



## **Rye Academy Trust**

### **Preventing Bullying - Policy for Rye College & Rye Studio School**

#### **1. Aim**

The aim of this policy is to ensure that learners and staff can work in a supportive, caring and safe environment without harassment, intimidation, threat or fear.

#### **2 Our values**

Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated within our community. We believe that all learners have the right to feel happy and safe and to be included fully in the life of their school.

We therefore seek through this policy with support of all members of the academy community:

- To reduce and to eradicate, wherever possible, instances in which learners are made to feel frightened, excluded or unhappy;
- To reduce and to eradicate, wherever possible, instances in which learners are subject to any form of bullying;
- Establish a means of dealing with bullying, and of providing support to learners who have been bullied;
- Ensure that all learners and staff are aware of the policy and that they fulfil their obligations to it.
- Meet our legal obligations.

#### **3. What is bullying?**

What some consider teasing, others can see as bullying. There is no legal definition for bullying but it is usually understood as repeated physically or/and emotionally hurtful behaviour. It can take many forms, including:

- Physical - hitting, kicking, taking another's belongings;
- Verbal - name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks;
- Indirect - spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours;
- Cyber - All areas of the internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse; mobile threats by text messaging & calls. Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video.

Bullying is therefore:

- Deliberately hurtful;
- Repeated, often over a period;
- Difficult for victims to defend themselves against.



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### 4. Cyber Bullying

Cyber bullying is the misuse of digital technologies or communications to bully a person or a group, typically through messages or actions that are threatening and/or intended to cause offence, anxiety or humiliation.

Behaviour that is classed as cyber bullying includes:

- **Abusive comments**, rumours, gossip and threats made over the internet or using other digital communications – this includes internet trolling.
- **Sharing pictures**, videos or personal information without the consent of the owner, and with the intent to cause harm and/or humiliation.
- **Hacking** into someone else's email, phone or online profile to extract and share personal information, or send abusive, or inappropriate content while posing as that person.
- **Creating** specific websites that negatively target an individual or group typically by posting content that intends to humiliate, ostracise and/or threaten.
- **Blackmail** or pressurising someone to do something online that they do not want to do.

Cyber bullying will be treated with the same intolerance and in the same ways as any other form of bullying in respect of this policy.

Cyber bullying can be reported through the same channels of communication outlined further on in this policy.

The academies will educate learners about cyber bullying through PSHE lessons, assemblies, outside speakers and our police liaison officer.

The academies will endeavour to keep up to date with the internet technologies being used by pupils both within and outside school.

### 5. Who is vulnerable to bullying?

Any person can be bullied. Some forms of bullying are attacks not only on the individual, but also on the group to which he or she may belong. Children and young people are most commonly bullied because of a real or perceived difference:

- **Racist bullying** based on ethnicity, skin colour, language, religious or cultural practices.
- **Homophobic bullying** based on sexuality or gender identity.
- **Disablist bullying**, the bullying of learners who have special educational needs and disabilities.
- **Sexual bullying**, unwelcome sexual advances, remarks that are intended to cause offence, humiliation or intimidation.



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- **Discriminative bullying** based on any perceived weakness such as children in fostering or care homes, young carers, those with disabled siblings or parents, single parent families, low economic backgrounds, etc.
- **LGBT parents** based on the children of lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender couples.

### 6. The Effects of Bullying

The effects of bullying are severe and can often continue long into adulthood. Learners who are bullied are more likely to:

- have low self-esteem;
- develop depression or anxiety;
- become socially withdrawn, isolated and lonely;
- have lower academic achievements;
- be unable to form trusting, healthy relationships with friends or partners in the future.

### 7. Signs and Symptoms

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

- Is frightened of walking to or from school;
- Doesn't want to go on the school/public bus;
- Begs to be driven to school;
- Changes their usual routine;
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic);
- Begins to truant;
- 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 school work;
- 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 a bully);
- Has dinner or other monies continually 'lost';
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises;
- Comes home starving (money/lunch has been stolen);



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- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable;
- Is bullying other children 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 should be investigated.

### **8. How we will create an anti-bullying climate**

Our behaviour policies explain how we promote positive behaviour to create an environment where learners behave well, take responsibility for each other's emotional and social well-being and include and support each other.

We have a legal duty under the Education Act 2002, the Education and inspections Act 2006 and the Equalities Act 2010 to prevent and tackle bullying.

