



# **Anti-Bullying Policy**

**Co-ordinator – Assistant Headteacher**

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## **Robertsbridge Community College: Anti-Bullying Policy**

### **Purpose:**

In Robertsbridge Community College we strive to create an open atmosphere of mutual respect in which bullying behaviour is unnecessary and unacceptable.

We support each other by ensuring that no-one is insulted, offended or harmed in any way.

We recognise that everyone in our community has the right to learn in a supportive caring and safe environment free from intimidation or injury.

### **Definition:**

Bullying is defined as behaviour which, either intentionally or unintentionally, upsets or intimidates another child or children. Forms of bullying include:

**Physical:** pushing, hitting, kicking, stealing, and threatening gestures. Damaging or stealing property that belongs to someone else. Violent behaviour. Assault.

**Verbal:** name-calling, teasing, taunting, intimidating, humiliating, spreading malicious gossip, sexual harassment, racial abuse, homophobic abuse.

**Written:** text and e-mail messages, notes.

**Cyberbullying:** name calling, teasing, taunting, intimidating, humiliating, spreading malicious gossip, sexual harassment, racial abuse and homophobic abuse on Social Networking sites, on e-mail, in 'chat' rooms/forums and online gaming sites. Students and parents have access to our E-Safety policy.

**Silent:** exclusion from group activities, rude gestures.

**Damage to property or theft:** pupils may have their property damaged or stolen. Physical threats may be used by the bully in order that the pupil hands over property to them.

It is important in respect of this that pupils learn that one person's good natured teasing may, to another person, be unkind and even cruel bullying.

It is not necessarily the way the behaviour is intended, but the way that it is received that is important in identifying and tackling incidents of bullying.

Pupils are taught through the tutor system and in assemblies to recognise the difference between teasing and bullying.

### **What can you do if you are being bullied?**

Remember that your silence is the bully's greatest weapon!

- Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied and that it is wrong.

- Be proud of who you are, it is good to be individual.
- Try not to show the bully you are upset, he/she thrives on that!
- Stay with a group of people if you can.
- Be assertive, let the perpetrator know that you believe you are being bullied, walk away confidently. Go straight to a teacher or an Anti-Bullying Peer Mentor to get immediate support.
- Share your fears with your parents.
- Share your fears with your Learning Mentor or a chosen adult at school.

Teachers will take bullying seriously and will deal with bullies in a way which will end the bullying and will not make things worse. It would be helpful to list some of the things that you think might happen if you tell.

Teachers record the incident, perpetrator, and victim on a central document regularly viewed by Heads of House.

### **If you know someone is being bullied**

- Take action! Doing nothing looks as if you condone the bully!
- Think! How would I feel? What if this was a member of my family?
- If you feel you cannot get involved tell an adult immediately.
- Heads of House have a way of dealing with bullies without getting you into trouble.
- Do not be friends, or pretend to be friends with people who are bullies.
- Assure the student that in reporting it the issue will be handled sensitively by the teacher/Head of House.
- Advise the student that if they tell, the bully will be dealt with and it will stop.

### **Common Indications of Bullying:**

Look for unusual behaviour this may include:

- A child suddenly not being willing to attend school.
- Feeling ill regularly or feigning illness regularly.
- They may not be completing work to their normal standard.
- A child may be withdrawn and anxious, may develop a stammer.
- They may show uncharacteristic aggression.
- They may be being excluded from groups both at socially and in the classroom.

### **Advice to Parents:**

- Always take an active role in your child's education.
- Enquire how their day has gone, who they spent lunchtime with.
- If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying inform the College immediately.
- It is important you advise your child not to fight back it can make things worse and could get them into trouble.
- Tell your child it is not their fault they are being bullied. Reassure them!
- Make sure your child is fully aware of the College's stance on bullying and that they are not afraid to ask for help.
- Negotiate the appropriate staff to inform at the college.
- Parents should feel they can contact the form tutor with any concerns.

### **As a school we will:**

- Ensure that our own behaviour is in line with the ethos of the school and does not constitute bullying.
- Use opportunities to discuss the way we behave towards each other within the Learning Mentor time programme and with peer mediators, within our PSHE lessons and assemblies.
- Deal quickly with any complaints, involving parents where necessary.
- Review the school policy annually.
- College staff will not use teaching material which gives a bad or negative view of any group because of their ethnic origin, gender or sexual orientation.
- 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.
- Encourage pupils to treat everyone with respect.
- We will treat bullying as a serious offence and take every possible action to eradicate it from our College.
- Through our School Council we will explore ways to encourage children to share their opinions and offer support.
- Offer support to students through the presence of our peer mentors.
- Through our staff Handbook make all who work in the college aware of the Anti-Bullying Policy.

### **Action to be taken when bullying is suspected**

The following steps may be taken when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached.
- A clear account of the incident will be recorded and given to the Head of House.
- The Head of House will interview all concerned and will record the incident.
- The student will be kept apprised of what action has been taken.
- Form tutors will be kept informed and if it persists the form tutor will advise the appropriate subject teachers.
- Parents will be kept informed.
- Punitive measures will be used as appropriate and in consultation will all parties concerned.
- The incident will be logged on a central college form which notes perpetrator and victim. This document picks up if a child has reported bullying and on how many occasions equally, if a child has bullied and how often.

### **Disciplinary steps**

- (1) The bullies' parents/guardians will be informed.
- (2) Where a student has been found to bully another sanction will be imposed. This will be decided in each individual case.
- (3) They may be put in isolation dependant on the situation.
- (4) They may be excluded from the school premises at break and/or lunch times.

- (5) Where appropriate, a 'restorative justice' meeting will be held between students.
- (6) If they do not stop bullying they may be excluded for a minor fixed period.
- (7) If they then carry on they will be recommended for exclusion for a major fixed period or an indefinite period.
- (8) If they will not end such behaviour, they will be recommended for permanent exclusion.

A pupil who has been bullied supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff of their choice.
- Reassuring the pupil.
- Offering continuous support
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence.
- Bringing in an outside agency where appropriate.
- Restorative justice where appropriate.

Pupils who have bullied will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened.
- Discovering why the pupil became involved.
- Establishing the wrong doing and need to change.
- Informing parents or guardians to help change the attitude of the pupil.
- An outside agency skilled in anti- bullying support where appropriate.

Cyberbullying:

This is the use of information and communication technologies to bully (as defined above).

- Where this affects a student in the college, they will be given support.
- Parents are advised to contact the police as a matter of course.

**Monitoring, evaluation and review**

The school will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school. Pupils will be involved in drawing up the policy.

Last updated: September 2015