

ANTI BULLYING POLICY

RUPERT HOUSE SCHOOL



WHOLE SCHOOL, INCLUDING EYFS, ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Last Review	Significant Changes
Member of staff responsible	Designated Safeguarding Lead
December 2024	Annual update
September 2025	Update to incorporate KCSIE 2025

ANTI BULLYING POLICY

INTRODUCTION

This policy applies equally to the EYFS, Prep-Prep and Prep School, and should be read in conjunction with the 'Behaviour Policy', 'Safeguarding Policy', 'E-safety Policy' and 'Staff Handbook'.

Rupert House School follows the DfE Guidance *Preventing and Tackling Bullying (2017)*, the *Education Act 2011*, *Cyberbullying: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff (2014)*, the *Equality Act 2010* and the latest version of *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)*.

Wishford governance value the good relationships between all the members of the school community as fostered by the school and expect that every allegation of bullying will be taken seriously. All staff, pupils and parents should be aware of the negative effects that bullying can have on individuals and the school in general and should work towards ensuring that pupils can work in an environment without fear.

We therefore take a strong stance against bullying of any type, since it indicates a lack of appreciation of the feelings of others. Bullying can cause deep distress. Bullying is unacceptable in this school; it will not be tolerated under any circumstances, and it will be addressed. The School also recognises that it must take note of bullying perpetrated outside school that spills over into the school. The School will do what is reasonably practicable to eliminate any such bullying. Rupert House School aims to promote Emotional Literacy, defined as people being able to 'recognise, understand, handle and appropriately express their emotions' and teaches this through form times, assemblies, day to day conduct in lessons and the PSHE curriculum. Members of staff are expected to act as role models and high expectations of behaviour are set.

DIVERSITY STATEMENTS

Every pupil should have opportunities to achieve the highest possible standards, and the best possible qualifications for the next stage of their life and education.

Every pupil should be helped to develop a sense of personal and cultural identity that is confident and open to change, and that is receptive and respectful towards other identities. Learning about the Protected Characteristics is part of our school curriculum.

Every pupil should develop the knowledge, understanding and skills that they need in order to participate in Britain's multi-ethnic society, and in the wider context of an interdependent world. Promoting the well-being of pupils requires us to protect them from harm and neglect but also requires us to consider their physical and mental health and emotional well-being, their opportunities for education, training and recreation, the contribution made by them to society and their social and economic well-being. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued.

AIMS

- To ensure that children learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment, without fear of being bullied
- To demonstrate that the school takes bullying seriously and that it will not be tolerated
- To take measures to prevent all forms of bullying in the school, whether it be between children or adults or both, during online and offline activities and during off-site activities

ANTI BULLYING POLICY

- To support everyone by acting to identify and protect those who might be bullied
- To demonstrate to all that the safety and happiness of pupils are paramount
- To promote an environment where children feel that they can trust and tell adults if bullying is taking place
- To promote positive attitudes in pupils

UNKIND BEHAVIOUR AND BULLYING

Rupert House School recognises that teaching children to be kind and considerate to one another is an essential part of everyday life in school and that it underpins our values. Incidents of unkindness are dealt with in accordance with the School's Behaviour Policy and recorded. We monitor any patterns of unkind behaviour that might indicate bullying, which triggers action under this policy i.e. the Anti-Bullying Policy.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

In 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying (2017) the DfE defines bullying as:

'behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can 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.

Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case. 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 can 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 can 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 can in itself have a significant impact on its target. If left unchallenged or dismissed as banter or horseplay it can also lead to reluctance to report other behaviour.'

WHAT IS BULLYING?

The School recognises the seriousness of bullying, both physical and emotional, which may be perpetrated directly or indirectly. The school also recognises the negative and damaging effects that bullying may cause.

Bullying takes many forms and can be:

- Emotional manipulation - such as excluding someone or spreading malicious rumours about them, being unfriendly, tormenting, hiding belongings,

ANTI BULLYING POLICY

- Making threats, use of threatening gestures
- Physical – pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Verbal – name calling, sarcasm, teasing, ‘banter’
- Cyber-bullying – via social networking websites, email and internet chat room misuse, mobile phone threats by text messaging and calls, photograph misuse, spreading of misinformation, disinformation, and conspiracy theories
- Prejudice-based and discriminatory – perceived as a result of perceived or actual differences which can lead to discriminatory language or behaviour, including racism, sexism, homophobia, biphobia or transphobia

Much bullying is performed in subtle ways, which are not easy to detect: a bully can use a simple look, word or gesture to a victim to signal an intended threat or insult. Some pupils are adept at changing a bullying situation into an apparently harmless one when an adult approaches. This makes it all the more important for the victim or another pupil to be able to come forward to report bullying, and for staff and parents to be alert to symptoms of bullying.

