



ROACH VALE PRIMARY SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Objectives:

Our Anti-Bullying Policy outlines what Roach Vale Primary School will do to prevent and tackle bullying so that Roach Vale is a place safe from bullying and harassment for the school community to learn.

Our school community:

- Discusses, monitors and reviews our anti-bullying policy on a regular basis.
- Supports staff to promote positive relationships and identify and tackle bullying appropriately.
- Ensures that pupils are aware that all bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively; that pupils feel safe to learn; and that pupils abide by the anti-bullying policy.
- Reports back to parents/carers regarding their concerns on bullying and deals promptly with complaints. Parents/ carers in turn work with the school to uphold the anti-bullying policy.
- Seeks to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere and utilises support from the Local Authority and other relevant organisations when appropriate¹.

Defining Bullying

Roach Vale's definition of bullying includes the following:

- bullying behaviour deliberately causes hurt (either physically or emotionally)
- bullying behaviour is repetitive (though one off incidents such as the posting of an image, or the sending of a text that is then forwarded to a group, can quickly become repetitive and spiral into bullying behaviour)
- bullying behaviour involves an imbalance of power (the person on the receiving end feels like they can't defend themselves)

Bullying is not:

- teasing and banter between friends without intention to cause hurt
- falling out between friends after a quarrel or disagreement
- behaviour that all parties have consented to and enjoy

Types of Bullying

Bullying includes a wide range of repetitive behaviours with the intent to cause harm. For example name calling, offensive comments, hitting, kicking and shoving, theft or harm to belongings, graffiti, coercion, spreading of harmful messages through gossip, sending or spreading messages and images through mobile phones and the internet, deliberate exclusion from play and isolation.

Bullying linked to prejudice and discrimination Bullying can also be linked to prejudicial behaviour or targeting of certain individuals or groups – for example homophobic bullying, bullying of children with special educational needs and disabilities, bullying related to health conditions and allergies, bullying related to race and religion, bullying of children in care, bullying of children who care for their parents or their siblings (young carers), and gender based bullying (e.g. transphobic, sexual and sexist bullying).

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Bullying related to appearance: We also know that children and young people can be subjected to bullying related to their physical appearance (e.g. weight, height, disfigurements, hair, teeth, skin conditions, glasses and clothes).

Sexual bullying: Sexual bullying is any behaviour with a sexual element that is harmful, non-consensual and repeated. For example this could include sexual comments and name-calling, spreading of sexual rumours, use of technology to spread sexual gossip, comments or images, exposing body parts and non-consensual touch (e.g. touching body parts, pulling bra straps, raising skirts, pulling down trousers).

Is cyberbullying different? The development of internet and mobile phone technology has provided different tools and methods for bullying others that we call cyberbullying. However, fundamentally it is driven by the same behaviour and motivation as any form of bullying. Cyberbullying can include sending or posting of harmful messages, comments and images online or through mobile phones, exclusion from social networking and impersonating of others to cause harm.

Bullying and crime: There are times that bullying behaviour becomes criminal - but not all bullying behaviour is criminal. Some examples of bullying behaviour that could be considered criminal include:

- threatening or actual physical assault
- threatening or actual sexual assault
- the use of technology to bully and harass
- theft
- coercing others to commit a crime
- hate crime (e.g. racism)

If the Headteacher thinks a crime may have been committed they will contact the police for advice on appropriate action to take.

Bullies and the Bullied

It is not always easy to identify those who bully and those who are bullied. These are not personality types – no child is born a bully or a victim of bullying. Rather bullying is a type of behaviour that potentially any child can exhibit. Bullying can also be group behaviour - it can be particularly difficult for school staff to determine what has happened in cases of bullying involving several pupils – particularly if these groups are made up of children in the same peer or friendship group.

Bullying can happen in public – such as physical assault in the playground, or it can be very subtle and hard to detect – such as the spreading of rumours or deliberate social exclusion

Strategies for dealing with and preventing bullying

Roach Vale takes any instances of bullying very seriously. Any form of bullying is unacceptable and will be dealt with using the agreed procedures and policy. We use the following strategies to help inform our practice:

- A Strong commitment to tackling bullying from the senior leadership team
- Data collection
- Prevention
- Response
- Involving students (through the PSHCE Curriculum and School Council)

- Working with parents and carers
- Staff training and development

All staff have a commitment to tackling bullying in school. The subject is brought up at regular Staff Meetings and reviewed throughout the year. Any recommendations are shared with staff via staff meetings and minutes are sent to all stakeholders in the school to ensure the messages discussed are available for all.

