



Radyr Comprehensive School

Ysgol Gyfun Radur

Respect ♦ Commitment ♦ Success

Anti-bullying Policy



Introduction

Bullying is unacceptable in any form. This policy aims to help create a positive environment where students are able to learn without fear of bullying and/or harassment, in line with the school's core values of Respect, Commitment and Success.

At RCS, we acknowledge the importance of clear, constructive communication between all stakeholders in order to minimise and deal with bullying in school. For young people, school is an environment where they can socialise with their peers as well as gaining an education. Therefore, when relationships break down between peers, or when bullying occurs, it can have a detrimental effect upon a young person's social and emotional wellbeing as well as their educational attainment.

The policy outlines what the school will do to prevent bullying and procedures that will be followed when bullying is identified. It should be read in conjunction with the school's Behaviour policy.

Principles

Our policy is based on the following principles:

- Every member of the school community is entitled to come to school knowing that they will be free from humiliation, oppression and abuse;
- All members of the school community are responsible for ensuring that it is one which is caring and protective;
- Parents/carers are entitled to feel that their children are free from threat or harm;
- School is a place where every person has the right to be themselves and to be included in a safe and happy environment;
- Everyone at RCS school is equal and should be treated with respect.

Aims

Our aims are:

- To clearly outline what constitutes bullying and the different forms bullying may take;
- To promote an environment where it is regarded as normal and healthy to tell someone about bullying;
- To raise awareness with all members of the school community that bullying behaviour is taken seriously and will not be tolerated;
- To work with students, parents, staff and external agencies to address bullying and promote a caring and protective ethos in our school;
- To ensure that procedures are in place for recording and reporting incidents of bullying;
- To ensure that appropriate procedures are in place to assist staff to investigate and deal with bullying behaviour in a fair and consistent manner;
- To apply sanctions, where necessary, to improve the behaviour of those responsible for bullying in order to prevent it from happening again;
- To ensure that appropriate support and protection is provided for any student who is a target of bullying behaviour or witnesses such behaviour;
- To ensure that appropriate support is given to any perpetrator of bullying so that they can recognise the impact of their behaviour and address it;
- To outline the role everyone at RCS plays in addressing bullying.

Definition of bullying

Bullying is aggressive, hurtful or unkind behaviour that is deliberate and repeated. Bullying can be carried out by an individual or a group of people (the perpetrator/s) towards another individual or group (the victim/s), where the perpetrator/s hold more power than those being bullied.

Bullying can be:

- Physical – such as hitting or physically intimidating someone, or using inappropriate or unwanted physical contact;
- Attacking property – such as damaging, stealing or hiding someone's possessions;
- Verbal - such as name calling, using derogatory or offensive language, threatening someone, insulting someone, making offensive remarks, using offensive names when addressing someone, or ridiculing someone's appearance, way of speaking or personal mannerisms;
- Indirect – teasing or spreading malicious rumours about someone or their family, excluding someone from social groups, sending malicious e-mails or messages;
- Psychological - such as deliberately excluding or ignoring people;
- Cyber-bullying – such as using text, e-mail or other social media to write hurtful things about someone, or to share pictures of someone without their permission in order to embarrass, humiliate or hurt them.

Identity-based bullying

This can occur where there is a perceived difference between the bully and the victim, which can include disability, ability, race, gender, sexuality and faith:

Racist and Religious Bullying

This is motivated by difference, or perceived difference, between the bully and the victim. The bullying may take many forms and be based on skin colour, dress, accent, cultural identity, way of life, stereotyping, religious observances or an inability to participate in certain activities. This also includes racist phrases, words or language which may cause offence.

Homophobic or Transgender Bullying

This is motivated by difference or perceived difference, between the bully and the victim. The bullying may take many forms motivated by the perpetrator's ignorance, prejudice or fear, which can have a serious impact upon the target's quality of life. It can affect young people whether they identify as being Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender or not.

Some behaviour, though unacceptable, is not considered bullying. The Welsh Government's document "Rights, respect, equality: Statutory guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools" (2019) sets out such behaviour. These instances are dealt with in accordance with the school's behaviour policy to prevent an incident escalating to become bullying.

The following are examples of instances which would not normally be considered bullying:

- Friendship fallouts. A friendship feud may however deteriorate into bullying behaviour enabled by the fact that former friends have an intimate knowledge of the fears and insecurities of one another. Children and young people who are targeted by former

friends feel the betrayal deeply and are frequently isolated from their former friendship group;

- A one-off fight. This is addressed according to the school's behaviour policy unless it is part of a pattern of behaviour that indicates intentional targeting of an individual;
- An argument or disagreement between two children or young people. Nevertheless they may require assistance to learn to respect others' views;
- A one-off physical assault. This has to be stopped and addressed immediately using the school's behaviour policy. Police involvement may also be appropriate;
- Insults and banter. Children and young people often protest that an incident was a joke or banter. If two friends of equal standing are in the habit of bantering with one another it is not deemed to be bullying. If one student uses banter to humiliate or threaten another who is powerless to stop it and is made fearful by the act, the borderline between banter and bullying is likely to be crossed.
- A one-off instance of hate crime. Unless the behaviour is repeated it would not usually be regarded as bullying but it would be criminal behaviour, to be dealt with in accordance with the school's behaviour policy and other relevant policies. If considered necessary, the school might also involve the police.