Staff will be alert to child-on-child abuse, child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment and steps will be taken to monitor areas of the school where children may be vulnerable to these, including where children may have access to the internet or use of social networks.

All staff should be aware of any child missing from education. Early intervention is important, so any safeguarding or wellbeing issues can be acted on.

All members of staff are aware that vulnerable children, such as adopted children, children who are carers, those with Special Education Needs and those who are looked after may be especially vulnerable to bullying. Members of staff are aware that children who may be perceived as being ‘different’, for whatever reason, are also vulnerable to bullying.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

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

- Is unwilling to go to school
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Attempts or threatens self-harm
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares/bedwetting
- Regularly feels ill in the morning
- Begins to do poorly in schoolwork

ANTI BULLYING POLICY

- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- Has possessions go missing
- Has unexplained cuts and bruises
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what is wrong
- Is frightened of walking to or from school
- Changes their usual routine

All staff should be aware of these possibilities and pupils will be told always to report incidents of bullying.

DEALING WITH INCIDENTS

- If bullying is suspected or reported, it will be investigated and dealt with promptly by the teacher approached who will inform the Deputy Head Pastoral
- The teacher will record the details of the incident on the Incident Log and if warranted on the Allegations of Bullying Log and inform the Deputy Head Pastoral
- All incidents must be reported and recorded in full. The 'Allegations of Bullying' Log is maintained in the RHS Staff Team. If deemed necessary, incidents will be put onto CPOMS
- This record of bullying will enable patterns to be identified
- All the parties involved will be interviewed and a record made
- Staff will be made aware, and Form Teachers will be informed in as much detail as possible
- The appropriate strategy and plan of action to combat the bullying will be decided and circulated to those members of staff involved
- The implementation of the strategy will be overseen by either the Deputy Head Pastoral or the Head
- Parents will be kept informed – SMT member will decide who contacts the parents
- Any sanctions will be in line with the RHS Behaviour Policy
- So that it is easy to report bullying, including cyber-bullying outside school, the threshold for reporting a bullying issue to external agencies (such as the police, children's social care) can be found on the OSCB website, and records are kept to evaluate the effectiveness of the approach adopted or to enable

ANTI BULLYING POLICY

patterns to be identified. Note: Bullying should be treated as a Child Protection concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that the child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm

RESPONSIBILITIES

GOVERNANCE

Governance at Wishford will liaise with the Head and the Deputy Head Pastoral over anti-bullying measures and be made aware of individual cases where appropriate. It is their responsibility to check that this policy is implemented in the school.

The SMT will discuss incidents of bullying, review and endorse agreed measures and advise Governance.

The Wishford Head of Safeguarding and Compliance will liaise with the Head, the DSL and Senior Management Team about issues to do with protecting children from radicalisation.

THE HEAD

The Head has a legal duty to draw up procedures to prevent bullying amongst pupils. The Head will:

- Ensure that all staff have an opportunity of discussing strategies and review them regularly
- Determine the strategies and procedures with the Deputy Head Pastoral
- Discuss development of the strategies with the Senior Management Team
- Ensure appropriate training is available
- Ensure that the procedures are brought to the attention of all staff, volunteers, parents and pupils
- Report to the Governing Body

THE DEPUTY HEAD PASTORAL

The Deputy Head Pastoral will:

- Be responsible for the day-to-day management of the policy and systems
- Ensure that there are positive strategies and procedures in place to help both the bullied and the bullies
- Keep the Head informed of incidents and discuss sanctions
- Arrange relevant pupil training
- With the Head, determine how best to involve parents in the solution of individual problems
- Ensure proper record keeping in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the School's approach and to enable patterns to be identified.

ANTI BULLYING POLICY

- Ensure that all pupils and parents are aware of 'Safer Internet' procedures, with dedicated lessons given to pupils regarding internet awareness, including the safe use of social media. This includes informing pupils and parents of age restrictions for use of social media.