Roach Vale has a very simple behaviour code, drawn up by the school council. It is:

1. We care for ourselves and others
2. We respect everybody's right to learn and to enjoy school
3. We are careful with things that don't belong to us
4. We make the most of every day

This code sets the standard of behaviour across the school for all children, members of staff and visitors. All stakeholders are expected to follow this code, and any incidence of bullying will refer back to the behaviour code as its starting point.

Roach Vale promotes the positive behaviour of all its children in order to prevent bullying occurring within the school.

Responding to incidents of bullying

In dealing with bullying incidents, we will observe five key points.

- We will not ignore bullying
- Staff should not make premature assumptions
- All accounts of the incidents should be listened to fairly
- We will make every effort to adopt a problem-solving approach which encourages pupils to find solutions rather than simply justify themselves
- We will follow up to check bullying has not resumed

Records

The school will keep records of all incidents and the school's response. This will be written down in the behaviour log, kept in the headteacher's office.

Advice to bullied pupils

We tell our children not to suffer in silence. This will be reinforced through general day-to-day teaching and specifically PSHCE ethos.

During a bullying incident, pupils will be advised to:

- Try to stay calm and look as confident as they can
- Be firm and clear and look the bully in the eye and tell them to stop
- Get away from the situation as quickly as they can
- Tell an adult what has happened straight away

After they have been bullied, pupils should:

- Tell a teacher or other adult at school immediately, and keep on telling until they feel listened to
- Tell their family
- Take a friend with them if they are scared to tell an adult by themselves
- Not blame themselves for what has happened

When they talk to an adult about the bullying, pupils should be clear about:

- What has happened to them
- How often it has happened
- Who was involved
- Where it happened
- Who saw what happened
- What they have done about it already

Strategies For Dealing With Bullying The following is a list of actions available to staff depending on the perceived seriousness of the situation. The emphasis is always on a caring, listening approach. If bullying is suspected we will:

- Talk to the suspected victim, and any witnesses.
- Identify the bully and talk about what has happened, to discover why they became involved.
- Make it clear that bullying is not tolerated at Roach Vale.
- If the bully owns up then sanction procedures will be followed.
- If the suspected bully does not own up, further investigation will take place.
- Invite the parents of the bully and victim into school to discuss the situation.
- Continue monitoring the situation to ensure no repetition.

From time to time, outside agencies may be contacted, such as; Behaviour Support, CAMHs, Education Welfare and Educational Psychologists to further support the child and school.

In very serious cases where bullying does not cease, the bully may be temporarily or permanently excluded from the school.

Parents are informed of any incidents of bullying, whether their child is the alleged victim or bully.

Role Of Parents

Parents have an important part to play in our anti-bullying policy. We ask parents to:

- a) Look out 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 usual standard
- b) Always take an active role in your child's education. Enquire how their day has gone, who they have spent their time with, etc
- c) If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform school immediately. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow
- d) If a child has bullied your child, please do not approach that child on the playground or involve an older child to deal with the bully. Please inform school immediately
- e) It is important that you advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse
- f) Tell your child that it is not their fault that they are being bullied
- g) Reinforce the school's policy concerning bullying and make sure your child is not afraid to ask for help
- h) If you know your child is involved in bullying, please discuss the issues with them and inform school. The matter will be dealt with appropriately

Bullying outside a school's premises

Schools are not directly responsible for bullying off their premises. A court judgement ruled that the head's duty of care to prevent bullying generally only applied within the precincts of a school, although exceptionally, failure to take disciplinary steps to combat harmful behaviour

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outside the school might breach the school's common law duty of care. At Roach Vale Primary School, we are aware that bullying of pupils could take place outside the school gates, and on journeys to and from school. The bullying may be by pupils at the school, pupils at other schools (for example older siblings/ children from other schools met through extra-curricular activities/ sporting tournaments or through family/ friend connections), or people not at school at all. Our school's anti-bullying policy encourages pupils not to suffer in silence. Where a pupil reports bullying off the school premises, a range of steps may be taken

- Talk to parents so that they can deal with the issue outside school if possible
- Talk to the local police about problems on local streets (if necessary seek a police presence or support from Community police officer)
- Talk to the head of another school whose pupils are bullying off the premises
- Talk to pupils about how to avoid or handle bullying outside the school

Role of Governors

The governors of Roach Vale will monitor the policy from time to time and review annually. Governors receive a termly report on bullying incidents.

Role of the school council

The school council represents the children of the school and they will look at the Anti Bullying policy from time to time to discuss how it is working and whether any changes need to be made. Suggestions will be made and changes will be ratified by the governing body.

Links to other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Equality Scheme

Links to other agencies

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) 0808 8005793 www.ace-ed.org.uk
Children's Legal Centre 08088 020008 www.childrenslegalcentre.com
KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline 08451 205204 www.kidscape.org.uk
Childline 0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk
Family Lives 0808 800 2222 www.familylives.org.uk