

Anti-Bullying Policy

Context

Bullying can take place in schools as it does in other work places. The aim of the anti-bullying policy is to ensure that pupils in this school learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Bullying is antisocial behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Definition

Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. (Children's Trust and Safeguarding Children Board Anti-Bullying Charter 2009)

Incidents of Bullying

Bullying can be related to:

- Race, religion or culture.
- Special educational needs or disabilities.
- Appearance or health conditions.
- Verbal (name calling, sexist, racist remarks, and other discriminatory language).
- Indirect (cyber bullying, spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups).

Bullying includes:

- Name-calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments, kicking, hitting, pushing or taking belongings.
- Inappropriate text messaging and emailing, sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet.
- Producing offensive writing or pictures.
- Gossiping, excluding people from groups, and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.

Although sometimes occurring between two individuals in isolation, bullying quite often takes place in the presence of others, for example, between pupils, between pupils and staff, or between staff; by individuals or groups; face to face, indirectly or using a range of methods.

Pupils being bullied may demonstrate emotional and/or behaviour problems including signs of depression, physical problems such as headaches and stomach pains, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting from school.

All school staff must be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly, sensitively and effectively against it in accordance with school policy. There is no 'hierarchy' of bullying – all forms of bullying should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately.

Reporting Bullying:

Pupils are encouraged to report bullying at the RGS through discussions in the curriculum, through the School council, or by reporting it to staff. The aims of the school's anti-bullying strategies and intervention systems are to:

- Prevent, de-escalate and/or stop any continuation of harmful behaviour.
- React to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way.
- Safeguard those pupils who have experienced bullying and those who have been involved in the act of bullying, and to trigger actions to support these pupils.

Any form of bullying should be reported to the Head of School who will record this in the Bullying Log. Where required, the concern is recorded as well as the action taken by the school.

Safeguarding and Bullying

Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, the school staff should report their concerns to their Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection.

Roles and Responsibilities

The role of the Board of Governors:

Governors have the responsibility to ensure that the anti-bullying policy is in place, that it reflects school's values and practice, and is reviewed annually.

The role of the Head of School:

The Head of School leads anti-bullying. He is responsible for ensuring the anti-bullying policy is not only in place but is being implemented by all staff.

Procedure

The following steps will be taken by staff when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be taken seriously and appropriate first steps are taken promptly by the member of staff who has been approached.
- Each incident will be investigated thoroughly, sensitively and effectively.
- A clear account of the incident, actions taken and review date will be recorded, given to the head teacher/senior manager and kept so incidents can be monitored.
- Relevant staff will be kept informed and if the bullying persists they will record this and inform the head teacher/senior manager, and appropriate further action is taken.
- Parents/carers will be kept informed appropriately.
- Appropriate rewards and sanctions in line with the school's Behaviour Policy will be used to support the improvement of pupils' behaviour.

Pupil Support

Pupils will have opportunities to develop their understanding of the nature of bullying, to explore their own and others' attitudes to bullying and to develop the skills to deal with bullying through PSHE and other subject areas and through Assemblies.

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported as appropriate by:

- having an immediate opportunity to discuss the incident(s) with an appropriate member of staff;
- being reassured;
- being offered support;
- raising their self-esteem and confidence;
- being encouraged to report further issues;
- arranging a review date/time to discuss outcomes and appropriate follow-up.

Pupils who have bullied will be supported by:

- having an immediate opportunity to discuss the incident(s) with an appropriate member of staff;
- establishing what behaviour was inappropriate and why the pupil became involved;
- establishing clearly what behaviour needs to change, and how the school can support this change;
- informing parents/carers of agreed actions, and establishing how they can support;
- arranging a review date/time to discuss outcomes and appropriate follow-up.