or victim to another class after consultation with the pupil, his/her parents and the relevant staff and reviewing vulnerable individuals and areas of the School.
- 5.19** Such other action as may appear to the Head of the Junior School, Deputy Head and Head of the Senior School or Head, as applicable, to be appropriate.
- 5.20** Members of the Board of Governors accept their duties as outlined in the above statement. They will periodically assess the effectiveness of this policy and ensure any necessary changes are made. This policy will be reviewed and updated annually.

## **6 KEY CONTACTS**

### **6.1** SMT member with lead responsibility for anti-bullying (Senior School):

Miss Claire Thompson, Deputy Head (Head of the Senior School) and DSL

[Claire.Thompson@redhouseschool.co.uk](mailto:Claire.Thompson@redhouseschool.co.uk)

**6.2** SMT member with lead responsibility for anti-bullying (Junior School):

Mr Simon Haywood, Head of the Junior School  
[Simon.Haywood@redhouseschool.co.uk](mailto:Simon.Haywood@redhouseschool.co.uk)

**6.3** Red House Pastoral Team:

- Dr Rebecca Ashcroft (Head) - [Rebecca.Ashcroft@redhouseschool.co.uk](mailto:Rebecca.Ashcroft@redhouseschool.co.uk)
- Miss Claire Thompson (Deputy Head (Head of the Senior School) and Joint DSL) - [Claire.Thompson@redhouseschool.co.uk](mailto:Claire.Thompson@redhouseschool.co.uk)
- Mr Simon Haywood (Head of the Junior School) - [Simon.Haywood@redhouseschool.co.uk](mailto:Simon.Haywood@redhouseschool.co.uk)
- Mrs Samantha Lindsay Symington (Director of Wellbeing and Pastoral Care and Joint DSL) - [Samantha.Lindsay@redhouseschool.co.uk](mailto:Samantha.Lindsay@redhouseschool.co.uk)
- Mr Ian Barnbrook McKay (EYFS Coordinator and Junior School SEND Lead) - [Ian.Mckay@redhouseschool.co.uk](mailto:Ian.Mckay@redhouseschool.co.uk)
- Mrs Nicola Cooper (KS1 Coordinator and Wellbeing Lead (Junior School)) - [Nicola.Cooper@redhouseschool.co.uk](mailto:Nicola.Cooper@redhouseschool.co.uk)
- Mrs Vicky Smith (KS2 Coordinator, Assistant Head of the Junior School and DDSL) - [Victoria.Smith@redhouseschool.co.uk](mailto:Victoria.Smith@redhouseschool.co.uk)
- Mr Tom Thorogood (Head of Years 9-11 and DDSL) - [Tom.Thorogood@redhouseschool.co.uk](mailto:Tom.Thorogood@redhouseschool.co.uk)
- Mrs Susan Casey (Head of Years 6-8 and DDSL) - [Susan.Casey@redhouseschool.co.uk](mailto:Susan.Casey@redhouseschool.co.uk)

**6.4** School Counsellor: Mrs Wendy Morris

**6.5** Safeguarding Governor: Mrs Leanne Boyd-Smith

**6.6** Wellness Governor & Deputy Safeguarding Governor: Dr Fiona Hunt

**6.7** Wellness Ambassadors:

- Mrs Rachel Dring (Junior School) - [Rachel.Dring@redhouseschool.co.uk](mailto:Rachel.Dring@redhouseschool.co.uk)
- Mrs Lucy Waldock (Junior School) - [Lucy.Waldock@redhouseschool.co.uk](mailto:Lucy.Waldock@redhouseschool.co.uk)
- Mr Tom Thorogood (Senior School - Years 6-8) - [Tom.Thorogood@redhouseschool.co.uk](mailto:Tom.Thorogood@redhouseschool.co.uk)
- Miss Claire Thompson (Senior School - Years 6-8) - [Claire.Thompson@redhouseschool.co.uk](mailto:Claire.Thompson@redhouseschool.co.uk)
- Mrs Samantha Lindsay Symington (Senior School - Years 9-11) - [Samantha.Lindsay@redhouseschool.co.uk](mailto:Samantha.Lindsay@redhouseschool.co.uk)
- Dr Rebecca Ashcroft (Senior School - Years 9-11) - [Rebecca.Ashcroft@redhouseschool.co.uk](mailto:Rebecca.Ashcroft@redhouseschool.co.uk)

## **7 EXTERNAL CONTACTS**

The Children's Hub  
Tel: 01429 284284 or 01642 130080  
Email: [childrenshub@hartlepool.qcsx.gov.uk](mailto:childrenshub@hartlepool.qcsx.gov.uk)  
Emergency Duty Team (outside office hours): 01642 524552

Children's Commissioner: 0800 528 0731  
[www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/](http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/)

Childline: 0800 1111  
[www.childline.org](http://www.childline.org)

NSPCC: 0808 800 5000  
Email: [help@nspcc.org](mailto:help@nspcc.org)

Samaritans: 116 123

EACH: EACH has a freephone Helpline for children experiencing homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying or harassment: 0808 1000 143

Young Minds Parent Helpline: 0808 802 5544

Kidscape Parent Advice Line: 020 7823 5430

Reviewed by: Dr R Ashcroft, Miss C Thompson & Mr S Haywood  
May 2024

Ratified by: The Board of Governors  
May 2024

## **APPENDIX 1: GUIDANCE FOR PUPILS**

### **1. Pupils' guide to how to respond if you are being bullied**

If you are being bullied the following responses should help:

- Stay calm and try to appear confident. Explain to the bully that his/her words/actions are upsetting; he/she may not be aware of this. However, if the bullying continues try not to show your feelings.
- Walk away quickly and confidently, even if you don't feel that way inside.
- If you are different in any way, be proud of it – it's good to be an individual.
- The bully will not stop if he or she thinks she can get away with such behaviour. Discuss the problem with your friends, tell a member of staff or ask your friends to tell a member of staff on your behalf. Telling does not make you a 'grass' or a 'snitch'; not telling means that the bullying is likely to continue.
- If you do not want to talk to an adult in school or a member of your family, you can talk to the School Counsellor.
- Be assured that we take every report of bullying seriously and will act upon it, even if it has happened outside of school. We will keep records of what has happened and consult you and support you in whatever action we take.
- Remember – being bullied is not your fault. Nobody ever deserves to be bullied. All forms of bullying are unacceptable and all reports of bullying are investigated and dealt with, irrespective of who the person responsible for the bullying incident might be.

### **2. Pupil's guide to how to respond if you think someone is being bullied and how to prevent bullying**

You can help to stop bullying:

- If the pupil being bullied is in any danger, fetch help. If she or he is not being bullied, your presence may ease the situation so remain together.
- Show that you and your friends disapprove – stand up for them. Studies show that one of the most effective ways of stopping bullying is for fellow pupils to show support for the victim. Do not, however, put yourself in any danger.
- Talk to a member of staff so the School can take steps to help the victim and stop any bullying. The victim may be too scared to tell anyone.
- Give sympathy and support to others who may be bullied.
- Be careful about teasing or making personal remarks. What you intend to be a joke may not be received that way.
- Be sceptical about rumours concerning other pupils. Don't add to them. Put yourself in the position of the person being targeted.
- Don't be drawn into simply being a bystander. Many perpetrators will not persist in bullying unless they have an audience to play to and, by not taking action, it could be argued that you are condoning what is happening.