



## Anti-Bullying Policy

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Date to be reviewed	November 2022
Date of last review	November 2018
Governors Committee accountable for review	Education
Senior Leadership Team member accountable for review	DPD



## RGS Anti-Bullying Policy

### 1. Introduction

This policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant policies:

BMA note: place policies below in alphabetical order

- Acceptable Use of ICT Systems and Learning Gateway Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Equalities Policy
- Home-School Agreement
- Mobile Phone Policy
- Peer on Peer Abuse Policy
- PSHE and Relationships Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- RGS Behaviour Chart
- School Rules
- Sixth Form Agreement

This policy also encompasses all students, adults and working practices under the responsibility of the Royal Grammar School including Fraser Youens Boarding House. There are additional specific Boarding House guidelines relating to anti-bullying issues in the Boarding House Handbook for Staff.

### 2. Statement of Principles and Values

At the Royal Grammar School, we believe that everyone in the School should have the same basic rights to freedom from all forms of harassment. Our vision is to have high standards of teaching and learning which challenge our students to achieve. Our anti-bullying policy supports this ideal by:

- Promoting respect and tolerance for each other.
- Helping students towards an understanding of what is right and wrong.
- Supporting everyone in forming good relationships with adults and peers.

We believe in tackling incidents of bullying and harassment by encouraging an environment where individuality is celebrated and individuals can develop without fear. This involves including and engaging everyone's perception of bullying.

We believe that students should be fully involved in writing, implementation, monitoring and review of an anti-bullying policy. The following definitions of bullying were suggested by students.

### 3. Definition of Terms

## What is bullying?

### Bullying ...

- is hurtful, threatening, harmful and disrespectful behaviour. Bullying incidents involve a bully or bullies, a victim or victims and possibly bystanders
- can be unprovoked and is often repetitive
- can be hidden and often victims do not tell about their experiences for complex reasons
- reflects the misuse of power with one or more people victimised by the bully or bullies

Bullying behaviours can include physical, verbal, written, social and psychological aspects such as:

- name-calling, use of offensive or annoying nick-names, mocking, making people feel inferior, making offensive comments, graffiti, taunting about physical and personal differences (this includes racist, sexist, SEN/disablist, homophobic and LGBT bullying)
- kicking, hitting, slapping, tripping people up, pushing, spitting, fighting or any use of aggression and intimidation
- taking, damaging or hiding belongings, taking money or other possessions with threats
- spreading hurtful or untruthful rumours
- socially excluding people from groups, e.g. not talking to them, excluding them from activities
- threatening or intimidating words or behaviours
- extortion

Cyber-bullying is the use of technology such as mobile phones, email, chat rooms, gaming sites or social media to harass, threaten, embarrass, intimidate or target an individual. Types of cyber-bullying can include:

- **Flaming:** Online fights usually through emails, instant messaging or chat rooms where angry and rude comments are exchanged.
- **Denigration:** Putting unpleasant or malicious online messages through email, instant messaging, chat rooms, or websites set up to make fun of someone.
- **Exclusion:** Intentionally leaving someone out of a group such as instant messaging, friend sites, or other online group activities.
- **Outing:** Sharing secrets about someone online including private information, pictures, and videos.
- **Trickery:** Tricking someone into revealing personal information then sharing it with others.
- **Impersonation:** Pretending to be someone else when sending or posting unpleasant, malicious or false messages online.
- **Harassment:** Repeatedly sending malicious messages to someone online.
- **Cyber-stalking:** Continuously harassing and denigration including threats of physical harm.
- **The sending of nude or semi-nude images:** this is the sending or receiving of sexually explicit or sexually suggestive images, messages, or videos via online electronic devices. **The sending of nude or semi-nude images** is always treated as a safeguarding concern.
- **Upskirting** the act of taking a sexually intrusive photograph up someone's skirt without their permission.

The school has a separate policy related to on-line safety addressing the use of mobile technology, social media, appropriate online activity, security, access and monitoring procedures in place.

Bullying is harmful to all involved, not just the bullied, and can result in long-term outcomes of self-doubt, lack of confidence, low self-esteem, depression, anxiety, self-harm and in extreme cases serious mental health concerns.

“Keeping Children Safe in Education” (September 2021) places a responsibility on schools to operate a zero-tolerance policy to peer on peer abuse and not pass off incidents as ‘banter’ or ‘just growing up’. RGS will reassure victims they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. Cases of extreme bullying and peer on peer abuse (including sexual harassment and violence), should be treated as a child protection issue.

The Royal Grammar School is aware that it is a possibility that the bully may be an adult The School will follow child protection procedures where this is the case. It is also possible for students to bully adults and this too will be treated seriously and is covered in our Behaviour Policy.

