

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Policy reviewed by: Koen Claeys – Chair of Governors and Safeguarding Governor

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This is a whole school policy, which also applies to the Early Years Foundation Stage.



POLICY AMENDMENT PAGE

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Anti-Bullying Policy

The School Ethos

“At Riverston School we aim to provide a supportive and disciplined environment in which children are encouraged to pursue high academic and personal goals as happy and secure individuals”.

The policy reflects the school ethos and the curriculum. Its emphasis is on helping children to take responsibility for their own behaviour and caring for others. Educational elements are also included in assemblies, projects, drama, stories, literature, historical events, current affairs and discussion of differences between people and the importance of avoiding prejudice-based language. PSHE Lessons, Circle Time and an annual anti-bullying week are also key features of the school’s strategy to prevent and tackle bullying. The school aims to ensure that bullying is prevented in so far as reasonably practicable, by the drawing up and implementation of an effective anti-bullying strategy.

The school seeks to have effective procedures for dealing with bullying and demonstrate that concerns raised by children or parents will be taken seriously. This is a whole-school policy.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Cyber-Bullying Policy, the Online Safety Policy, the Behaviour Policy, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (including Prevent), Looked After Children Policy, PSHE Policy and the Staff Code of Conduct.

Aims

- To raise awareness amongst pupils that we must respect all people no matter what their beliefs or persuasions are
- To raise awareness amongst pupils and parents about bullying behaviour and that they should report bullying, including when they find themselves as by-standers (as a by-stander a person has the responsibility to report immediately what he/she has witnessed)
- To raise awareness about the school's attitude to bullying behaviour via the anti-bullying policy
- To challenge attitudes about bullying-type behaviours and help build an anti-bullying ethos in school
- To raise awareness that hurtful behaviour in young children can develop into bullying in older children and that psychological damage can even result in suicide
- To prevent pupils being subjected to radicalisation (as part of the Prevent duty of all schools, following the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 – see Safeguarding Policy and Anti-Terrorism Policy).
- To foster a positive caring atmosphere
- To ensure good supervision in all areas of the school at all times so far as is reasonably practical, including off-site visits and activities and holiday clubs/play scheme
- To raise staff awareness by involving them in training
- To talk openly about bullying with the children so that they can understand the feelings of someone who is being bullied and learn to deal with bullying.



Objectives

All Board members, Directors, staff, parents and pupils understand what bullying is

All Board members, Directors, teachers and non-teaching staff know what the school policy is on bullying, use it to help prevent bullying and follow it when bullying is reported

All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises

Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported, and given appropriate counselling, if necessary, when bullying is reported.

Bullying is defined as behaviour, which is:

- Being deliberately hurtful to others (physically, emotionally, mentally or through exclusion)
- Difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves against. This includes;
 - racist, cultural, sexist and homophobic bullying
 - bullying on the basis of being lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender
 - cyber-bullying, e.g. via mobile phones, social media, text messaging, websites, photographs and e-mail
 - bullying because of a person's special educational need or disability
 - bullying someone because he/she is adopted or a carer
 - bullying someone because he/she is a Looked After or Previously Looked After child or has a social worker.
- Frightening someone into doing something he/she does not want to do
- Invading someone's personal space to make him/her feel uncomfortable or unhappy
- Taking or damaging someone's property
- Spreading rumours about someone.

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally (Preventing and Tackling Bullying, Advice for Head Teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies, DfE, July 2017). Although bullying is noted usually to be repeated over time, the school will, where appropriate, take action in response to a single incident and keep an appropriate record.

Staff are aware that child-on-child abuse, (including sexual violence and sexual harassment between pupils, and upskirting), is closely allied with bullying and that initiation ceremonies may also have the effect of causing harm, embarrassment or physical or emotional distress. Staff work to raise the pupils' awareness of the potential damage of such incidences in order to minimise their occurrence. Any such issues will be dealt with in accordance with this policy and the safeguarding and child protection policy.

As noted in the DfE Guidance 'Behaviour in Schools 2024', the headteacher has the authority to take disciplinary action in relation to events which take place away from the school premises. (Refer to the Behaviour Policy for further details). In this respect, the school will take seriously and respond



appropriately, in accordance with this policy, to reports of bullying, including cyber-bullying, which take place away from school.

As a statutory requirement, the Anti-Bullying Policy is available to parents of pupils and prospective pupils via the school website. Its content and implications are discussed with pupils, for example, in lessons, assemblies and other relevant occasions.

