

ANTI BULLYING POLICY – INFORMATION AND PROCEDURES

‘Every child has a right to protection from all forms of violence and exploitation, to protect themselves and to expect that people will protect and help them’. – NSPCC and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

This policy applies to all members of Richmond House School, including EYFS, and takes into account the *Preventing and Tackling Bullying (DfE October 2014)* and *Cyberbullying: Advice for Headteachers and school staff (2014)*.

Richmond House School is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. Bullying, harassment, victimisation or discrimination are considered as forms of abuse and will not be tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up”. We treat all pupils and parents fairly, with respect, and we expect this to be reciprocated towards each other and the staff. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with appropriately at the earliest opportunity. We aim to encourage anyone who knows that bullying is happening to tell the staff or a responsible adult. This is underpinned through the anti-bullying units within the whole school PSHE programme and supported by the school’s pastoral framework.

Our approach to bullying is in line with our Behaviour and Sanctions policy and our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. These policies set out the standards of behaviour we expect from everyone. The sanctions for bullying are included in these policies and strong sanctions, such as suspension, removal and expulsion may be necessary in cases of severe and persistent bullying. As a school we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors and teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when it is reported.
- All pupils and parents should know what they should do if bullying should arise.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is the deliberate harmful behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over a period of time, that intentionally upsets, intimidates, harms or humiliates another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

There are many different types of bullying which can be motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs, disability or physical attributes. It may occur directly or through cyber-technology (social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email).

Bullying can be:

Emotional. Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures), refusal to work with or cooperate with others

Physical. Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence

Racial. Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, making fun of customs, music, accent or dress of anyone from a different culture

Sexual/Sexist. Unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive comments or remarks

Homophobic. Because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality

Verbal. Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, degrading comments, ridicule, insults or 'jokes'. This may be because of perceptions of sex (male/female stereotypes) or disability (physical, mental, emotional), real or perceived. All acts of hostility, discrimination and the use of prejudice-based language is offensive and should be avoided.

Disability and Special Educational Needs. Children with obvious disability may experience bullying, but children whose disability becomes apparent through odd behaviour or learning difficulty may also be bullied. The bullying could take any form but may include exclusion and name calling.

Online/Cyber bullying. The use of Information and Communication Technology, particularly mobile phones and the internet, to deliberately upset someone else. Cyberbullying takes place between children; between adults; but also across different age groups. Young people can target staff members or other adults through cyberbullying.

Bullying hurts. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. Schools have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying as it can lead to psychological damage and even, in very serious cases, suicide.

Cyber Bullying

Richmond House School believes that all members of the school have the right to learn and teach in a safe, supporting environment without fear of being bullied. We are committed to using information and communication technology to promote learning and to equip children with the skills and knowledge to be able to use it safely and responsibly. The school's e-safety policy explains the procedures the school has in place to safeguard children online. Many children get caught up in cyber bullying because they do not think of the consequences of their actions. Parents are advised to monitor the ways in which their child is using the internet, mobile phones and games, and follow any advice given from school.

Cyberbullying includes sending or posting harmful or upsetting text, images, or other messages, using the internet, mobile phones or other communication technology. There are some particular features of cyberbullying that differ from other forms of bullying. These differences should be taken into account when determining how to respond effectively. (See E-Safety, Safeguarding and Child Protection, and Sexting Policies as appropriate.)

- Impact – the scale and scope of online/cyberbullying can be greater than other forms of bullying because it can invade homes and personal space.
- Targets and perpetrators - the people involved may have a different profile to traditional bullies and their targets
- Location – the 24/7 and 'anyplace' nature of cyberbullying
- Anonymity – the person being bullied will not always know who is attacking them
- Motivation – some pupils may not be aware that what they are doing is bullying
- Evidence – unlike other forms of bullying, the target of the bullying will have evidence of its occurrence

Advice to pupils and parents in relation to cyber bullying

- Think before messages are sent. Remember to respect others and what may feel like a joke can be hurtful. What is sent can be spread quickly and stay online forever.
- Change passwords regularly and do not share them with others.
- Set social networking sites to private and only share mobile numbers with close friends.
- Do not reply to any offensive messages but report them to an adult you trust. Replying to messages, especially with anger, is probably what the bully wants, and by not replying, the bully may think that the message has not been delivered or seen, or that they were not bothered by it.
- Save any offending or abusive messages and give them to a parent or member of staff
- Block the perpetrators of these messages.
- Report the incidents immediately to a parent, school, mobile phone operator. They will advise whether to take it further to the police.
- Think about the information that they have in the public domain and where they go online

Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

Changes in behaviour that may indicate a pupil is being bullied can include;

- frightened to walk to or from school
- unwilling to go to school
- feels ill in the morning
- frequent absence, erratic attendance, late to lessons
- difficulty in sleeping, experiences nightmares or cries at night
- changes to their usual routine or established habits (e.g. giving up clubs, changes to vocabulary)
- begins to underachieve in school work or produces work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others
- frequent or regular visits to the School office for medical reasons such as stomach pains or head aches
- choosing the company of adults or other peer groups
- unwilling to join in activities
- stops eating; spends a long time in the dining room
- changes in behaviour such as stammering, poor eye contact, repressed body language
- self -confidence diminishes
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- becomes withdrawn, anxious or unusually quiet
- becomes over emotional/ bursts into tears
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions go 'missing' or damaged
- asks for money or starts stealing
- has unexplained cuts or bruises

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Who are the bullies?

