



# Bunscoill Rhumsaa Anti-Bullying Policy

## Rationale

At Bunscoill Rhumsaa we value people for who they are, leading to courtesy, consideration, respect for others' views, empathy, tolerance and mutual caring.

Bullying prevents an equality of opportunity and challenges our determination to provide an inclusive education. It is the responsibility of all members of the school community to prevent bullying and to support the ethos at Bunscoill Rhumsaa. Consequently the overall aim of this policy is to support everyone within the school community in tackling bullying.

Where bullying exists the victims must feel confident to approach an adult so that the anti-bullying systems within the school can be implemented. It is our aim to challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour, increase understanding for bullied students and to promote an anti-bullying ethos at Bunscoill Rhumsaa.

## Guidance

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (England 2006, Isle of Man 2009.)
- Isle Of Man Children's Plan.
- Healthy Lifestyles criteria.

## Links to other guidance documents

- Safeguarding guidance
- Behaviour policy
- Healthy futures guidance
- Health and safety guidance
- PSHE policy

## Definitions of Bullying

We believe it is important that we educate students to know the difference between simply 'falling out' and bullying. The following definitions are designed to clarify this distinction.

As a member of the Anti-Bullying Alliance, Bunscoill Rhumsaa uses their definition of bullying as its own, which is;

**the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online.**

You can find out more about how this definition was created, as well as lots of information, at [www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)

Bullying includes:

- **Physical.** Pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching and other forms of violence or threats.
- **Verbal.** Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing. This also includes messages by mobile phone, e-mail and social networking sites.
- **Emotional.** Excluding, tormenting, ridicule, humiliation.
- **Racist.** Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- **Sexual.** Unwanted physical contact or abusive comments.
- **Homophobic.** Any hostile or offensive action based upon an individual's sexuality or perceived sexuality.
- **Cyber.** Mobile threats by text messaging and calls; all areas of internet such as email and chat room misuse; misuse of associated technology e.g. camera and video facilities.

Although bullying can occur between individuals it can often take place in the presence (virtually or physically) of others who become the "bystanders" or "accessories". In cyber bullying, bystanders can easily become perpetrators – by passing on or showing to others images designed to humiliate or taking part in online polls or discussion groups. Students may not recognise themselves as participating in bullying, but their involvement compounds the misery for the person targeted. They will be made aware that their actions can have severe and distressing consequences and that participating in such activity will not be tolerated.

## Signs and Symptoms

A student may indicate by signs or behaviour that they are being bullied. Staff and carers should be aware of these possible signs and they should investigate if a student:

- is frightened of walking or getting the bus to or from school
- asks to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- attempts or threatens self harm
- feels ill in the morning
- school work declines
- arrives home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- 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.

## **Awareness Raising and Implementation of the policy**

At Bunscoill Rhumsaa we believe that prevention is better than cure. The principle of prevention will be addressed by raising awareness throughout our school.

- All students, staff (teaching and non-teaching), governors, parents and members of the wider school community are made aware of the Bunscoill Rhumsaa anti-bullying policy by a variety of methods, for example:
  - PSHE and other curriculum opportunities
  - Assemblies
  - Newsletters
  - School Council meetings
  - Governor's meetings/reports
- At whole school level – through assemblies when students will be informed of the school's zero-tolerance policy and the actions that will be taken to prevent bullying taking place. Assembly time will also be used to challenge the notion that there can be innocent, neutral bystanders with regards to the issue of bullying.
- Students will be reminded of our policy regularly through curriculum focus, assemblies and through the work of the School Council.
- Anti-Bullying Week in November will be used as an opportunity to raise the profile of this issue.
- At classroom level – through PHSE the focus will be on developing strong anti-bullying messages to ensure that all students recognise that all forms of bullying are unacceptable and understand the effects of bullying upon the victims. Stereotypical views will be challenged and students encouraged to appreciate and view positively the differences in others whether arising from race, culture, gender, sexuality, ability or disability.
- We as a school, recognise that there are particular times when students may be more vulnerable to bullying – lunch and break times and the beginning and end of the school day. Duty arrangements are made to ensure that at such times there is adequate supervision available to reduce the risk of bullying incidents.
- Students will have the opportunity to contribute to the school's Anti-Bullying Policy through the School Council.

## **Incident Management and Monitoring**

Teaching and support staff at Bunscoill Rhumsaa are expected to be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with school policy.

Students are told that they must report any incidents of bullying to an adult in school.

Upon the report of an incident of bullying we will take appropriate action in order to support the victim and to both support and sanction the bully. We will employ a variety of strategies to suit the individual circumstances. The bully will be made clearly aware of the consequences of repeated bullying and the sanctions, which may include suspension from school, will be explained to them.

All incidents of bullying will be taken seriously and investigated. Such investigations will normally be the responsibility initially of the class teacher. Incidents and outcomes will be noted in record books held in the Headteacher's Office and trends such as numbers and context of incidents and perceptions of bullying will be monitored. In order to ensure effective monitoring of such occurrences and to enable co-ordinated action, all proven instances of bullying will be reported to the Headteacher who will report information to the Department of Education, if necessary.

At all times all students involved will be given the opportunity to talk and discuss the incident. The focus will remain on finding a solution and stopping any repeat of the behaviour.

## **Restorative Thinking**

Bunscoil Rhumsaa uses Restorative Thinking as part of its practice in managing incidents of bullying. The Restorative Thinking program introduces pupils to restorative practices and equips pupils with the skills, knowledge and understanding to apply restorative practices to both past events and future conflict situations.

The overriding aim of the Restorative Thinking program is to develop community and to manage conflict and tensions by repairing harm and building relationships.

Restorative Thinking works in partnership with the Anti-Anti-Bullying Alliance, and you can find more information at [www.restorativethinking.co.uk](http://www.restorativethinking.co.uk)

## **Parental Involvement**

Bunscoil Rhumsaa is firmly committed to working in partnership with parents and believes that the best outcomes emerge when professionals and parents/carers are able to work together when bullying occurs. We recognise the important influence which parents/carers have on their children and would wish to enlist their support when their child is involved in bullying – either as victim or a perpetrator.

The parents of bullies and their victims will be informed of an incident and the action that has been taken. Parents will be expected to support strategies proposed to deal with the problem.

## **Evaluation and Review**

The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed every year by the whole school including all staff, parents and students and with reference to data collected during the cycle.

To be reviewed January 2020.