The Protected Characteristics and Prejudiced-based Bullying

The Equality Act protects people against discrimination because of the protected characteristics. In the Equality Act, the nine protected characteristics are defined as:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

The school recognises that people who have a protected characteristic may experience an additional vulnerability to being bullied. Throughout the curriculum and co-curriculum and, in particular, through the PSHE programme, staff work to develop a sense of tolerance and respect towards people who have a protected characteristic, in line with the school's promotion of fundamental British values. Any bullying on the basis of a protected characteristic is taken very seriously. The school's log of bullying incidents enables any issues arising out of a protected characteristic to be identified and characterised to facilitate the monitoring of patterns or trends, the school's success in its anti-bullying strategies and its active promotion of the pupils' well-being.

Cyber-Bullying

Cyber-bullying is perpetrated via a technological medium, e.g. using social media. It can be an extension of 'face-to-face' bullying, with technology providing the bully with another route to harass their target. However, it differs in several ways from other kinds of bullying because of the invasion of home and personal space and the size of the audience, and that it can take place at any time of the day. It takes different forms;

- threats and intimidation
- harassment
- cyber stalking, e.g. repeatedly sending unwanted texts,
- defamation
- exclusion or peer rejection
- impersonation
- circulation of private information or images.



Research into cyber-bullying indicates that it is a feature of many young people's lives. Cyber-bullying can extend into non-school time. We advise parents to contact the police if this is the case. The school should be informed of the details if the incident is likely to have repercussions in school.

Cyber-bullying, like all other forms of bullying, is taken very seriously. It is never acceptable.

Responsibilities

Early Years to Year 3

Children are asked to:

- Say "don't do that" / "stop" / "leave me alone" if someone does something they don't like
- Tell an adult, i.e. a teacher, classroom assistant, helper, lunchtime or aftercare supervisor or parent if someone's behaviour is hurtful to them
- To step in to help children in distress or tell an adult (i.e. not to ignore it)

Parents are asked to:

- Tell their child's teacher or member of staff if their children are telling them about hurtful behaviour in school

Staff will:

- If children hurt other children, having ascertained the full facts, record the incident and report it to the Head
- Ensure that perpetrators make a meaningful apology and help children to plan how they can put things right
- Sanction them by taking them to the Head or member of the Senior Management Team
- Monitor the situation to prevent it happening again, by supervising areas and times where incidents could happen covertly

Year 4 and Above

The Anti-Bullying Reporting Chain

The victim should speak to a friend (a student volunteer may act as a mediator giving verbal information), who will then inform the Form Tutor. Alternatively, the Form Tutor may be spoken to directly. All incidences are recorded (on a 'Record of Incidents of Bullying' form, a copy of which will be held centrally by the Head for monitoring purposes and to evaluate the effectiveness of the approach adopted, or to enable patterns to be identified. A further copy will be added to the pupil's file.) Both the bullied and the bully are spoken to by the appropriate Form Tutor(s) and the Head is informed. It should be made clear that the bully's behaviour is unacceptable and, dependent upon the nature of the event, parents may be informed at a very early stage. The victims must be aware that action has been taken against the bully, and are encouraged to develop strategies if they find themselves in similar situations outside the school. The DfE Guidance requires staff to be aware of

the times and places where bullying is most likely to occur; staff are vigilant at all times, especially during movements between buildings and during lunch and break times.

If incidences reoccur the parents will be invited to a meeting with the appropriate Form Tutor and Head and the bully's future within the school will be reviewed.

The Head and/or DSL have received training as to what constitutes a child protection issue, as far as bullying is concerned, i.e. any bullying that puts the child at personal, mental or physical risk. The threshold for reporting a bullying issue to external agencies (e.g. police, social care) is known by all staff. This includes all issues where a child is at risk of further bullying, particularly outside the school area, or where the bullying involves a criminal act. A bullying incident will be treated as a child protection concern when there is "reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer, significant harm".

Where bullying constitutes child-on-child abuse or raises a safeguarding concern, it must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) without delay. The DSL will assess whether the incident meets the threshold for referral to children's social care or the police, in line with the school's Safeguarding Policy and KCSIE

Incidents involving prejudice-based language, including racist, homophobic or transphobic slurs, are recorded and monitored for patterns. Pupils engaging in such behaviour will be subject to appropriate sanctions, and the affected pupil(s) offered support.