#### **4. Signs and Symptoms**

A student may indicate by signs or behaviour that they are being bullied. Adults should be aware of possible signs that could indicate a reaction to bullying:

- frightened of walking to or from school;
- does not want to go on the school / public bus;
- asks to be driven to school;
- change in usual routine;
- unwilling to go to school;
- begins to truant;
- difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares;
- feels ill in the morning – headaches, stomach aches;
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence;
- starts stammering;
- attempts or threatens running away, self-harm or suicide;
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged;
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing";
- asks for money or starts stealing money;
- continually loses money;
- has unexplained cuts or bruises;
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable;
- sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations;
- bullying other children or siblings;
- changes in eating habits – skipping meals, binge eating or coming home hungry because they have not eaten lunch;
- frightened to say what is wrong;
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above;
- loss of interest in activities they used to enjoy;
- afraid to use the internet or mobile phone;
- nervous or jumpy when a message on social media/text is received.

In-school behaviour signs:

- finds it difficult to join a group during class work and discussion;
- reluctant to answer questions in class or approach staff for academic help;
- signs or spoken language which imply an unusual lack of self-esteem;
- disengagement during tutor activities;
- isolated or alone at lunch or break time;

- standard of work declines;
- unusual lack of care or engagement in class work and homework.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and if it is felt appropriate, should be investigated.

## 5. Roles and Responsibilities

The Education Act 2002, Education and Inspections Act 2006, the DfE guidance “Preventing and Tackling Bullying” (July 2017), “Approaches to Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Case Studies” (June 2018) and the Public Sector Equality Duty set out in section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 all refer to a school’s legal responsibility to prevent and tackle bullying. This policy has also been written with reference to “Keeping Children Safe in Education” (September 2021) and “Working Together to Safeguard Children” (July 2018) and “Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people” (December 2020) By law, all state schools must have a behaviour policy in place and displayed on their website and must also follow anti-discrimination law. This means staff must act to prevent discrimination, harassment and victimisation within the school. In addition, The Royal Grammar School has developed this anti-bullying policy, a copy of which is available on the school website for parents, staff and students to access.

Whilst schools are not directly responsible for bullying behaviour away from their premises, nevertheless students are encouraged not to suffer in silence. If the bullying incident involves students from the RGS, if appropriate, the response will be the same as an incident occurring at school. During school hours, when students are on the way to and from school and while students are taking part in school visits and after school clubs, the school has direct responsibility to ensure children feel safe and secure.

### **Staff**

Staff have a vital role to play as they are at the forefront of behaviour management and supporting students’ sense of well-being in the school. They have the closest knowledge of the students in their care and should build up a relationship involving mutual support, trust and respect.

Staff will:

- Be responsible for ensuring that the policy and procedures are followed, and consistently and fairly applied.
- Attend training that equips them to identify bullying and to follow school policy and procedures with regard to behaviour management.
- Provide students with a framework of behaviour, including classroom conduct rules, which supports the whole school policy on behaviour.
- Use a range of methods to help prevent bullying and to establish a positive climate of trust and respect for all.
- Keep a vigilant watch on suspected ‘bullies’.
- Do all they can to support a child who is being bullied.
- Behave in a respectful and caring manner to students and colleagues.
- Provide students with a good role model.
- Raise awareness of bullying through assemblies, lessons, discussions in form period, the RGS Anti-Bullying Charter, peer support, annual online-safety presentations for Year 7 and all new boarders, school council, PSHCE, national anti-bullying week, training for prefects and an annual bullying survey.
- Keep the governing body informed regarding issues concerning behaviour management via the Senior Team.

**Parents/Carers will:**

- Support the school by reading the Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Support the school by not accepting any form of bullying behaviour and by reporting any bullying incidents that they are aware of; this includes reporting any suspected signs of bullying.
- Encourage their child to be a positive member of the school community by following the School's Anti-Bullying Charter.

**Governors will:**

- Support the Headmaster and the staff in the implementation of this policy.
- Be fully informed on matters concerning anti-bullying, the monitoring of bullying, and the effectiveness of this policy.

**Students will:**

- Be encouraged to tell somebody they trust if they are being bullied, and if the bullying continues they must keep letting people know.
- Be expected to tell somebody if they see someone else being bullied.
- Be made fully aware of the school policy, procedures and expectations.
- Be encouraged to participate fully in activities that raise their awareness about bullying, in order that they clearly understand what to do if they, or another child, are being bullied.

**Bullying in the workplace:**

- Incidents, where it has been deemed that a member of staff has been bullying a student, will be taken very seriously. The Headmaster, with the support of the governing body, will deal with this; formal action will be taken where necessary. Such action will also be taken if it is deemed that a member of staff is bullying other members of staff.
- In the event of the Headmaster being involved in such incidents, reports will be given immediately to the Chair of Governors who will also take formal action where necessary.

