



RGS SURREY HILLS

ANTI BULLYING POLICY

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Introduction

This policy is based on DfE guidance “Preventing and Tackling Bullying. Advice for Headteachers, Staff and Governing Bodies”, July 2017:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/623895/Preventing_and_tackling_bullying_advice.pdf

It also has regard for the DfE guidance “Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff”, 2014 and the DfE guidance on the Independent School Standards and the additional information in “What we are doing to combat bullying in education”, November 2022. Other key sources of information and guidance are noted in the closing sections of this policy.

Due to the nature of the School, this policy also takes regard of the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2022, DfE Guidance (NMS Sept 2022).

Aims and Objectives of this Policy

RGS Surrey Hills School aims to provide a safe environment for everyone to learn and grow without anxiety. We therefore encourage an ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable and we have measures in place to reduce the likelihood of bullying and to deal with it when necessary.

RGS Surrey Hills School takes the issue of bullying very seriously. It is one factor that may completely ruin a child's experience of school life, and that may have serious consequences on both academic performance and social development. It may also cause long-term physical and/or psychological damage, even leading to suicide.

This policy outlines what RGS Surrey Hills School will do to prevent and tackle bullying. We are committed to developing an Anti-bullying culture whereby no bullying, including between adults or adults and children and young people will be tolerated.

The policy is available via the school website and a paper copy may be requested from the School Office.

All governors, teaching and support staff, pupils and parents need to understand what bullying is, what to do if bullying occurs, and how they will be supported if they report bullying.

To ensure that effective training is provided for staff with regard to identifying, tackling and reporting bullying.

Our School Community:

Discusses, monitors and reviews our Anti-bullying Policy and practice on a regular basis.

- Supports all staff to promote positive relationships in order to prevent bullying and will intervene by identifying and tackling bullying behaviour appropriately and promptly.
- Ensures that pupils are aware that all bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively, so that pupils feel safe to learn and flourish within the school environment.
- Through a range of preventative measures, PSHE, online education, and other approaches, ensure that pupils understand and 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.
- Seeks to develop a Student Support Committee to assist with providing peer mentor support.
- Reviews the effectiveness of the school's approach involving pupils as well as staff.

Definition of Bullying

The DfE guidance states that bullying is “behaviour by an individual or a group, usually repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally”. (DfE “Preventing and Tackling Bullying”, July 2017)

However, we are aware that bullying may also involve a single incident, for example in some cases of cyberbullying, and will take action in response to this as appropriate.

Bullying may include name calling;

taunting; mocking; making offensive comments; kicking; hitting; taking belongings; producing offensive graffiti; gossiping; excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.

Bullying may take many forms for instance:

cyberbullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which may include the use of images and video.

It is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power may manifest itself in several ways, it may be:

physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It may result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

Low-level disruption and the use of offensive language may in itself have a significant impact on its target. If left unchallenged or dismissed as banter or horseplay it may also lead to reluctance to report other behaviour.

Early intervention may help to set clear expectations of the behaviour that is and is not acceptable and help stop negative behaviours escalating.

Staff understand that we must give confidence to pupils that if they report bullying then effective action will be taken: bullying is never brushed aside.

The School acknowledges that, unlike a day school, boarders who are being bullied (offline) cannot escape their bullies for long periods of time as they are not going home as often. Work is subsequently done to ensure that there are accessible and effective systems for children to report bullying (Standard 16 – Preventing Bullying – NMS Sept 2022).

Forms of Bullying Covered by this Policy

Bullying can happen to anyone. Even so, the school recognises that some pupils including those with SEND are identified by the DfE as being more vulnerable to abuse, harassment and bullying.

This policy covers all types of bullying including:

- Bullying related to race, religion or culture.
- Bullying related to SEND (Special Educational Needs or Disability).

- Bullying related to appearance or physical/mental health conditions.
- Bullying related to sexual orientation (e.g. lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender bullying).
- Bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances.
- Sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying.
- Bullying via technology: cyberbullying.