Records of any incidents of bullying are kept centrally by the school to evaluate the effectiveness of the approach adopted or to enable patterns to be identified. The number of incidents is available for parents to see. Training for staff includes how to record and report bullying, the staff's legal responsibilities, and the sources of support that might be available to staff, particularly to facilitate addressing the needs of pupils with protected characteristics.

Staff Guidelines

The Bully:

- Make the bully aware that such behaviour is unacceptable
- Explain clearly and precisely what behaviour is causing distress to the victim
- Discuss the difference between assertive and aggressive behaviour
- Make the bully aware of the consequences if bullying continues
- Discuss ways by which the bully must change his/her behaviour
- Always inform the Head
- Monitor the bully's behaviour over the next few weeks

Whatever the cause, bullying is usually a signal that the bully also needs help. The school will give due consideration as to whether an incident of bullying also gives rise to a possible child protection concern for the perpetrator.

Strategies

Pupils are encouraged to talk to peers and teachers who can then give feedback. Teachers support in a confidential manner.

All pupils undergo training to develop their resilience to bullying and to understand its effects and how to prevent it.

Curriculum areas, such as English and Drama, provide opportunities to explore relationships with bullying as the theme.

Creating an inclusive environment and a school, which builds on positive self-image and commends good and appropriate behaviour in all areas and ages.

Ensuring staff are trained on how to watch for signs, react to and deal with instances of bullying or suspected bullying. This needs to include training on the needs of the pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities. Training on this policy and the school's anti-bullying strategy is included in the induction training of new staff.

Staff are expected to be particularly vigilant in identifying and supporting pupils who may be more vulnerable to bullying, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those in receipt of social care services, young carers, or those with English as an additional language (EAL). Tailored pastoral and academic support will be offered to ensure these pupils are not disadvantaged.

Having comprehensive Internet security, with the appropriate filters.

Teaching children how to stay safe in the online and real world.

Senior Management, teachers and pupil groups regularly present 'Anti-Bullying Assemblies'.

The Head and DSL maintain a central log of bullying and prejudiced incidents, which is reviewed termly to identify patterns and inform strategic action.

Our key message will always be prevention, by teaching pupils that everyone in our school has the right to feel safe and happy, and that bullying of any kind will not be tolerated. This programme of education is aimed at building resilience, to promote and understand the differences between people, and help pupils avoid prejudice-based language.

Discipline and Exclusion

In deciding on appropriate sanctions in relation to identified incidences of bullying, the school ensures that its action is in line with its behaviour policy. Ultimately, parents may be required, during or at the end of a term, to remove a pupil, without refund of fees, temporarily or permanently from the school if, after consultation with a parent, the Head is of the opinion that the conduct of the pupil has been unsatisfactory. These sanctions will be imposed in severe or persistent cases of bullying. The school has an obligation to report to its Local Authority if a pupil is permanently excluded from the school. Following a permanent exclusion, the school will assist the parents in finding a future school. However, upon receipt of a request for a reference, if a pupil has been permanently excluded, if asked, the school is obliged to inform the potential future school about the exclusion.

Evaluation and Assessment

The effectiveness with which the school acts to prevent and tackle bullying is evaluated by the Local Governing Body, by the Head, Senior Leadership Team and class teachers. The policy has due regard for the DfE guidance documents, 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying, Advice for Head teachers, and 'Cyber bullying: Advice for headteachers

Useful Publications / Contacts for Parents:

- The Anti-Bullying Alliance (anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)
- Kidscape (kidscape.org.uk)
- Cyber bullying: DfE guidance ([Cyberbullying Advice for Headteachers and School Staff](#))
- ChildNet International (childnet.com)
- CEOP's Thinkuknow website (thinkuknow.co.uk)
- UK Council for Internet Safety ([uk council for internet safety](http://ukcouncilforinternetsafety.org))
- The UK Safer Internet Centre (saferinternet.org.uk)
- DfE Guidance: ([The use of social media for on-line radicalisation](#))

Designated Safeguarding Leads

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Prevent Strategy Lead is: Chloe Smtih

The Designated Safeguarding Lead for EYFS is: Katherine Clarke

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) are: Sarah Cronin and Kian Kingsley.

The person responsible for safeguarding, including in EYFS, is Vivianne Thompson

Interpretation

In this policy, the term “senior manager” means the School Head and their designated deputies.

This policy applies to all employees in all Schools (save for Schools with their own procedure which shall prevail) and other work environments