



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.

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

This policy also has regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, the Independent School Standards guidance 2026 and current statutory guidance on Relationships, Sex and Health Education.

Objectives of this Policy

RGS Surrey Hills 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 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 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 also be requested.

All governors, teaching and professional services 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.

Our School Community:

- Discusses, monitors and reviews our Anti-bullying policy and practice on a regular basis.
- Supports all staff to promote positive relationships 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; that pupils feel safe to learn; and that pupils 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

Definition of Bullying

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 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) and 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.

Forms of Bullying Covered by this Policy

Bullying can happen to anyone. The School will challenge all forms of bullying, including cyberbullying and prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying.

This includes bullying related to actual or perceived differences, including:

- race, nationality, ethnicity, religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation;
- gender reassignment, including transphobic bullying;
- disability or special educational needs;
- physical appearance or physical or mental health;
- pregnancy or maternity;
- family or home circumstances, including being adopted, in care or a young carer; and
- any other characteristic or perceived difference which is used as a basis for bullying or discrimination.

The School has due regard to its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and recognises the particular importance of preventing and responding effectively to prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying, including bullying related to a protected characteristic.

The School recognises that some children may be more vulnerable to bullying or may experience particular barriers to reporting it, including some children with SEND or certain medical conditions. Staff will take this into account when identifying concerns, providing support and considering appropriate action.

Bullying as a Safeguarding Matter

Bullying may, in some circumstances, amount to or indicate abuse and therefore become a safeguarding matter. Where a member of staff has a safeguarding concern arising from bullying, this must be reported without delay to the DSL or a Deputy DSL and dealt with in accordance with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Where there is concern that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, harm, a referral to local authority children's social care should be made immediately and, where appropriate, the police should also be involved. Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, the local authority has a duty to make enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989.

The DSL or Deputy DSL will consider the appropriate safeguarding response, including whether referral to children's social care, the police or other relevant agencies is required. Staff may also make a referral directly where necessary and should follow the procedures set out in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

The School records bullying incidents and the pastoral and safeguarding teams monitor these records in order to identify patterns, trends or emerging concerns and to inform preventative or remedial action.

Please see the 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 other devices, 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. 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. Some cyberbullying is deliberate and intentional, but in other cases distress to the victim can be caused by something that is seen as a joke by the perpetrator.

Cyberbullying may include the making, sharing or manipulation of images or other content in order to humiliate, intimidate, harass or harm another person.

This includes the consensual or non-consensual making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes. Images may have been taken by the child themselves, taken or created by another person, digitally altered or wholly generated using artificial intelligence, including so-called 'deepfakes' or 'deep nudes'.

All incidents involving the making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes require a safeguarding response and must be reported to the DSL or a Deputy DSL. They will be managed in accordance with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and current government guidance.

Cyberbullying may also include abusive or threatening messages, cyberstalking, trolling, the unauthorised sharing of private information or images, or the malicious use of AI or other technology to create or distribute harmful or humiliating material.

Where an electronic device is searched or confiscated, the School will act in accordance with current DfE guidance on Searching, Screening and Confiscation and the School's Behaviour and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies. Staff will consider the appropriate safeguarding response where data or files on a device may place a child or another person at risk.

Where there is reason to suspect that a device contains a nude or semi-nude image of a child, staff must not intentionally view, copy, print, share, store or save the image. The device should be secured and the matter referred promptly to the DSL or a Deputy DSL, who will determine the appropriate response in accordance with safeguarding procedures and current guidance. Where material may constitute evidence of an offence, it will not be deleted and the police may be involved as appropriate.

Child-on-child Abuse

Children can abuse other children. This is known as child-on-child abuse and can occur inside or outside school and online. It can involve children of any age and may take many different forms.

The School adopts a zero-tolerance approach to child-on-child abuse. Such behaviour must never be dismissed as 'banter', 'just having a laugh', 'part of growing up' or 'boys being boys'. Downplaying inappropriate or abusive behaviour can contribute to a culture in which abuse, harassment, discrimination or misogyny become normalised and children are less likely to report concerns.

Child-on-child abuse is a safeguarding issue for both the child who has experienced harm and the child alleged to have caused harm. The needs and wishes of the child who has experienced harm will be central to the School's response. Appropriate safeguarding, pastoral and, where necessary, external support will also be considered for the child alleged to have caused harm and for any other children affected.

The School recognises that, for some forms of child-on-child abuse, girls are more likely to be victims and boys more likely to be perpetrators; however, abuse can affect children of any sex or gender and all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

Child-on-child abuse may include, but is not limited to:

- bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying;
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children;
- physical abuse, including hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling or otherwise causing physical harm, and online activity which facilitates, threatens or encourages physical abuse;
- serious physical assault or harm, or threats of harm involving a weapon;
- harmful sexual behaviour, sexual violence and sexual harassment, which may include misogyny or misandry;
- consensual or non-consensual making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes, including images which have been digitally altered or generated using artificial intelligence;
- causing another child to engage in sexual activity without consent;
- upskirting; and
- initiation or hazing-type violence and rituals.

Further information about child-on-child abuse, including the School's procedures for responding to concerns, is contained in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

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 and challenging all forms of bullying, understand how to respond to, record and report concerns, and receive appropriate guidance to support the consistent implementation of this policy, including when concerns should be escalated under safeguarding procedures.
- 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 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 Hub or Wellbeing Centre, particularly if they are feeling very anxious.
- Use a variety of techniques to resolve the issues between those who are responsible and those who have been targeted.
- 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 Online Behaviours Policy – Students, 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 age-appropriate PSHEE/RSHE education, in accordance with current statutory guidance, which addresses respectful relationships, bullying and cyberbullying, prejudice and discrimination, safe and responsible use of technology, grooming and online harms, and how pupils can recognise, report and seek help in relation to harmful or inappropriate behaviour; use the School's Filtering and Monitoring system to prevent pupils from accessing social media sites;
- alert parents to sites which are causing problems for pupils;
- Raise awareness of the potential problems with AI generated images
- 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. through assemblies and PSHEE.
- Ensure that all pupils are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying (see School Rules published in pupil planner).
- Publicise the details of help lines and websites e.g. pupil pastoral card.
- 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
- Curriculum Policies such as PSHEE
- Exclusions Policy
- Online Behaviours Policy – Students
- Online Safety Policy
- Safeguarding and child protection policies

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:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006;
- Education Act 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 professional services 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
- <http://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-health-without-mental-health-a-cross-government-outcomes-strategy>
- Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk
- Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
- MindEd: www.minded.org.uk
- NSPCC: [NSPCC | The UK children's charity](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/) <http://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
- CEOP [CEOP Safety Centre](http://www.ceop.gov.uk/)
- Digizen: www.digizen.org
- Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk
- <http://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-0-to-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.stophate.uk.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.
- Where an incident of bullying may constitute child-on-child abuse, or otherwise raises a safeguarding concern, it must be reported without delay to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy DSL in accordance with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. This applies whether the alleged behaviour has taken place in school, outside school or online.
- Staff should not assume that the absence of reported concerns means that child-on-child abuse is not taking place. Pupils are encouraged to report concerns to any trusted member of staff and should be confident that concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon appropriately.
- Otherise, an account of the incident will be recorded and given to the relevant Head of Year.
- The Head of Year or another relevant member of the pastoral team 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 bully, 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.
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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 counsellor.
- 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.