Reporting Bullying

Bullying can only be stopped and the problems it creates dealt with if it is reported so that it can be dealt with appropriately.

It is important that all reports of bullying are reported so they can be investigated and dealt with accordingly.

All incidences of bullying will be dealt with by the relevant Key Stage pastoral teams. A student should report bullying to their Pastoral Progress Leader or Wellbeing Officer. If a student is not comfortable doing this, they should talk to their Form tutor who will then report the bullying to the relevant pastoral team.

If a student is not comfortable reporting the incident themselves, then their parent/carer should contact the relevant Pastoral Progress Leader or Wellbeing Officer in order to report the bullying.

Responding to Bullying in school

A student who has been bullied will be supported by:

- Having their concerns listened to;
- Restorative work with the perpetrator where appropriate;
- Having the opportunity to share their feelings and worries and receive reassurance and any further support where necessary;
- If appropriate, referral to the School Counsellor;
- If appropriate, involvement of an outside agency who can offer further support to a student.
- Depending on the nature of the reported incident, the Pastoral teams will deal with the incident.

According to the nature and severity of the incident, actions taken may include:

- Investigation of the incident by obtaining statements separately from the victim, any witnesses and the perpetrator;
- Facilitating an apology from the perpetrator to their target where appropriate;
- If bullying is proven, then it may incur a sanction in line with the school's behaviour policy. This may include: a verbal warning, loss of privileges, negative points (Cs) recorded on SIMS, detention, or, in more serious cases, a period of time in Internal Reflection (IR) or External Exclusion.

Where an incident of bullying is reported and proven details and outcome will be recorded on SIMS. Copies of witness statements will also be retained.

All incidents resulting in a sanction will also be recorded on SIMS. These records are used to analyse the types and frequency of bullying incidents and identify any whole school action needed.

Depending on the severity of the incident, the Wellbeing Officer/Pastoral Progress Leader may inform the Director of School, who may in turn inform the Deputy Headteacher responsible for standards across the school. They will assess whether parents/carers need to be involved.

Parents/carers of victims and perpetrators will always be informed of any serious incidents or persistent bullying.

Members of the pastoral team will always engage with the perpetrator of the bullying to highlight the unacceptable nature of their behaviour and to support them in changing it.

Some serious incidents of bullying may be linked to child protection. In such circumstances, they will be referred to the Assistant Headteacher responsible for Wellbeing and Inclusion, who is also the Designated Child Protection Lead (see Child Protection Policy).

Some serious incidents of bullying may also require Police or Local Authority involvement: this decision will be taken by the Directors of School in consultation with the Deputy Headteacher.

Bullying outside of school

Bullying is unacceptable and is not tolerated, whether it takes place inside or outside school.

Bullying can take place on the way to school, before or after school hours, at the weekends, during the holidays or in the wider community. The nature of cyber-bullying, in particular, means that it can impact on students' well-being beyond the school day. Staff, parents, carers and students must be vigilant in identifying bullying outside of school and report it and respond to it in line with their responsibilities as outlined in this policy.

The law empowers Headteachers, to such extent as is reasonable, to regulate the behaviour of pupils when they are off school site and provides members of school staff with the opportunity to impose disciplinary penalties for inappropriate behaviour in line with the school's behaviour and anti-bullying policies.

The school can deal with any behaviour in school, which may arise as a result of cyber bullying, but cannot be expected to investigate every online communication. The school is also not directly

responsible for bullying off-site. However, the school will aim to support parents/carers, as well as victims, as much as possible.

Where a pupil reports offsite bullying the school may:

- Talk to the local police;
- Talk to the transport companies about bullying on buses;
- Talk to other Headteachers if their pupils are involved;
- Talk to outside agencies such as Cardiff Against Bullying;
- Speak to parents/carers to discuss the situation.

Bullying behaviour outside of school is a criminal offence and the police may take action. The school will be fully cooperative in such instances.

Derogatory language

Derogatory or offensive language is not acceptable and is not tolerated. Use of derogatory language will be challenged by staff, its use recorded and monitored on SIMS and appropriate sanctions applied.