**6. Practice and Procedures**

If a student feels they have been bullied they should be encouraged to speak to their Form Tutor, a subject teacher, Head of Year, the Student Development Assistant, Assistant Head for Student Development, prefect, school counsellor, Matron or any other responsible adult in the school They can also inform staff via the "Concern Reporting" portal on Cloudbox.

**Dealing with an incident**

All bullying behaviour or threats of bullying are investigated. No two cases are the same, which can make consistency of response difficult. It is widely accepted that whilst punishment of the bully may be deemed necessary, he will also be given support and advice on how to behave in a more positive manner towards his peers. Actions and sanctions/consequences follow a tiered approach dependent on the nature of each incident and in line with the school Behaviour Policy and the "RGS Behaviour Chart".

**1. The school supports all involved by:**

- Talking through the incident with the person bullied and the bully. This may involve talking to those who have seen the incident and may involve students writing "Incident Reports".
- Helping the victim and the bully to express their feelings.
- Talking about which rule/s or policies has/have been broken.
- Discussing strategies for making amends.
- Discussing how the situation will be monitored or supported in the future if appropriate.

2. It may be appropriate or necessary to also use sanctions which may include:
  - time away from an activity within the classroom
  - missing break/lunch or another activity
  - communication with home
  - restorative justice approaches
  - meeting with parent/carer, staff and student
  - detention after school
  - Saturday morning detention
  - Pastoral Support Plan
  - Suspensions
3. Parents (of both the bully and the person bullied) are informed of what has happened, and how it has been dealt with. Records of incidents are logged, usually by the Head of Year. Where appropriate, copies of correspondence and incident reports will be placed on file. Child protection procedures should always be followed when child protection/safeguarding concerns arise.

## **7. Strategies to reduce bullying**

The school has adopted a range of strategies to prevent and reduce bullying, to raise awareness of bullying and support victims and those displaying bullying behaviour, including:

- The consistent promotion of the school's Behaviour Policy, RGS Behaviour Chart and the RGS Anti-Bullying Charter (Appendix 1)
- The reinforcement of the clear message that bullying has no place at the Royal Grammar School.
- Prompt action when bullying incidents are reported.
- Form Tutors and Heads of Year monitoring and responding to concerning behaviours logged on SIMS.
- Consultation with students through school surveys and other pupil voice methods.
- An annual bullying survey.
- Taking part in initiatives such as Anti-Bullying Week.
- Annual mufti day to raise money for an Anti-Bullying charity.
- Training for all members of staff on anti-bullying policy and strategy.
- The supervision by school staff of all social areas at lunch and break times.
- Sixth Form Prefects for Year 7 Forms.
- Prefects receive training on the issue of bullying.
- Providing information to all parents on the symptoms of bullying and the steps to take if they suspect their child is being bullied.
- The celebration of all students' backgrounds and cultures through assemblies.
- Assemblies and PSHCE learning sessions which explore bullying issues.
- Raising awareness of cyber bullying and teaching students to safely use technology (including mobile phones, social media and the internet), including presentations by the school Child Exploitation and Online Protection Ambassador to deliver advice on how to avoid and respond to cyberbullying and Online-Safety concerns.
- All websites accessed in school are screened. This software screens the language used in all documents, emails and websites.
- Work with multi-agency teams including police and children's services as appropriate.
- Access to the school counsellor available by request via a Head of Year or the Assistant for Student Development.
- Contact the parents of both the child being bullied and the bully.

- Challenging sexual content within verbal abuse especially challenging the word ‘gay’ and other homophobic language.
- “Concern Reporting” portal on Cloudbox

## **8. Monitoring**

The implementation and effectiveness of this policy will be monitored by the Deputy Headmaster and the Assistant Head for Student Development who will provide the governors with regular feedback. All students complete an annual bullying survey and this is particularly helpful in the monitoring, evaluating and action planning cycle.



## Appendix 1:

### The Royal Grammar School's Anti-Bullying Charter

We are working together with the whole school community to create an environment where bullying behaviour will not be tolerated.

Students must always:

- Respect each other and accept each other's differences.
- Have the right to a safe environment.
- Tell someone they trust if they are being bullied.
- Take action quickly if they observe any form of bullying by informing a member of staff and supporting the victim in the situation.
- Expect others to help them prevent further bullying.

Staff must always:

- Be vigilant about bullying.
- Take all reports of bullying seriously.
- Investigate all reports with an open mind.
- Take action promptly to resolve issues using strategies from the Anti- Bullying Policy.
- Monitor bullying situations after they have been dealt with.

Everyone must always:

- Report bullying and cooperate with each other to resolve bullying incidents fairly.

You can also report bullying, or any concern, via the "Concern Reporting" portal on [Cloudbox](#).