

Anti-bullying procedures

Rationale and context

At the RGS Guildford in Qatar, our efforts are focused on a calm, happy, and productive learning environment. It is important that students feel safe and nurtured and as a school, we seek to create a safe environment for all, at every opportunity. Whilst striving for the highest academic standards, we want to nurture responsible, compassionate, confident, and emotionally intelligent global citizens. Our standards and expectations of student interactions should be clear to our entire community.

At the heart of what we do are the RGS values;

Respect, Inclusivity, Scholarship, Courage, Collaboration, and Integrity.

Bullying is not tolerated and will be met with the relevant and appropriate sanctions. We work closely with others for mutual enrichment, and encourage a spirit of kindness and respect, a sense of integrity, and a firm belief that we can work collaboratively with others, to make a difference and have a positive impact on our society.

Feedback from our Student Council show that incidents in classrooms and in social time are rare. They have also notes that students feel safe in school and teachers go out of their way to make them feel seen, safe and heard.

Behaviour logs over the last academic year show that disruption in classes has reduced significantly and that bullying is now very rare. Furthermore, students behave well in all lessons observed, and exhibit positive attitudes to their learning.

Students appreciate the support they gain at RGSGQ and know that there is always someone to turn to if they have problems or are being bullied. They are very confident that their concerns will be followed up.

Aims

This policy aims to:

- Create a happy, caring, and safe environment, conducive both to students' well-being and learning, and staff's well-being.
- Encourage and support our students to make good choices throughout the school day and take responsibility for them.
- Set out procedures and routines, with firmness, kindness and 'follow-through' being key aspects of our approach.
- Create the regularity and predictability our students need to know that they are safe.
- Reiterate the rights of all school members to learn and teach.
- Reiterate the rights of all school members to feel safe (physically and emotionally).
- Reiterate the rights of all school members to mutual respect and understanding.
- Ensure a sense of equality and equity are understood and practised.
- Ensure we all use the same language, the same expectations and the same strategies consistently, for the benefit of our school community.

Terminology

For a consistent approach it is important that the correct language is used by all stakeholders.

For the purpose of this policy, bullying is persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another person or group. Bullying is not only a breach of our 6 values, but also a demonstration of incivility.

Bullying is generally characterised by:

- **Repetition:** Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over a period of time.
- **Intent:** The perpetrator(s) means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.
- **Targeting:** Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.
- **Power imbalance:** Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.

Bullying is the repeated action by those in power over another individual with a wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone. It can be physical (hitting, pushing, etc.), social (excluding someone), psychological (ignoring, funny looks, taunting etc.), or verbal (name calling, spreading rumours). Other forms of bullying may include interference with personal property.

Minor incidents are reported to the student's form tutor (FT), who investigates the incident, sets appropriate consequences for the perpetrator, and informs the Key Stage Leader (KSL) and other relevant form tutors in writing of the incident and outcome.

Research with our students demonstrated that discussing problems in the first instance helped minimise incidents of bullying. Bullying must start somewhere, however, most incidents within school are usually 'one-offs' or a misunderstanding.

When these occur, we would expect all members of the school community to use the following language:

1. "There is a problem."
2. "There is an on-going problem."
3. "There has been bullying".

Procedures

Problem

If a student reports a 'problem'; the following will be expected to take place:

- An adult will talk to both parties to gather evidence,
- A meeting will take place and actions agreed,
- There may be a formal consequence.

On-going Problem

If the problem continues the following will be expected to take place:

- An adult will talk to both parties to gather evidence,
- The school will contact both sets of parents,
- An action plan and review date will be agreed,
- There will be a formal consequence.

Bullying

When investigating a bullying incident, the following procedures are adopted:

- The victim, alleged bully and witnesses are all interviewed separately.
- Members of staff ensure that there is no possibility of contact between the students interviewed, including electronic communication.
- If a student is injured, members of staff take the student immediately to the nurse for a medical opinion on the extent of their injuries.
- A room is used that allows for privacy during interviews.
- If appropriate, all parties (bully, victim, witnesses) write down details of the incident [see appendix for reporting sheet]; students may need prompting questions from the member of staff to obtain the full picture. Additional witnesses are used for serious incidents.
- Premature assumptions are not made, as it is important not yet be judgemental.
- Members of staff listen carefully to all accounts, being non-confrontational and not attaching blame until the investigation is complete.
- All concerned students are informed that they must not discuss the interview with other students. Outcomes of investigations are explained to all students involved.

These final stages are rarely reached, as most bullying behaviour stops when the problem is brought into the open.

Roles

Staff:

- Staff members involved in dealing with the incident are required to consider whether there is a need for safeguarding processes to be implemented.
- Form tutors must investigate minor incidents when they are reported set appropriate consequences for the perpetrator, and inform the KSL and other relevant form tutors in writing of the incident and outcome.
- All staff are responsible for fostering a calm, nurturing environment where students feel safe while also being held to account. This is done without shaming, blaming or humiliating anyone. Our teachers are kind, fair and firm at the same time.
- Designated Safeguarding Lead will be responsible for further investigation and escalation as necessary.

Students:

- Communicate with their FT or KSL, as soon as they can after a problem has occurred. The best times to communicate concerns is at break or lunch, not during lessons unless they feel they are at risk of serious harm. If this is the case, students need to speak to their class teacher before receiving permission to leave their lesson.
- Students should allow the school adequate time to investigate and resolve the incidence- staff will contact parents once the circumstances are resolved or further steps are needed.

Parents:

- Communicate with the school and allow the school time to investigate and resolve the incidence- staff will contact parents once the circumstances are resolved/further steps are needed.
- Sit down with their child and talk through the information in this procedure.
- Calmly reassure their child of their support and the support of the school. Gently find out the facts, observations and perceptions. Reassure their child that the school will treat the problem seriously.
- Talk to their child's FT and explain your suspicions or concerns. To contact your child's FT, please directly message them on Class Dojo, or by email.
- If you have concerns about cyber-bullying, it is important to keep a record of all attempted communication e.g. screenshots and contact your child's FT and KSL as soon as possible.

Appendix

The following reporting sheet is used to inform staff of a variety of problems at each stage of an investigation.

 RGS QATAR	RGS Reporting Sheet	 RGS QATAR
Name: _____		Date: _____
I'd like to tell you about _____ _____ _____		
Who was involved?	Did anyone see what happened? What?	
What happened? _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____		
How did it make you feel? _____ _____ _____ _____		
My Signature _____		