Bullying as a Safeguarding Matter

When there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm' a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern under the Children Act 1989. Where this is the case, the school staff should discuss with the school's designated safeguarding lead and report their concerns to Surrey C-SPA and work with them to take appropriate action. This could include, for example, cyber, racist, homophobic and gender related bullying.

All staff are aware that children with SEND and/or differences/perceived differences are more susceptible to being bullied/victims of child abuse. It is possible for children to abuse one-another. If any form of abuse is suspected, then a referral must take place to Children's Services or if it is suspected that a criminal offence has taken place, then the police will be notified.

We keep a record of bullying incidents and the pastoral team monitor this to ensure that any problematic patterns or trends are noted and that appropriate remedial action may be taken.

Please see the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for further information. Below is an extract from the RGS Surrey Hills School Rules:

Bullying and child-on-child abuse

Bullying is a form of anti-social behaviour towards a person and has no place in this School. Bullying may include any sort of physical or mental intimidation of a person by another or a group, which can cause distress or anxiety to the victim. Such behaviour is unacceptable from any member of the school community, as no person has the right to intimidate another.

Therefore:

- **No-one should have to suffer name-calling**
- **Banter is not an excuse for unpleasant or offensive jokes**
- **No-one should have to suffer physical violence or unwanted physical contact**
- **No-one should feel victimised in any way, e.g. for their appearance, race, gender, religion or other choices that they make**
- **Sexual abuse and/or harassment will not be tolerated, e.g. upskirting, taking, asking for or sharing inappropriate images including nudes, rating students on attractiveness, wolf-whistling or making sexual comments**
- **No-one should suffer abusive or unkind messages via social media**
- **It is everyone's responsibility to ensure that bullying and child-on-child abuse is not tolerated.**

Cyberbullying

Widespread access to technology provides an additional medium for bullying, which can occur inside or outside school. Cyberbullying includes using mobile phones or iPads, etc, to send abusive messages, often through public forums such as social networking websites (e.g. Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok), or make unkind or indeed defamatory statements about pupils or teachers.

It includes cyber-stalking, sharing of nudes/semi nudes, “trolling”, “happy slapping” and unauthorised publication of private information or images. Cyberbullying can happen at any time of the day and has the potential to reach a wide audience. It can undermine the self-esteem of individual pupils and can undermine the professional status of staff.

Cyberbullying is often deliberate and intentional, but serious distress may also be caused to the victim by something that is mistakenly seen as a ‘joke’ or ‘banter’ by the perpetrator. “I was only joking” is the lame excuse often given in an attempt to avoid responsibility for causing harm to others.

At RGS Surrey Hills we encourage all pupils to think carefully about their words and actions when online and always avoid causing harm to others.

Cyberbullying can be a criminal offence; children are criminally responsible for their actions and their consequences from the age of 10. (See ‘Criminal Law’ below). The School also takes seriously its safeguarding responsibilities with regard to the production and/or dissemination of sexual images by young people

The Education Act 2011 amended the power in the Education Act 1996 to provide that when an electronic device, such as a mobile phone, has been seized by a member of staff who has been formally authorised by the headteacher, that staff member may examine data or files, and delete these, where there is good reason to do so.

This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person’s mobile phone.

If an electronic device that is prohibited by the school rules has been seized and the member of staff has reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, they must give the device to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable.

Material on the device that is suspected to be evidence relevant to an offence, or that is a pornographic image of a child or an extreme pornographic image, should not be deleted prior to giving the device to the police. Wherever possible the device should be placed in a sealed bag or container awaiting inspection by the appropriate authorities.

Child-on-child Abuse

Child-on-child abuse occurs when a young person is exploited, bullied and/or harmed by their peers who are the same or similar age and where everyone directly involved is under the age of 18.

Child-on-child Abuse may involve one or more of the following:

- Domestic Abuse
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Harmful Sexual Behaviour
- Serious Youth Crime/Violence including murder, rape and GBH between young people under-18

RGS Surrey Hills School recognises that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child-on-child abuse and promotes a culture, described in the Safeguarding Policy, the Behaviour Policy, School Rules and in this Anti-bullying Policy, which is designed to minimise the risk of such abuse.