STAFF

All Staff will:

- Be aware of the many forms that bullying can take
- Know and follow all relevant policies and procedures
- Be aware of any relationships between pupils that are being monitored (as discussed in staff meetings)
- Keep clear records on the 'Allegations of Bullying Log' held on Teams (RHS Staff)
- Be observant and talk to pupils
- Deal with incidents according to the policy
- Never let any incidence of bullying pass by unreported, whether on-site or during an off-site activity
- Take action to reduce the risk of bullying at all times and in places where it is most likely to occur
- Discuss from time to time where extra staff might be needed and be willing to carry out this additional duty
- Be given training to help them understand the issues of radicalisation, be able to recognise the signs of vulnerability or radicalisation and know how to refer these concerns. This information also forms part of Induction Safeguarding Training. Members of staff are updated as necessary in weekly staff meetings and these are minuted. It is the responsibility of staff to keep themselves up to date by ensuring that minutes of weekly staff meetings are read.

All Volunteers will be given the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Anti-Bullying Policy, Behaviour Policy and Whistleblowing Policy to read and understand and ask for clarification if necessary.

ANTI-BULLYING EDUCATION IN THE CURRICULUM

The school will raise the awareness of the anti-social nature of bullying through the PSHE and Citizenship Scheme of Work, School Assemblies, the School Council, use of form time, an Anti-Bullying Week and in the curriculum as appropriate.

- The Deputy Head Pastoral is responsible for initiating and developing an Anti-Bullying Programme as part of the PSHE and Citizenship curriculum

ANTI BULLYING POLICY

- All class teachers in Pre-Prep and Prep School deliver the anti-bullying work as part of the PSHE and Citizenship curriculum
- Heads of Departments are responsible for introducing anti-bullying material in their programmes of study as appropriate

Changing the attitudes and behaviour of bullies will play a major part in the strategies used by the School. Children's Emotional Literacy is developed by teaching them a wide vocabulary of words for emotions. We believe that this makes them better able to express their feelings, helping them to resist attempts at bullying. We also consider that being able to understand and express emotions reduces conflict between children and makes them less inclined to misinterpret others' actions, which can be a factor in bullying.

SUPPORT

BULLIED PUPILS

Members of staff who deal with pupils who have been bullied must always offer reassurance. Pupils who have been bullied will be given support.

BULLIES

It is recognised that support must also be given to the perpetrator. Changing the attitude and behaviour of bullies will be part of the responsibility of the positive procedures used by the school. However, the School recognises that sanctions will also have to be used against bullies.

Unkindness is dealt with under the Behaviour Policy but tougher action will be taken to deal with persistent and/or violent bullying. Sanctions might include:

- Removal from the group (in class)
- Withdrawal of break and lunchtime privileges
- Withholding participation in any school trip or sports events that are not an essential part of the curriculum

In the most serious cases of bullying a fixed term suspension or permanent exclusion may be imposed, in line with the 'Serious Sanctions' section of the Behaviour Policy.

INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS

Parents, as well as staff and pupils, should know that the School will not tolerate bullying and takes a positive, active approach to educating pupils to combat it. Parents will be informed of the policy and procedures.

Parents are aware of the policy and are encouraged to read it so that they can play their part in discouraging and identifying bullying. During the annual Anti-Bullying Week, parents receive information regarding work being done in School and will receive links to relevant information and websites. Experts are invited into school to talk to parents about strategies to help children deal with social situations, and to advise on Internet Safety.

Parents of pupils who are being bullied, and parents of the bullies, will be involved in the solution of the problem as appropriate. In the case of Parental Appeal relating to any allegations of bullying, parents should refer to the school Complaints Policy.

ANTI BULLYING POLICY

INVOLVEMENT OF PUPILS

Pupils will be involved in the positive strategies through both the School Council and form time. Through activities in PSHE and through School Council, pupils will have an input into the Anti-Bullying strategy.

A major part of the strategy will consist of educating pupils in how to cope with bullying. Pupils will be made aware of the Anti-Bullying policy as part of the Code of Behaviour.

Pupils must know to whom they should go if they are being bullied or if they are concerned about another child.

The pupils worked together to create an anti-bullying leaflet 'Be a Buddy, not a Bully'. This is given to all pupils to take home and is available in school.

STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH BULLYING

Strategies are considered according to the circumstances but take into account the DfE document '*Preventing and Tackling Bullying*' (2017). All children concerned should be fully involved in the discussions leading up to the solution and should not be left feeling isolated. Where appropriate, honest group discussions that involve both the bullied and bully with other children of their choice attendant and encouraged to participate, may help the children to resolve the matter themselves with support and vigilance from the staff and is the most effective way. Parents are kept fully informed.

