

# The Roundhill Academy

## Anti-Bullying Policy

### Rationale

Bullying is present to a greater or lesser extent in all institutions. *All* members of the school community deserve the right to feel valued, equal and respected and be able to come to school without fear. Bullying has a serious effect on a student's self-esteem, emotional and mental health, which in turn may prevent them from developing to their full potential. This can seriously affect their life chances.

Our school's definition of bullying is:

**Bullying can be defined as an abuse of power by one or more people through repeated hurtful or aggressive behaviour with the intention to cause emotional or physical harm to another person. It can happen at any time.**

**Bullying is not a one off incident of unkindness, a falling out between friends, or reciprocal name calling / unkindness between students.**

Bullying comes in many forms and may target others on the basis of race, religion, culture, Special Educational Needs, disability, appearance, health conditions, home circumstances, gender, sexuality (homophobia or biphobia), or gender identity (transphobia).

Bullying can include the following behaviours:

**Physical** – hitting, kicking, pushing, barging, tripping, pulling, stealing or hiding belongings, damage to personal property, deliberate staring or pointing, 'dirty looks', sexual assault.

**Verbal** – name-calling, teasing, taunting, personal insults or insults to family members, offensive or threatening language.

**Behavioural** – social exclusion from group activities, deliberate ignoring, forcing someone to do something against their will, spreading rumours or stories, graffiti, defacing property, stealing, displaying offensive literature or materials.

**Cyber bullying** – offensive or abusive text or internet/social media messages, recording images using mobile devices, and other uses of ICT such as bullying over gaming devices.

Bullying, in any form, will not be tolerated at our school. This includes any member of the school community (staff, students, parents or governors). As a school, we are committed to the creation of a positive, safe and secure learning environment for all. This policy is the outcome of consultation between all members of the school community (students, all staff, Governors and parents) through questionnaires and meetings. Our 4Rs reflects the importance of our anti-bullying values.

The school will support any student who is suffering from any form of bullying outside school hours. When behaviour from an incident that has happened is brought into school then the school has a responsibility to act on the grounds of Health and Safety or Learning.

### Purpose of the policy:

- To promote the aims and values of the school.
- To develop a positive and safe learning environment in which bullying will not be tolerated.
- To promote inclusion, mutual respect and self-esteem, ensuring that the physical, social, emotional and mental health needs of all members of the school community are considered and supported.

- To raise the standards of behaviour and levels of achievement for all.

#### **Guidelines for implementing the policy:**

- The policy will be monitored and evaluated.
- It is recognised that anyone can engage in bullying behaviour or be the target of such behaviour and that bullying can take many forms.
- It is recognised that the Principal and Governing Body have a statutory responsibility for school behaviour and discipline, but that all members of the school community accept collective responsibility for the successful implementation of this policy.
- Students and parents are encouraged to report all incidents of bullying, whether they are victims or bystanders.
- All staff will respond to student, staff or parental concerns seriously and support the agreed procedures.

#### **Our proactive strategies include:**

- We will listen to all parties and investigate any allegations of bullying. This is the message that will be promoted at all times and with all audiences. There is an agreed collective responsibility to address any incidents of bullying observed.
- Each year the issue of bullying will be raised to maintain awareness of the issue through assemblies, Teaching and Learning, Student Voice, links from our website and the prominent display of posters and information.
- Every opportunity to promote whole school initiatives such as anti-bullying week, theatre productions and external speakers will be taken.
- Priority will be given to creating safe playgrounds with adequate supervision and planned activities (computer club, friendship groups, and common rooms for all years) as break times are recognised as bullying hotspots.
- The Head of Student Services and Student Support Workers (SSW's) will be on duty at lunchtimes and specifically monitor and support students with difficulties or concerns.
- All students are taught what bullying is, what they should do and have named people who they can tell (usually Tutors and key workers).
- Students will have access to information in the planner that is student friendly and accessible.
- Peer support systems for students will be promoted and training provided for both staff and students, Humanutopia 'heroes' are a new addition to this support.
- A counsellor will be provided by the school with students able to self-refer to discuss their concerns or issues.
- The Governing body and Senior Leadership Team will monitor bullying via Go4Schools data, staff meetings, questionnaires from students, parents and the Junior Leadership Team.
- Bullying will be addressed within the Personal Development and Citizenship curriculum and particularly through tutor-time.
- All staff will receive training on the identification, prevention and management of bullying. At the start of a new school year, procedures for dealing with a bullying incident will be discussed at a Teacher Day or early staff meeting. The policy will be discussed and then distributed to all new staff.

