

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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Approved by:	Rabia Education Trust

INTRODUCTION

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for preventing bullying at Rabia Girls' School.

RATIONALE

Rabia Girls' will ensure that students are able to learn in a safe and supportive environment, respecting their rights as underpinned by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (Articles 2, 3, 6, 12, 13, 15, 19 and 29 of the UNCRC). It is our duty to prevent violence and immediate harm to our Students, but we also recognise that emotional bullying can be equally, if not more, damaging to a child.

The Independent School Standards Regulations 2014 require schools to have an effective anti-bullying strategy. We have zero tolerance to bullying in all its forms, and no one in our school community, be it staff or Students, should be discriminated against, harassed or victimised based on gender, age, race, disability, religion and belief or sexual orientation (see protected characteristics, Equality Act 2010).

Under the Children Act 1989, bullying is considered a child protection concern, and will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures.

Cyber bullying is potentially a complex issue as it can take place at any time, has a bigger audience and can be disseminated quickly with the click of a button. Under the Malicious Communication Act 1988, it is an offence to send electronic communication with the intent to cause harm or distress.

The school has the power to impose disciplinary penalties for incidents of bullying outside school premises and incidents of cyber bullying (Education Act 2011). This Policy should be read in conjunction with our Behaviour, Safeguarding and Child Protection, safer recruitment, Code of Conduct, Sexting and E-safety Policies.

In developing this policy, we have taken into account the DfE advice on:

- Preventing and tackling bullying (November 2014)
- School support for children and young people who are bullied (March 2014)
- Cyber bullying: Advice for head teachers and school staff (November 2014).

AIMS

We are committed to providing a caring, safe working environment where every student and employee is treated with dignity and respect and where each person's individuality and sense of self-worth within the school is maintained.

The aim of the policy and procedure is to ensure that any complaint of harassment or bullying is effectively and speedily dealt with and that appropriate action is taken to ensure as far as possible that it does not occur again.

This policy will be freely accessible to all staff and all staff will be made aware of this policy as part of their induction programme. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to report incidents to trusted adults and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

OBJECTIVES

The as a whole will work towards maintaining high levels of self-esteem both for students and staff. This will permeate the curriculum and ethos of the school. This means that:

- all staff, trustees, students and parents should understand bullying
- bullying will not be tolerated
- clear procedures for reporting bullying should be understood and followed
- the procedure for investigating and dealing with incidents of bullying should be clearly understood
- we will promote ways of preventing bullying.

EXPECTATIONS

- Staff will listen to children and take allegations of bullying seriously.
- Staff will follow the School procedure as set out in the Bullying/Racist/Homophobic Incident Flowchart.
- Incidents will be fully investigated, and the students involved supported appropriately. Incidents and issues will be reported to the Pastoral Lead.
- Students will report incidents that they witness or are involved in to an appropriate member of staff or trusted adult
- Trustees will be aware of the School's procedures on Anti-Bullying. The numbers of racist and bullying incidents will be reported termly to the Board of Trustees.
- Parents will report incidents and issues to their child's class teacher or appropriate member of staff
- Staff will be aware of the findings of the OFSTED Survey 'No Place for Bullying' (June 2012):and will actively promote strong, inclusive values and spell out how students should interact with each other in order to ensure that Students develop empathy, respect for individual differences and a good understanding of the impact of their behaviour on others.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Definition:

Bullying is unprovoked behaviour by an individual or a group usually repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. It includes cyber bullying via text messages or the internet. It is often characterised by an imbalance of power, which makes it hard for the bullied to defend themselves. Students can at times be bullied for no reason, but often due to prejudice, including race, religion, or culture, special educational needs or disabilities, gender, sexual orientation, weight or socio-economic status.

Definition agreed by the students:

Bullying is when someone hurts someone else or a group of people on purpose. It can be hurting their bodies or hurting their feelings repeatedly.

Bullying can take many forms, but the four main types are:

1. Physical - hitting, kicking, theft using physical aggression and invasion of personal space
2. Verbal - racist, gender-biased or homophobic remarks, threats and name calling or extortion
3. Emotional/Indirect - isolating an individual from activities and social acceptance of their peer group and spreading rumours
4. Technological (Cyber bullying and Sexting) - using technology to hurt an individual, text messages or the internet.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF BULLYING

Students may:

- not want to go to school
- be frightened to walk to and from school become withdrawn from family and friends
- show a decrease in attainment and/or progress in school work change their eating habits; not eating at lunchtimes.
- cry themselves to sleep
- ask for money (may be the victim of extortion)

PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING BULLYING

Incidents of bullying should be reported to a member of the school staff. Complaints will be taken seriously and written records (including letters/ notes to and from parents) will be kept. All incidents should be reported to the Behaviour Lead in the first instance. The degree of seriousness of any incident is a matter of subjective interpretation but should be judged by the effect on the victim.

PROCEDURE FOR INVESTIGATING ALLEGATIONS OF BULLYING

Whenever an incident of bullying has been reported, it is essential that the victim and the alleged bullies are interviewed as soon as possible. Interviews should take place separately.

The victim's interpretation of the incident should not be trivialised. Written notes should be taken of all interviews held (See appendix). Interviews should also be held with other students or adults who may have witnessed the incident.

Staff interviewing students about alleged incidents of bullying should set a good example to students by their behaviour towards each party. They should seek to obtain the true facts by polite, perceptive questioning.

PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH INCIDENTS OF BULLYING

Where the investigation clearly shows that bullying has taken place, action will be taken:

- to support the victim(s)
- to discipline and support the bully or bullies to inform parents of both parties

Any disciplinary action should be designed to help the bully change her behaviour. In some cases where it is appropriate, this will involve meeting with the victim and a member of staff and talking about the bullying from the victim's point of view.

Actions may include:

- offering an apology, either verbally or (preferably) in writing making reparation in some form for damage or distress
- practical remedial work is done to help change the student's behavioural attitude. This may involve writing about the effects of her actions; devising a set of targets for her future behaviour; or considering the parts of the school's code of conduct that have been breached by the bullying behaviour, and how this could be repaired.

Support for victims may take the form of:

- counselling by a member of staff
- role-play to increase assertiveness
- peer-support, through a "buddy" or monitoring scheme

The parents of both the bully or bullies, and the victim(s) will be contacted by letter and invited to the school to discuss the matter with the class teacher and the Behaviour Lead. Parents will be asked to support the school in its actions and to reinforce those actions at home, where appropriate.

In very serious cases of bullying, where a bully is not able or prepared to change her behaviour, a behaviour improvement programme (BIP) will be planned which may include, a fixed-term or even permanent exclusion will be considered as a disciplinary measure.

PREVENTION

Preventative strategies include:

- Character building. We have high expectations of our students and promote exemplary character traits through our Character Education programme.
- Encouraging and facilitating open discussions and debates about differences.

- Creating an inclusive environment and celebrating diversity and success.
- Promoting an ethos of good behaviour, where Students treat one another and their teachers with respect. Our students are reminded of the importance of following in the footsteps of the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) in his tolerance, mercy, forgiveness and respect for others, including those whom he disagreed with.

*“None of you will truly believe until he loves for his brother that which he loves for himself”
(Hadith of the Prophet, peace be upon him).*

- Having an approach to developing social and emotional skills in areas such as empathy and the management of feelings and utilise curriculum opportunities to address bullying.
- Use of opportunities throughout the academic year to raise awareness of the negative consequences of bullying and promoting virtues during Anti-Bullying Week; e-safety day and World Kindness Day.
- Involving Students so that they understand the school’s zero tolerance to bullying and their role in preventing bullying.
- Use of drama and role-play to practise acceptable ways of reacting to aggression and taunts, to help bullies find other ways of behaving, and to increase assertiveness in victims or potential victims. Reflect on and link with the UNCRC and Character Education programme.
- Regular student questionnaires to ascertain students’ perceptions of levels of types of bullying so that staff can react and update procedures accordingly
- Drop in staff room and worry boxes in classrooms to provide additional channels of communication between staff and students
- Ensuring a student support system is in place and that students are confident that complaints will be taken seriously and dealt with swiftly.
- Developing skills and roles for Students to play in particular the student leaders and peer mentors, Anti-Bullying week champions, acts of kindness journal keeping and blogging and tutorial discussions.
- Staff, volunteers and Students signing the Acceptable Usage Policy (AUP). The policy outlines the roles and responsibilities of staff, Students and parents in safely using the internet.
- Providing effective staff training and updates so that teachers and learning support staff having the knowledge and expertise to respond in classroom situations in a way that helps children develop appropriate behaviour.
- Staff being aware of the school’s policies and procedures and the importance of maintaining a positive, inclusive school culture.
- Regular slot in staff meetings, where necessary, to discuss students who need monitoring especially during breaks.
- Involving parents so that they are aware of the procedures to follow if they have concerns, feel confident that their concerns will be taken seriously and help reinforce good behaviour at home (see flowchart). Parents will be expected to promote positive behaviour in students, and to support the school in dealing with any instances of misbehaviour.
- Applying disciplinary measures fairly and consistently (see Behaviour policy), considering the needs of vulnerable students, supporting the victim and considering the motivations behind bullying, the perpetrator may also need support.

Disciplinary actions have four main purposes, namely to:

- Impress on the perpetrator that bullying behaviour is unacceptable
- Deter the perpetrator from repeating that behaviour
- Send a clear message to other students and deter others from such behaviour
- Hold students who bully to account and ensure that they face up to the harm they have caused, learn from it and give them the opportunity to put right the harm they have caused.

Our approach is a continuous process that includes: challenging those responsible, supporting the victims and perpetrators and reporting incidents.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Behaviour Lead will:

- Regularly review incident logs to reveal any patterns with individual Students or groups.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of strategies and actions taken.
- Engage with and inform multi-agency teams as necessary.
- Review the anti-bullying and behaviour policies annually.
- Continually develop best practice based on knowledge of what works.

USEFUL SOURCES

1. Racist perspectives
Practical ideas and activities. www.garp.org.uk
2. Oxfam Educational Resources
Free online teaching resources, including lesson plans and assemblies.
www.oxfam.org/education/resources
3. Global Teaching
Materials available to support a global dimension to the curriculum.
www.globalteacher.org.uk/resources
4. Britkids
Anti-racist bullying website. www.britkids.org
5. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444864/Supporting_bullied_children.pdf
6. <http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/advice/support>
7. BIG award <https://www.bullyinginterventiongroup.co.uk/index.php>
8. KIDS space <http://www.kidscape.org.uk/>



9. Think U Know: resources provided by Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) for children and young people, parents, carers and teachers.
10. Digizen: provides online safety information for educators, parents, carers and young people.
11. Advice on Child Internet Safety 1.0: The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) has produced universal guidelines for providers on keeping children safe online
12. <https://www.randomactsofkindness.org/kindness-ideas/1015-start-a-kindness-journal-or-blog>