Prejudice-based incidents

A prejudice-based incident is:

- a one-off incident of unkind or hurtful behaviour;
- motivated by a prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views; and
- directed at an individual who has a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 or at a minority group.

It can target an individual or a group of people and have a significant impact on them. All prejudice-based incidents are taken seriously and recorded on SIMS along with the actions taken in response. These records are used to analyse the type and frequency of prejudice-based incidents and to inform targeted intervention.

School Initiatives to prevent and tackle bullying

The school uses a range of measures to prevent and tackle bullying, including:

- Raising awareness to establish a school where bullying is not tolerated by using posters and assemblies;
- Discussing the school's anti-bullying policy with Year 6/7 students as part of the transition process;
- A staggered start at the beginning of the academic year for students in Year 7 to help them settle into school;
- Issues related to bullying are addressed as part of our pastoral programme and PSE lessons;
- Pupils who join the school in Years 8-11 are allocated a "buddy" to support in the integration process;
- The school works with agencies such as Cardiff Against Bullying to assess the school's anti-bullying strategies;
- The school works with specialist external agencies to offer a range of support and guidance to

- any individual affected by or involved in bullying;
- The school website provides information regarding sources of support;
- The interviewing, conciliation, mentoring and counselling of victims and bullies;
- Restorative justice approaches are implemented where appropriate to hold perpetrators to account for their behaviour and engage with them to agree the actions to be taken to repair the harm caused;
- The school will produce information to help pupils to cope with bullying, how to react to it if it occurs and how to avoid future incidents;
- If it is determined that bullying behaviour is serious or persistent sanctions will be applied, including exclusion (as outlined in the Behaviour Policy). Sanctions are applied fairly, proportionately, consistently and reasonably, taking into account any additional educational needs or disabilities that pupils may have and taking into consideration the needs of vulnerable children;
- The school engages with parents/carers promptly when issues of serious or persistent bullying come to light, whether their child is the victim or perpetrator;
- Any incident and action taken will be recorded on SIMS and followed up;
- Bullying Incidents will be monitored by the Directors of School in conjunction with the Deputy Headteacher;
- Changes of class or form may be considered in serious cases of bullying.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body

The Governing Body is responsible for regularly reviewing and approving this Anti-Bullying Policy in conjunction with the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher in order to monitor its effectiveness.

The Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team and Directors of School

The Headteacher is responsible for reviewing and approving this Anti-Bullying policy in conjunction with the Governing Body, communicating it to staff and monitoring its effectiveness.

Under the direction of the Deputy Headteacher, the Directors of School will ensure that the school environment encourages positive behaviour and that staff deal effectively with bullying.

The Directors of School will also monitor how staff implement this policy to ensure the policy is applied consistently.

Staff

All members of staff have a duty to ensure that the anti-bullying policy is implemented accordingly and that the school is a safe place for our students and staff. All members of staff will:

- Read and implement the anti-bullying policy consistently;
- Instill in our students that they should not suffer in silence but have the courage to speak out about bullying behaviour to put an end to their own suffering and that of other potential targets;
- Report any perceived or directly reported incidents of bullying to the appropriate Key Stage team promptly;
- Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying;

Under the direction of the Deputy Headteacher, the Key Stage teams will:

- Read and implement this anti-bullying policy consistently
- Support pupils, parents and carers in upholding the school's zero tolerance stance towards bullying;
- Deal with observed incidents of bullying promptly and fairly in accordance with agreed procedures;
- Listen to a child who reports an incident of bullying or who has been bullied, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them;
- Offer support by making clear to the victim that the school will take their concerns seriously and the matter will be investigated;
- Where appropriate, liaise effectively with the parents/carers of the victim and perpetrator.
- Where appropriate, instigate multi-agency and/or police involvement to ensure necessary support.

Parents/Carers

Parents/Carers are expected to:

- Discuss any concerns regarding bullying with the relevant Key Stage teams promptly;
- Support the school in upholding this anti-bullying policy and zero tolerance of bullying- this includes engaging with the SIMS app, where incidents and sanctions are recorded;
- Understand that the school may need time to investigate and address the reported bullying behaviour and fully support the school in dealing with the bullying;
- Work with the school to develop ways to support their child;

If their child is responsible for bullying, parents/carers are expected to:

- Not ignore it;
- Speak to their child in a calm and measured manner to ascertain the facts. Conversations should concentrate on the behaviour and an awareness of how the behaviour affects others should be fully discussed;
- Make it clear that such behaviour is unacceptable both inside and outside of school;
- Work with the school to develop ways to change the behavior.

Parents have a responsibility to make their child aware that persistent or serious incidents of bullying could result in police involvement, which may result in a police investigation.

Students

Students are expected to:

- Uphold this anti-bullying policy at all times.

Reviewed: June 2021

Approved by the Standards Committee of the Governing Body: Autumn 2021