Anyone can be a bully, both children and adults. Bullies may be people who

- Are trying to get attention
- maybe having problems at home
- maybe trying to impress others to fit in.
- may have been or are being bullied by others

They may bully because they

- are prejudiced
- are insecure and cowardly
- are jealous
- enjoy a sense of power over others
- are easily led or want to try to impress their peers

Procedures

1. All pupils are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying. They must not be made to feel embarrassed or shy about telling someone. All pupils should feel confident that any allegations of bullying are taken seriously and will be acted upon.
2. Staff must be responsive to any allegations of bullying and the member of staff who is first contacted takes initial responsibility for investigating the incident.
3. If the member of staff considers the complaint to be serious, they should report this to the class teacher, likewise if any incidents are reported by parents, these should go to the class teacher.
4. The incident must be investigated and recorded on SIMS to enable patterns to be identified. The class teacher is responsible for keeping a copy and to inform a senior member of staff. Any recorded information should be included on SIMS and can be emailed via SIMS to the form teacher and Deputy so that individual incidents can be dealt with promptly and so that any patterns of behaviour or types of incident can be identified and dealt with speedily. Any interviews in relation to the incident should be recorded and a note made on SIMS to cross reference. Any paper notes should be added to school files in School Office.
5. When serious incidents occur, the Head teacher or Deputy will assume responsibility. (This will always be the case if a member of staff reports being bullied). A bullying incident should be treated as a child protection concern where there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm'. (See Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy)
6. When serious incidents occur the parents of the victim and the bully will be informed. If appropriate, the parents will be asked to come into school for a meeting to discuss a satisfactory outcome.
7. Investigations should also be made to find the reasons for the bully's behaviour and support given to correct this behaviour.
8. The victims should receive extra support and help for dealing with the bullying.
9. Sanctions will reflect the seriousness of the incident as laid out in our Behaviour and Sanctions policy and will convey a deterrent effect.
10. After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

Preventative Measures

Richmond House School takes the following preventative measures;

- All pupils are encouraged to tell a member of staff or a parent at once if they are being bullied or know that bullying is taking place.
- We use assemblies and our PSHE programme to explain our policy on bullying and to encourage children to speak out and look after each other. Emphasis is also placed on self-esteem and friendship skills, assertiveness and handling conflict.
- Pupils are reminded of our Code of Conduct.
- Other lessons such as RE, History, stories and activities also highlight the issues surrounding bullying and we reinforce our intolerance of bullying by teaching spiritual and moral values of respect and consideration to all.
- All reported incidents are investigated immediately and are subsequently monitored.
- We raise staff awareness through INSET, as part of Child Protection training. Staff should be aware and vigilant and should aim to uncover bullying when possible.
- All members of staff are made aware that their own conduct is influential and should avoid actions and statements which may imply support for any inappropriate behaviour.
- We reserve the right to investigate incidents that take place outside school hours, on school visits and trips and that occur in the vicinity of our school, which involve our pupils.
- Certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and our network manager monitors use of the internet. Sanctions are imposed for attempted or misuse of the internet.
- Mobile phones are not permitted on site for pupils. Pupils are expected to hand in any phone to the office at the start of the day and collect it before they go home.
- E-safety information is given to pupils and parents each year, with regular and relevant updates.

Advice to Pupils

- It is right to tell an adult you trust straight away that you or others are being bullied. You will be listened to and your concern will be taken seriously.
- Tell yourself you do not deserve to be bullied and that it is wrong.
- Ignore the bully; pretend not to hear and try not to show you are upset.
- Walk away quickly; use body language to look determined, strong and positive even if you feel frightened inside. Be assertive.

Advice to Parents

Parents should always encourage their child to speak out about bullying. If you feel your child is being bullied, encourage your child to talk about what is happening and contact your child's class teacher. Please do not confront the bully directly or his/her parents. Be aware of the definition of bullying.

A review of this policy, through the governing body and through staff meetings, in line with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, is undertaken on an annual basis.

Supporting Pupils

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their teacher or a member of staff of their choice
- Being advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to 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

Pupils who have bullied will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened and establishing the concern and the need to change
- Informing parents/carers 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
- Speaking with local police when appropriate.

Supporting Adults

Adults (staff and parents) who have been bullied or affected will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the concern with a senior leader.
- Being advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how respond to concerns and build resilience as appropriate.
- Where the bullying takes place outside of the school site then the school will ensure that the concern is investigated and that appropriate action is taken in accordance with the school's behaviour and linked policies
- Reassuring and offering appropriate support
- Working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance

Adults (staff and parents) who have bullied will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened with a senior member of staff and establishing the concern
- Clarifying the school's official procedures for complaints or concerns
- If online, requesting content be removed and reporting account/content to service provider
- Instigating disciplinary, civil or legal action

Policy Date: January 2017

Signed Headteacher

Heleen Stiles

Signed (Chair of Governors)

[Signature]

Associated Policies

Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
Behaviour and Sanctions Policy
E-Safety Policy

This has largely been replaced by SIMS records from 2014.

Richmond House School

Parent / Teacher interview

Name _____ of pupil: Form _____ : _____

Date: _____ Time _____ : _____

Brief summary of conversation / concern

Action to be taken – When? Who? How?*(Attach extra sheets if used)*

*(Incidents of bullying/poor behaviour, should be recorded on SIMS.
If you make a paper record, pass it to the Deputy Head or
HeadTeacher for filing in the child's file - this can also be scanned to add to SIMs.)*

Signed: _____ Date _____ : _____