Allegations are investigated thoroughly and, where appropriate, the School’s Designated Safeguarding Lead or another member of the school staff will report any concern about child-on-child abuse to the local authority children’s social care and work with them and if so guided with the police to take appropriate action.

School recognises that the perpetrator should also be supported and thought given to whether or not they may be in need of early help or additional support by external agencies.

Preventing, Identifying and Responding to Bullying

The school community aims to:

- Create and support an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration and care for others which will be upheld by all.
- Work with staff and outside agencies to identify all forms of prejudice-driven bullying.
- Actively provide systematic opportunities to develop pupils' social and emotional skills, including their resilience.
- Provide a range of approaches for pupils, staff and parents/carers to access support and report concerns.
- Challenge practice that does not uphold the values of tolerance, non-discrimination and respect towards others.
- Help ensure that pupils understand their responsibilities as bystanders.
- Consider all opportunities for addressing bullying in all forms throughout the curriculum and supported with a range of approaches such as through displays, assemblies, peer support and the school/student council and using these to respond to the trends in pupil behaviour as they arise.
- Regularly update and evaluate our approaches to take into account the developments of technology and provide up-to-date advice and education to all members of the community regarding positive online behaviour.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the importance of identifying all forms of bullying and know that they must follow the school policy and procedures (including recording and reporting incidents).
- Ensure that school sanctions are applied robustly where bullying is discovered. This may range from detentions focusing on reflection work, to the most serious response of exclusion from the School.
- Proactively gather and record concerns and intelligence about bullying incidents and issues so as to develop strategies effectively to prevent bullying from occurring. Bullying incidents are recorded centrally and patterns are monitored by the Heads of Year/Section and Deputy Heads to identify any patterns and to reflect on the success of our approach to keeping children safe from bullying. We will aim to change our approach in response to noted patterns or concerns.
- Actively create "safe spaces" for all our community but especially for vulnerable children and those with protected characteristics. For example, a pupil may go to the school library, or to a Head of Year office. Some pupils may have 'time-out' in the medical room, or in the Snug in the Health and Wellbeing Centre, particularly if they are feeling very anxious.
- Use a variety of techniques to resolve the issues between those who bully and those who have been bullied.
- Work with other agencies and the wider school community to prevent and tackle concerns.
- Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos.

In addition, in seeking to prevent cyberbullying, the School aims to:

- enforce the Acceptable Use Policies, including provisions designed to reduce the misuse of new technologies and to prevent cyberbullying;
- ensure staff keep up to date with the technologies which the pupils are using;
- deliver PSHEE lessons which, include specific training regarding the safe use of ICT, particularly mobile phones, iPads and the internet, as well as age-appropriate information about grooming, internet sites containing violent or adult content and the dangers of sharing personal information and/or photographs;
- use the School's Monitoring system to prevent pupils from accessing social media sites;
- alert parents to sites which are causing problems for pupils;

- ban pupils from taking a still or moving image on the School site or on the School coaches without the specific, prior permission of a member of staff: this rule is conveyed to pupils regularly, including at an assembly at the start of the year;
- inform parents in Information Evenings about aspects of online behaviour that they should be alert to, including information about grooming, sexting, cyberbullying, and the dangers of age-inappropriate sites and of sharing personal information and/or photographs;
- regularly evaluate and update our approach to take account of developments in technology.

Involvement of Pupils

We aim to:

- Ensure that all pupils know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying e.g. to individual adults in the school and through assemblies and PSHEE.
- Ensure that all pupils are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying.
- Publicise the details of help lines and websites around school (in common rooms).
- Offer support to pupils who have been bullied and to those who are bullying in order to address the problems they have.
- Help to build resilience in pupils through promoting the understanding of differences between people and highlighting the importance of avoiding prejudice-based language.