STAFF TRAINING

The School arranges a regular programme of staff development, which includes Child Protection and Anti-Bullying strategies. This raises staff awareness so that the principles of the school policy are understood, legal responsibilities are known, action is defined to resolve and prevent problems, and sources of support are available. Where appropriate we invest in specialised skills to understand the needs of our pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities. This includes training for support staff as well as teachers.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Head and SMT consider the reports on a termly basis to determine what can be learned from the incidents and how they were handled, with a view to improving the School's strategies. The reports also enable patterns to be identified. The Head reports to the Governing Body regularly.

APPENDIX 1: ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

GUIDELINES AND ADVICE FOR PUPILS, PARENTS AND STAFF

This appendix is circulated to pupils and parents and staff.

ANTI BULLYING POLICY

Pupils

If you are being bullied or you suspect or observe bullying, be encouraged to:

- Talk to any adult you trust.
- Read the 'Be a Buddy, not a Bully' leaflet
- Be confident that action will be taken to stop the bullying.
- Be a good friend, above all when it is known that someone is unhappy or lonely and remember to include everyone in your class or House, especially where group work is concerned.

If you are being bullied the following responses should help:

- Try and explain to the bully that their words/actions are upsetting; they may not be aware of this. Be firm, look them in the eye and tell them to stop. However, if the bullying continues try not to show your feelings.
- Walk away quietly and confidently, even if you don't feel that way inside.
- It might be useful to jot down a few notes about what has happened, to keep it clear in your mind.
- How often has it happened?
 - Who was involved?
 - Who witnessed what was happening?
 - Where did it happen?
 - What have you done about it?
 - Talk to an adult; tell a member of staff or ask your friends to tell a member of staff on your behalf.
 - You can always take a friend with you to talk to someone about it.
 - Talk to your parents, let them know what's going on.

Everyone can help to stop bullying

- Always show that you and your friends disapprove of bullying.
- Give sympathy and support to pupils who are being bullied.
- If you know of any bullying – tell someone!

Parents

Problem-solving approaches to bullying which are school-based alone, may not always work without the help of the parents, so please support us on this issue. You will always be informed if your child is suspected of bullying another or if we suspect that your child might be being bullied.

Sometimes, parents are the first to hear of repeated behaviour that might suggest bullying. You should not dismiss it. In the first instance, talk to the class teacher or the Deputy Head Pastoral. Please stay calm, supportive and find out the facts of the situation before forming any conclusions. The School will keep you informed of how things are progressing.

Parents can sign up to the National College website <https://nationalcollege.com> for general advice on internet safety or advice on particular apps and we could recommend [childnet.com](https://www.childnet.com) which can be accessed by visiting <https://www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers/hot-topics>. This has plenty of information and suggestions about how parents can help children to be safe online.

Parents are reminded to read the school's e-safety Policy.

Parents are specifically asked to read and sign – alongside their child – the school's Acceptable Use Agreement which can be found in their child's school planner.

ANTI BULLYING POLICY

If your child is involved in bullying:

It is important to work with the school to modify the patterns of behaviour, which are causing your child to bully. Do not panic or blame yourself; these things do happen and the School has strategies in place to deal with the issue. It is helpful to recognise some of the reasons why pupils behave in this way from time to time.

Sometimes children bully others because:

- They are not aware of how hurtful it is
- They are copying the behaviour of older siblings or people they admire
- They have a temporary difficulty integrating in their peer group
- They are encouraged to do so by friends
- They are going through a difficult time personally

To stop your child from bullying others:

- Help them to understand that what he/she is doing is unacceptable
- Liaise with the School
- Make time to talk about how things are going at School
- Ensure your child has identified an adult at School to whom he/she can talk

Staff

If you are approached by a child who says they are being bullied:

- It is important that the child feels secure. This type of disclosure is difficult to trust with anyone.
- Take every reported incident seriously and complete the Incident Report Form:
 - Exactly what happened?
 - Who was involved?
 - Who saw what happened?
 - How often has this happened?
 - Where did it happen?
 - Do parents know?

Pass the form to the Deputy Head Pastoral and copy in the Head.

Further advice

- In a spiral of tit-for-tat incidents between individuals, provocation and retaliation may become confused. It can be difficult to establish the facts. A problem-solving approach, which avoids blaming, can be much more effective in clarifying the situation and achieving a change in behaviour. The aim is to resolve the incident as quickly as possible by discussion.
- Seek an apology or restitution and continue to monitor the situation.
- Discuss with colleagues who might know the child a little better than you do. Incidents should be raised at weekly staff meetings.
- Report the matter to the Head /Deputy Head Pastoral who will monitor the situation.