#### **Our reactive strategies:**

- In the event of a bullying incident the same procedures will be followed as for all other incidents of poor behaviour (see school Behaviour Policy). Staff will report incidents to the Tutor or the Pastoral team and SSW's who will gather evidence and decide on the appropriate action to be taken.

- There is a hierarchy of sanctions that will be taken against bullying behaviour dependent upon the severity of the incident and previous involvement in bullying:
  1. Verbal warning
  2. 20 minute lunchtime detention
  3. 60 minute after school detention (letter and policy is sent home)
  4. Seclusion (parents will be invited into school for a reintegration meeting)
  5. Fixed-term Exclusion
  6. Managed Move
  7. Possible Permanent Exclusion
- The most serious incidents may lead to a fixed term or permanent exclusion and be considered after a full review of the facts. Consideration will also be given to reporting such incidents to the Police.
- In all cases of bullying details of the incident and the action taken will be recorded. Parents of both the child with bullying behaviour and the target of the bullying will be kept fully involved and informed. Contact will initially be by telephone, but parents may be required to attend a meeting at school if bullying behaviours continue.
- Our prime concern will be the support and protection of the target of the bullying behaviour. Action will continue until the issue is satisfactorily resolved and the bullying ceases. The actions will be reviewed and modified in light of circumstances and if the bullying continues.
- We will also offer support to the young person who is engaging in bullying behaviour. This will be tailored to the individual need.
- Strategies to support targets of bullying behaviour will involve staff and students. Approaches such as conflict resolution, buddying, mentoring, and counselling will all be considered.
- Bullying incidents will be logged and monitored on a termly basis. Information will be given to the Governing body each term in the Principal's report.

### **Advice to students:**

If you are bullied

- Try to keep calm.
- Walk away.
- Try to assess how serious it is.
- Go to a place of safety.
- Stay where there are a lot of people if you can.
- Talk about it with someone you trust.
- Tell someone – family, friends, member of staff.
- Do not feel bad about yourself – it is the bullies fault not yours!

Remember:

- Your silence is the greatest weapon of the child with bullying behaviour.
- Fighting back may make things worse.

If you witness bullying what can you do?

- Tell a member of staff.
- Tell your parents.
- Be friendly to anyone who is bullied.

### **Advice to staff:**

If a student reports an incident of bullying to you it is because they feel they can talk to you and trust you. They should be allowed to stay in control of the situation and be consulted on any course of action. The following advice may be useful:

- Take the report seriously. Do not tell the student to ignore it, do not dismiss it immediately or tell the student to go and see someone else straight away. However, you could ask the student if she / he is happy to speak to their Tutor an SSW or the Head of Student Services.
- If the student is adamant that they want to talk to you and you do not have time at that precise moment, arrange a convenient time as a matter of urgency.
- Listen carefully to what the student has to say, ask for detailed information.
- Agree what action to take with the student. If after talking to the student you 'refer' to someone else, explain why you are and check that the student is happy for this to happen.
- Inform the Tutor, The Head of Student Services or appropriate SSW so that the incident can be recorded on Go4Schools and the bullying log, to enable effective monitoring.

#### **Advice to parents:**

- Watch for signs of distress in your children. For instance, they could be unwilling to attend school, feel unwell regularly, have missing equipment or be 'losing money'.
- Take an active interest in your child's social life. Discuss friendships, how lunchtime is spent and the journey to and from school.
- Proactively monitor your child's use of mobile devices, social networking and other forms of communication. Contact the school for a copy of Digital Parenting which offers practical advice for parents.
- Inform the school immediately if you feel your child may be the victim of bullying behaviour. Speak to your child's tutor, the Pastoral team or the Assistant Principal.
- Do not encourage your child to hit back – it makes matters worse.
- Be supportive – make sure that your child knows that the bullying is not their fault.
- Know that the school will appreciate your involvement and take the report seriously.

**Reviewed March 2018**

**Helen Blythe**