

Roots *and* Shoots

Anti-Bullying Policy

Last Updated: 25 Sept 2023

Walnut Tree Walk, Kennington, SE11 6DN
Charity number: 1064070

Anti-Bullying Policy

This Anti-Bullying Policy is based on DfE guidance "Preventing and Tackling Bullying" (July 2017) and supporting documents. It also considers the DfE statutory guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education" (2022).

Our Approach

Unfortunately bullying is part and parcel of everyday life and at Roots and Shoots we take the view that it is likely to be happening every day even if we cannot see it. All young people are at risk and young people with special needs are statistically more likely to be at risk. It is up to everyone involved at all levels to be vigilant and develop strategies to observe and respond to all types of bullying.

We believe that all young people have the right to live and be educated in an environment which is supportive, caring and safe, and where there is mutual respect, courtesy, kindness and cooperation. Bullying is anti-social behaviour which threatens the fundamental principles of the organisation and it will not be tolerated. This policy has been developed with due regard to the duties and obligations under existing legislation and public sector duties for the safeguarding and well-being of all students.

Forms of Bullying

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour to someone as a single incident or over a period of time. It can be either physical, verbal or indirect or a combination of any of these forms. Often it includes one or more of the following: intimidation, exclusion, rumour spreading, name calling, anonymous messages, damage to or theft of personal property. The victim may react by becoming silent or withdrawn, feigning illness, missing lessons, not eating, or not working. The potential serious consequences of bullying, both physical and emotional, should not be underestimated. Bullying can lead to psychological damage and in extreme cases, suicide. **All staff should be aware of this.**

Cyberbullying includes the use of ICT in the following ways:

- Texting or emailing unpleasant, scary or rude mobile phone messages.
- 'Sexting', where sexually inappropriate mobile phone pictures of one person are used by another person to upset, harass or demean the person in the pictures.
- Posting abusive or demeaning comments on social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter, or in chat rooms.
- Deleting or ignoring a person's messages on social networking sites or in chat rooms.

Sexual and Sexist Bullying

Sexual and sexist bullying includes:

- Making any offensive, derogatory or demeaning comment or innuendo to a person linked to their gender, sexuality or sexual activity.

- Displaying sexual or pornographic pictures on any electronic device with intent to insult, demean or harass another person.
- Any unwanted physical conduct or coercion into a sexual act.

Racist and Religious Bullying

Racist and religious bullying includes making any offensive, derogatory or demeaning comment to a person linked to their race, nationality, ethnicity, religion or belief, or cultural practices.

Homophobic and Transphobic Bullying

Homophobic and Transphobic bullying includes making any offensive, derogatory or demeaning comment or innuendo to a person linked to their sexuality or gender identity to upset, harass, humiliate or isolate that person.

Disability Bullying

Disability bullying includes making any offensive comment or physical inference towards another person who has a mental or physical disability or a learning difficulty, whereby that disability or learning difficulty is exploited with the intent to upset, harass, humiliate or isolate that person.

Tackling Bullying

Information from here comes from a range of courses including

- Approaches to preventing and tackling bullying Case studies June 2018
- Bullying at School: The Law
- NSPCC Anti-bullying week
- Anti-Bullying week Alliance

Prevention

The following measures and recommendations are intended to discourage bullying in all its forms.

General: Preventative Measures to stop bullying

- Unauthorised absence from class will be monitored daily and reported to the education managers. This is done twice a day. Any absence is followed up by phone calls to parents by the office twice a day – morning and afternoon. A support package is put in place for students to address the reasons for the absence.
- Poor academic performance is monitored by the staff and management team and addressed on a case by case basis.
- Staff will make time to see any learner who wishes to discuss any personal problem with them. This is done **promptly** when the student asks for support.
- Staff will be informed of anyone who has reported or is suspected of being bullied or bullying, and the situation will be monitored and reviewed regularly.

- Education staff have a monthly meeting at which any concerns about particular students are discussed and addressed and information shared to ensure staff have a complete picture of the students situation – with input from the whole staff team.
- The issue of bullying and anti-social behaviour of any student is shared with staff on a daily basis, formally and informally.
- The staff team is vigilant at all times and reports any concerns, however small to managers. Good communication of the staff team is nurtured and encouraged resulting in early intervention in many cases to avoid escalation of problems.
- Roots and Shoots discourages the formation of cliques and fosters good relations with students between each other by discussing issues as they arise and giving students the tools to resolve any issues between them. This is done sensitively by staff in one to one or small group meetings (if the issue is between a group of students).
- Students are encouraged to speak to staff about any concerns. This is done during induction and reinforced at all opportunities by staff throughout the students' progression with us.
- Students are advised that anyone who feels that they are being bullied, or who knows that someone else is being bullied, should tell any member of the staff team. The disclosure will be passed on and dealt with by the local social services in the first instance.
- All complaints of bullying will be taken seriously, investigated, dealt with appropriately, effectively, sensitively and as confidentially as possible, and responded to in a consistent manner.
- Staff receive frequent training opportunities to help prevent and tackle bullying.
- Issues are recognised and nipped in the bud by staff who are responsive and alert to any issues and problems between students.
- Students report feeling comfortable to seek support from staff with any issues and concerns (student questionnaires are ongoing).