Liaison with Parents and Carers

We aim to:

- Make sure that the Anti-bullying Policy is available to parents via the website.
- Parents are always reminded about the open door policy at school and the importance of raising any concerns about their child e.g. at Meet the Tutor Evenings, Parents' Evenings and Induction Events.

Links with Other School Policies and Practices

This Policy links with a number of other school policies, practices and action plans including:

- Behaviour policy
- Exclusions Policy
- Safeguarding and child protection policies
- Acceptable Use Policies (AUPs)
- Curriculum Policies such as PSHEE
- E: Safety Policy

Links to legislation

There are a number of pieces of legislation that set out measures and actions for schools in response to bullying as well as criminal law. These may include:

- The Education and Inspection Act 2006, 2011
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children Act 1989
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997

- The Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- The Computer Misuse Act 1990

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of:

- School Governors to be involved in monitoring and reviewing this policy.
- Governors, the SLT, teaching and support staff to be aware of this policy and implement it accordingly.
- The SLT to communicate the policy to the school community and to ensure that disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably.
- SLT to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this policy.
- Staff to support and uphold the policy.
- Parents to support their children and work in partnership with the school.

Supporting Organisations and Guidance

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Beat Bullying: www.beatbullying.org
- Childline: www.childline.org.uk
- DfE: “Preventing and Tackling Bullying. Advice for Headteachers, Staff and Governing Bodies”, and “Supporting children and young people who are bullied: advice for schools” March 2014:
 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>
- DfE: “No health without mental health”: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/no-healthwithout-mental-health-a-cross-government-outcomes-strategy>
- Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk
- Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
- MindEd: www.minded.org.uk
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
- PSHE Association: www.pshe-association.org.uk
- Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk
- The Diana Award: www.diana-award.org.uk
- Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk
- Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk
- Young Carers: www.youngcarers.net

Cyberbullying

- Childnet International: www.childnet.com
- Digizen: www.digizen.org
- Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk
- Think U Know: www.thinkuknow.co.uk

- UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk

LGBT

- EACH: www.eachaction.org.uk
- Pace: www.pacehealth.org.uk
- Schools Out: www.schools-out.org.uk
- Stonewall: www.stonewall.org.uk

SEND

- Changing Faces: www.changingfaces.org.uk
- Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk
- DfE: SEND code of practice: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0to-25>

Racism and Hate

- Anne Frank Trust: www.annefrank.org.uk
- Kick it Out: www.kickitout.org
- Report it: www.report-it.org.uk
- Stop Hate: www.stophateuk.org
- Show Racism the Red Card: www.srtrc.org/educational

Additional Content

Dealing with Incidents

The following steps may be taken when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with by the member of staff who has been approached.
- An account of the incident will be recorded and given to the relevant Head of Year.
- The Head of Year will interview all concerned and will record the incident.
- Teachers/Form Tutors will be kept informed where appropriate.
- When responding to cyberbullying concerns the school will take all available steps to identify the perpetrator, including looking at the school systems, identifying and interviewing possible witnesses, and contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary. The police will need to be involved to enable the service provider to look into the data of another user.
- Where the bullying takes place outside of school, the school will ensure that the concern is investigated and that appropriate action is taken in accordance with the school's behaviour policy.
- Parents will be kept informed.
- Sanctions will be used as appropriate.
- If necessary and appropriate, the police or other local services will be consulted.

Supporting Pupils

Support for pupils who have been bullied may include:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their teacher or a member of staff of their choice.
- Being offered the opportunity to be referred to the school counselling service, The Lucy Raynor Foundation.
- Being advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how respond to concerns and build resilience as appropriate.
- Reassuring the pupil and providing continuous support.
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence.
- Working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance.

Support for pupils who have bullied may include:

- Discussing what happened and establishing the concern and the need to change
- Informing parents to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child
- Providing appropriate education and support
- If online, requesting content be removed and reporting account/content to service provider
- Sanctioning in line with school behaviour policy. This may include official warnings, detentions, removal or privileges, fixed-term and permanent exclusions.
- Speaking with police or local services.