

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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Compliance lead	Director of PSTE
Agreed Policy file name	Anti-bullying Policy and Procedure
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POLICY:

All young people need to feel safe, respected and valued by their peers and adults in order to learn and achieve their full potential. Ruskin Mill Trust (the Trust) is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere.

Bullying is an anti-social behaviour that may be considered to be abusive and fall within the Trust's safeguarding policy and procedure. Bullying is an abuse of power over others and can include the same symptoms as emotional and physical abuse.

The Trust believes that bullying of any kind is unacceptable and should be actively discouraged and appropriately dealt with when it occurs. This requires staff and students to report their observations and concerns. Students need to be supported to report their experiences of bullying and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Any member of staff or student who knows that bullying is happening should report it to either the Duty Manager or the Education Learning Coordinator.

The Trust is committed to ensuring that all staff, volunteers, students and parents should understand what bullying is, what they should do if bullying arises, and understand the RMT policy on bullying; Students, parents and other interested parties are assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported and Bullying will not be tolerated

What is Bullying

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding belongings, threatening gestures)
- Physical: Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Verbal: Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber: All areas of interest, such as emails and internet chat room or social media misuse, mobile phone threats by text messaging and calls, misuse of associated technology, ie camera and video facilities.

And bullying may also involve aspects that are:

- Racist: Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual: Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comment
- Homophobic: Focusing on the victim's actual or perceived sexual orientation.
- Transphobic bullying: behavior or language that makes a young person feel unwelcome or marginalized because of their perceived or actual gender identity

The Importance of responding to Bullying

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect and bullying is contra to the Trust commitment to equality and diversity. Students who bully need to be supported to learn different ways of behaving.

The Trust has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Recognising Bullying

A student may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Members of staff should be aware of these possible signs and should investigate if a student:

- is frightened of walking to or from the provision
- doesn't want to go on the transport to the provision
- begs to be driven to the provision by the Shared Lives Provider or other member of staff
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to the provision or develops phobias of the provision
- begins to truant or abscond
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in work at the provision
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or 'go missing'
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has other monies continually 'lost'
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (lunch has been missed on purpose)

- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children, students or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and investigated.

PROCEDURE:

All students will be encouraged to report bullying to staff and know that:

- Incidents will be recorded by staff
- In serious cases parents or carers will be informed and invited to a meeting to discuss the problem with the consent of the student if they have the capacity to give it or a decision may be taken in the students best interests under the mental capacity act to share and discuss this information if they lack capacity to consent
- If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted (This may also be necessary even if the individual withholds consent because of the risks posed to other students.)
- The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying will be investigated and every effort will be made to stop the bullying and this may warrant the instigating of safeguarding procedures
- An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour

All incidences of bullying noted by staff during the day should be reported to the Duty Manager, who should inform the appropriate Education Learning Coordinator.

All incidences of bullying in the residential setting should be reported to either the Duty Manager or directly to the Education Learning Coordinator.

The designated Education Learning Coordinator will be responsible for ensuring that the incident has been appropriately recorded and investigated and that appropriate action has been taken including invoking the safeguarding procedure if necessary.

The designated Education Learning Coordinator will make every reasonable effort to ensure that the student being bullied:

- Will be met in an appropriate setting
- Is listened to and taken seriously
- Has their concerns followed up
- Is encouraged to take part in the process of deciding on follow up action

The student suspected of bullying will be:

- Listened to in an appropriate setting
- Presented with the established facts, following the investigation of any allegation
- Helped to understand the seriousness and damaging consequences of their bullying behaviour
- Helped to understand the reasons for the action taken
- Told that if the bullying persists the designated Education Learning Coordinator will inform a member of the provision Management Team which may result in the Trust's Discipline and Sanctions Policy being followed

Outcomes

As a consequence of staff interventions:

- The bully (bullies) may be asked to apologise sincerely. Other specific follow up actions may be required
- In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered as part of the Sanctions Policy
- If possible, and where appropriate, the students will be encouraged and supported to reconcile
- After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, continual monitoring will put into place to help prevent any repetition

Prevention

Working proactively, The Trust will use the following methods to prevent bullying:

- Referring students to provision anti-bullying procedures and policies
- Requiring students to sign behaviour contracts if they have the capacity to do so
- Requiring students to participate in anti-bullying workshops. These may include discussions about bullying, role play, writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying and reading real life stories about bullying

Additional Support

Staff and students may access additional support on tackling bullying from the following organisations:

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)	0808 800 5793
Children's Legal Centre	01206 877 910
Parentline Plus	020 7284 5500
Youth Access	020 8772 9900
Bullying Online	www.bullying.co.uk
CEOP	https://ceop.police.uk/

IMPACT OF NON-COMPLIANCE FOR:

Staff	Disciplinary action
Students	Potential risk of harm
Legislation / organisation	Litigation, reputational damage, regulatory non-compliance