Cyberbullying: Preventative Measures to Stop Bullying

- All students and staff are required to adhere to Roots and Shoots Acceptable Use of IT Policy for the safe use of the internet. Certain sites are blocked by the organisation's filtering system and staff may monitor students' use. Students' email use may also be monitored by the college.
- Students are encouraged to share any concerns they have about being bullied on any other form of social media eg WhatsApp or Facebook and to discuss this with staff for resolution.
- The college will work with parents and carers so that parents/carers can also monitor the use of social media by their young person, if appropriate.
- As part of the Roots and Shoots curriculum, and also informally with students as issues arise, guidance is offered on the safe use of social networking sites and cyberbullying. The guidance covers blocking, removing contacts from friends' lists and sharing personal data. This is also included in the organisation's Acceptable Use of IT Policy.
- Shout Out UK - The home of political literacy and youth voice
- https://www.mencap.org.uk/about-us/our-projects/safesurfing

- Guidance is offered on the safekeeping of names, addresses, passwords, mobile telephone numbers and other personal details.
- Mobile phones are to be used with discretion and not in lessons unless expressly for teaching purposes, as directed by the teacher.
- The use of cameras on mobile telephones is not allowed in lessons (unless with express permission).

Bullying Outside of College

Senior staff have a specific statutory power to discipline students for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives staff the power to regulate students' conduct when they are not on Roots and Shoots premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of staff. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or across London.

Where bullying outside Roots and Shoots is reported to the Senior Management Team, it should be investigated and acted on. Staff should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator in their local authority of the actions taken against a student. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed.

Recording, Reporting and Monitoring Bullying

Students are encouraged to report incidents of bullying to any member of the staff team of their choice. Students may also choose to give information anonymously by note but it is advised that with genuine concerns their identity is shared confidentiality so that the incident and the person can be properly supported.

The staff member learning of the incident would follow Roots and Shoots' Safeguarding Policy and communicate it to those who will be able to deal with it effectively, if appropriate.

All incidents of bullying should be recorded and reported to relevant teachers, management team and parents/carers. The Senior Management Team should be copied into all reports and trustees should receive regular updates and reports.

Where students have been involved in a bullying incident, they will be monitored to ensure the behaviour is not repeated.

Support for Students

Students who have been bullied will be supported in the following ways:

- Being offered an immediate opportunity to discuss what happened, particularly their feelings, with their tutor, a manager or member of staff of their choice.
- Being reassured that they have done the right thing by reporting the incident, if applicable, and that the organisation will be investigating the incident and taking it seriously.
- Being offered on-going and continuous support, if appropriate.
- Working together to restore their self-esteem and confidence, if appropriate.

- Using the services of the Roots and Shoots therapist, if appropriate.

The above forms of intervention will be aimed at supporting and empowering students who have experienced bullying rather than encouraging a view of them as victims. Students are given a choice of how to proceed and asked for their views on what they would like to happen next in the process, ensuring they are fully involved and consulted.

Students who have bullied will be helped in the following ways:

- Discussing what happened and discovering why they became involved.
- Exploring different perspectives of the incident, as appropriate.
- Establishing all hurtful and offensive behaviour and the need to change.
- Informing parents/carers and encouraging them to support change in their young person.
- Using the services of the Roots and Shoots therapist to help bullies control their aggression and be more empathic, if appropriate.

Case Study

Mimicking Behaviour is a Form of Bullying

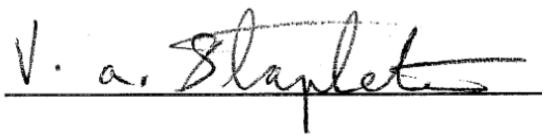
During break time staff report that two students are mimicking another student's voice. When exploring this further it turned out that this was not the first time. When the DSL approached the student being mimicked they said it had started last week. The student "thought we were all friends" but now "they are making fun of me". The two students in question did not initially admit to wrongdoing but through a series of interventions they did agree that their behaviour was having a negative impact on someone they considered their friend. Staff monitored the students closely during this time and provided strategies to help them communicate positively, especially during informal break times.

Signed by the Director:



Date: 25/09/23

Signed by the Chair of Trustees:



Date: 25/09/23