We recognize that bullying can occur not only on the school premises but also on the journeys to and from school, on trips or after school clubs and via cyber bullying at any time. If an incident of bullying off-site, is made known to us, we will investigate and take appropriate action. Depending on the circumstances, this may be reported to external agencies or the police.

To stop bullying before it starts, we will, through our curriculum, raise awareness of issues which might provoke conflict, identify the negative impact of bullying and the importance of a supportive and collaborative learning environment where these skills are learned and practiced. We will talk with learners about issues of difference, respecting one another, how to say no to bullying and the importance of reporting it.

Everyone within the academy community is expected to:

- Act in a respectful and supportive way towards one another.
- Adhere to and to promote the objectives of this policy.

Staff are expected to adhere to the aims of this policy and challenge bullying wherever they may come across it.

Governors are expected to monitor behaviour within the academy with regard to bullying, ensuring the academy is challenging bullying and taking steps to promote an antibullying climate with regular data checking to track trends and frequency.



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As a learner, you should expect:

- Not to be bullied;
- To learn in a safe and supportive environment;
- To be able to say 'no' to anything you think is wrong;
- To tell a member of staff if you feel that someone is bullying you.

In turn, we expect learners will:

- Be intolerant of bullying;
- Help stop others bullying;
- Not to be afraid to report bullying in any form;
- Support other students who are being bullied.

Parents/carers can help by:

- Supporting this policy, the home school agreement and academy procedures.
- Discussing with their child's teacher any concerns that their child may be experiencing bullying or involved in some other way.
- Helping to establish an anti-bullying culture outside of school.

### **9. Responding to incidents when they occur**

Learners who are experiencing bullying personally, should report this to any member of staff.

Learners who see others being bullied should report this to any member of staff.

Members of staff who witness bullying or receive reports that a learner is/has been bullied should investigate the incident fully and take appropriate action.

All reports will be taken seriously. A clear account of the incident including statements from all those concerned will be recorded and given to the appropriate member of staff.

We will inform parents/carers of the learners involved.

Where required the academies will report incidents to partner external agencies.

We will ensure teachers and support staff receive training in tackling bullying.



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### 10. Support mechanisms

We will provide support to learners who are bullied:

- They will be reassured that they do not deserve to be bullied and the bullying is not their fault.
- We will assure them that it was right to report the incident.
- We will encourage them to talk about how they feel.
- We will try to ascertain the extent of the problem.
- We will engage them in making choices about how the matter may be resolved.
- We will try to ensure that they feel safe.
- We will discuss strategies for being safe and staying safe.
- We will ask them to report immediately any further incidents to us.
- We will affirm that the bullying can be stopped and that the academy will persist with intervention until it does.
- We will listen to their version of events.
- We will interview the learner (or learners) involved in bullying.
- We will talk to anyone else who may have witnessed the bullying.
- We will reinforce the message that bullying is not acceptable, and that we expect bullying to stop.
- We will seek a commitment to this end.
- We will affirm that it is right for learners to let us know when they are being bullied.
- We will adopt a joint problem solving approach where this is appropriate, and ask the learners involved to work with us to find solutions to the problem. This will encourage learners involved to take responsibility for the emotional and social needs of others.
- We will consider sanctions under our behaviour policy.
- We will advise learners responsible for bullying that we will be checking to ensure that bullying stops.
- We will ensure that those involved know that we have done so.
- When bullying occurs, we will contact the parents of the learner involved at an early stage.
- We will keep records of incidents that we become aware of and how we responded to them.
- We will follow up after incidents to check that the bullying has not started again. We will do this within two weeks, and again within the following half term.
- We will use our internal support mechanisms to support learners who need emotional support. If the expertise is not available within the academies we will refer to the relevant outside agencies such as CAMHS.

The range of strategies also includes fixed term and permanent exclusion. If the bullying is in the form of a serious physical attack, we will not hesitate to involve the police.



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Learners who have bullied will be helped to change their behaviour by:

- Discussing what happened and its impact on others;
- Discovering why the learner became involved;
- Acknowledgement of wrongdoing and the need to change;
- Positive recognition of improved behaviour;
- Informing parents/carers and working with them to change the attitude and behaviour of the learner.

### 11. Monitoring, evaluation and review

We will evaluate and review this policy on an annual basis or sooner if necessary – e.g. in response to guidance.

<b>Approval date:</b>	March 2017
<b>Review date:</b>	March 2018