

ANTI-BULLYING

INTRODUCTION

Bullying affects everyone, not just the bullies and the victims. It also affects those other children who watch, and less aggressive pupils can be drawn in by group pressure. Bullying is not an inevitable part of school life or a necessary part of growing up, and it rarely sorts itself out. No one person or group, whether staff or pupil, should have to accept this type of behaviour. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed, will a child best be able to benefit from the opportunities available at Riverside.

RATIONALE

- 1.1 We believe that pupils have the right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without the fear of being bullied.
- 1.2 Our school also has a clear policy on the promotion of good citizenship, where it is made clear that bullying is a form of anti-social behaviour. It is WRONG and will not be tolerated.
- 1.3 This policy promotes the belief that both pupils and parents/carers are fully aware that any bullying complaints will be dealt with firmly, fairly and promptly.
- 1.4 Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour. It can be:
 - PHYSICAL - a child can be physically punched, kicked, hit, spat at, etc.
 - VERBAL - verbal abuse can take the form of name calling. It may be directed towards gender, ethnic origin, physical/social disability, or personality, etc.
 - EXCLUSION - a child can be bullied simply by being excluded from discussions/activities, with those they believe to be their friends.
 - DAMAGE TO PROPERTY OR THEFT - pupils may have their property damaged or stolen.

PROCEDURE

What to do if you are being bullied

- 2.1a Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied, and that it is WRONG!
- 2.1b Be proud of who you are. It is good to be individual.
- 2.1c Try not to show that you are upset. It is hard but a bully thrives on someone's fear.
- 2.1d Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
- 2.1e Be assertive - shout "No!" Walk confidently away. Go straight to a teacher or member of staff.
- 2.1f Fighting back makes things worse. It is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. You will get immediate support.
- 2.1g Teachers will take you seriously and will deal with bullies in a way which will end the bullying and will not make things worse for you.
- 2.1h Remember that your silence is the bully's greatest weapon!

What to do if you know someone is being bullied

- 2.2a TAKE ACTION! Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own.
- 2.2b Tell an adult IMMEDIATELY. Teachers have ways of dealing with the bully without getting you into trouble.
- 2.2c Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully.

What to do if you are a parent/carer

- 2.3a Look for unusual behaviour in your children. For example, they may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to their normal standard.
- 2.3b Always take an active role in your child's education. Enquire how their day has gone, who they have spent their time with, how lunch time was spent etc.
- 2.3c If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the School IMMEDIATELY. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- 2.3d It is important that you advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse!
- 2.3e Tell your own son or daughter there is nothing wrong with him or her. It is not his or her fault that they are being bullied.
- 2.3f Make sure your child is fully aware of the School policy concerning bullying, and that they will not be afraid to ask for help.

What we do at Riverside School

- 3.1 We organise the community in order to minimise opportunities for bullying, e.g. provide increased supervision at problem times.
- 3.2 We use opportunities to discuss aspects of bullying, and the appropriate way to behave towards each other.
- 3.3 We deal quickly, firmly and fairly with any complaints, involving parents where necessary.
- 3.4 We review school policy and its degree of success.
- 3.5 Staff have a firm but fair discipline structure. The rules are simple and easy to understand.
- 3.6 We do not use teaching materials or equipment which give a bad or negative view of any group because of their ethnic origin, sex, etc.
- 3.7 We encourage pupils to discuss how they get on with other people and to form positive attitudes towards other people. This includes a review of what friendship really is.
- 3.8 We encourage pupils to treat everyone with respect.
- 3.9 We treat bullying as a serious offence and take every possible action to eradicate it from our school.

Action taken when bullying is suspected

- 4.1 If bullying is suspected a member of staff will talk to the suspected victim, the suspected bully and any witnesses. Help, support and counselling will be given as is appropriate to both the victims and the bullies. If any degree of bullying is identified, the following action will be taken:
- 4.2 The **victims** are supported in the following ways:
 - by offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with their class teacher or another teacher if they choose
 - informing the victims' parents/carers
 - by offering continuing support when they feel they need it, a Place 2 Be counsellor is available at school if required
 - If necessary, arranging for them to be escorted to and from the school premises by a senior member of staff
 - by taking one or more of the seven disciplinary steps described below to prevent more bullying
- 4.3 We also discipline, yet try to help the **bullies** in the following ways:
 - by talking about what happened, to discover why they became involved
 - by monitoring behaviour over an agreed period
 - informing the bullies' parents/carers
 - by continuing to work with the bullies in order to get rid of prejudiced attitudes as far as possible
 - by taking one or more of the seven disciplinary steps described below to prevent more bullying

Disciplinary steps

- 5.1 A verbal warning to stop offending by the SLT.

- 6.2 A “pink form” completed – a copy is kept in the Headteacher’s office and a copy to the class teacher
- 6.3 The bullies’ parents/carers are informed
- 6.4 A behaviour report is issued which must be completed at each session, including playtimes, and monitored by the SLT at regular intervals throughout the day. The length of time is set at the start
- 6.5 Exclusion from the school playground or classroom throughout the day
- 6.6 Formal meeting with parents and the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher
- 6.7 Exclusion from school for a fixed period. Parents have the responsibility of escorting the pupil to and from the school premises.
- 6.8 Exclusion from school for a major fixed period or an indefinite period. Parents have the responsibility of escorting the pupil to and from the school premises.
- 6.9 Permanent exclusion after consultation with the Chair of Governors

MONITORING AND RECORD KEEPING

- 7.1 It is the responsibility of senior members of staff to monitor behaviour and act on information in line with school procedure.
- 7.2 It is the responsibility of the SLT to monitor and record incidents and initiate action. “Pink forms” are kept by the Headteacher as evidence of behaviour.
- 7.3 Records are kept of any discussions with parents concerning bullying. These records are confidential.
- 7.4 The personnel sub-committee monitor behaviour throughout the school. The Headteacher is required to report any incidents of bullying to the committee, which meets each term.
- 7.5 Exclusions are monitored by the governing body. The Headteacher is required to report exclusions to governors. Governors’ meetings are held each term.

*For further information, please refer to **behaviour policy**.*

LINKS WITH EXTERNAL AGENCIES

- The Education Welfare and Attendance Service
- Learning Support Services
- Youth Offending Team