

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Applicable to:	RGS Guildford
Author(s):	Assistant Head Pastoral (DSL)
Executive owner:	Senior Deputy Head
Date of last review:	June 2026
Date of next review	Trinity 2027

1. Aims and Objectives

The Royal Grammar School, Guildford and RGS Prep (together, “the School”) are committed to providing the highest standard of education and pastoral care. This policy reflects the School’s values, ensuring clarity and consistency for pupils, staff and parents.

Throughout this policy, the terms ‘child’, ‘pupil’ or student’ are used to refer to all those attending the School. At the time of publication, the school is a boys’ school but is preparing to become co-educational. Nursery, Reception (Shell) and Year 3 at RGS Prep, and Year 12 (Lower Sixth) at RGS Senior will become co-educational from September 2027. Year 7 (1st Form) at RGS Senior will become co-educational from September 2028.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School’s Safeguarding Policy and is underpinned by *Keeping Children Safe in Education*. *Bullying is recognised as a form of child-on-child abuse and will always be treated as a safeguarding concern where appropriate.*

The School community is based upon respect, integrity and inclusivity. Therefore, the School is committed to providing a safe and caring environment that is free from disruption, violence and any form of harassment so that every student can fully realise their potential. The RGS expects students to treat members of staff with courtesy and co-operation so that they can learn in a relaxed; but purposeful atmosphere.

All students should care for and support each other. Parents / guardians have an important role in supporting the School in maintaining high standards of behaviour. It is essential that there are consistent expectations of behaviour and that the school and home co-operate closely together. Acceptance of this policy forms part of our standard terms and conditions.

Bullying can cause immense psychological and emotional damage and may even lead to suicide. Bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination will not be tolerated. The RGS treats all students and their parents fairly, with consideration and we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff and the School. Any kind of bullying is unacceptable.

2. Definition of bullying

Bullying (child on child abuse) is recognised as a form of child-on-child abuse and will be treated as a safeguarding concern in line with KCSIE. All cases will be reported to the DSL. There is more information on child-on-child abuse in the Safeguarding Policy.

Bullying is defined as the **intentional hurting, harming or humiliating of another person**, which may occur repeatedly over time, or as a one-off incident that causes significant harm. Bullying may take place **in person or online** and may involve individuals or groups.

It includes, but is not limited to:

- **Physical:** hitting, kicking, pushing, damaging belongings
- **Verbal:** name-calling, insults, threats, offensive remarks
- **Emotional/Indirect:** exclusion, rumour-spreading, manipulation
- **Cyberbullying:** misuse of technology, social media, messaging or AI-generated content

It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It can involve complicity that falls short of direct participation. Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and intimidatory. It is usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child both physically and emotionally.

Bullying may overlap with or include forms of child-on-child abuse, including:

- Sexual harassment and sexual violence
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships
- Prejudiced-based abuse
- Initiation/hazing behaviours
- Online abuse, including image sharing

Such behaviours will be managed in line with safeguarding procedures and **led by the DSL where appropriate**.

Bullying may target protected characteristics, including:

- Race, ethnicity, religion or belief
- Sex, gender identity or gender expression
- Sexual orientation
- Disability or special educational needs

The School recognises that some students may be particularly vulnerable, including:

- Students with SEND
- Looked-after and previously looked-after children
- LGBTQ+ students
- Students with mental health needs

Additional support and safeguarding consideration will be given in such cases.

The School has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment, sexual violence and harmful sexual behaviours.

This includes:

- Inappropriate sexual comments or “banter”
- Unwanted physical contact

- Sharing of images without consent
- Gender-based harassment

These behaviours are never dismissed as harmless and will be treated as safeguarding concerns.

Bullying is often not an isolated event. Research has indicated that peers are present in 85% of bullying episodes and therefore bullying frequently occurs within a social context. The School will therefore explore the role of all parties involved in any instance of bullying at the RGS, including “followers” and “bystanders”.

Students who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, e.g. becoming shy and nervous, showing uncharacteristic signs of aggression, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be changes in work patterns, a lack of concentration, or truancy.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

All Staff will maintain a vigilance for the signs of bullying and take all reports of bullying seriously. Staff will act immediately to safeguard students and record and report concerns promptly. The DSL or a DDSL will take lead responsibility for safeguarding concerns raised and assess risk determining the thresholds for intervention. They will also liaise with external agencies where necessary. Pastoral Leaders will investigate incidents, implement support and behaviour strategies and monitor ongoing situations. Trend analysis will be reviewed regularly by the Senior Deputy Head, Assistant Head (Pastoral & DSL) and the Heads of Section by monitoring and reviewing CPOMS data.

Students are expected to treat others with respect, report concerns promptly and support peers by challenging inappropriate behaviour safely.

4. Procedures for reporting and responding to bullying

Students are encouraged to report any instances of bullying to any member of staff or through the ‘Speak Up’ form found on the SharePoint homepage. The member of staff to whom it was reported or who first discovers the situation, will control the situation, de-escalate, reassure and support the students involved.

Staff should inform an appropriate member of the pastoral team as soon as possible, usually the Head of Section, Head of Year, Assistant Head (Pastoral & DSL) or the Senior Deputy Head.

All students directly involved will be interviewed individually and may be asked to write an immediate account of events.

The relevant member of the pastoral team will calmly explain the range of disciplinary measures that are potentially involved including restorative conversations where appropriate. Educational conversations will occur and projects will be considered. Tutors should be informed. In very serious incidents, the Headmaster should be informed.

The Head of Section, Head of Year or Form Tutor will determine, in consultation with the Assistant Head (Pastoral & DSL) or Senior Deputy Head, an appropriate strategy and plan of action to combat the bullying.

The victim will be offered appropriate support which may include pastoral support, counselling and strategies to help themselves.

The Head of Section, in consultation with the Head of Year and Form Tutor will oversee the implementation of the strategy, including monitoring the situation to ensure that the bullying does not recur. Where appropriate, the parents of those directly involved should be informed by the tutor, Head of Year, Head of Section, Assistant Head (Pastoral & DSL) or Senior Deputy Head.

Appropriate sanctions will be determined by the Senior Deputy Head in consultation with the Assistant Head (Pastoral & DSL), Head of Section or Head of Year. This may involve referring the incident to the Headmaster. Any instance of bullying will be recorded by the Head of Section, Head of Year, Assistant Head (Pastoral & DSL) or Senior Deputy Head so that any patterns of bullying can be identified. All documentation relating to student files will be added onto CPOMS.

5. Sanctions

Bullying will not be tolerated at the RGS. Those who engage in bullying can expect stern sanctions. Parents of a student involved in bullying may be asked to come into School to discuss the issue. Any student who continues to bully can expect to have their membership of the School community reviewed by the Headmaster.

In very serious cases, and only after the Headmaster has been involved, it may be necessary to make a report to the Police or to the Social Services where the CSPA advice line will be used. However, it is the policy of the RGS to attempt to resolve such issues internally under the School's own disciplinary procedures, unless the matter is of such gravity that a criminal prosecution is likely.

A key facet of the School's disciplinary procedures is to hold students to account for their behaviour and to help them face up to the harm they have caused. It is important that students develop their emotional intelligence and empathy by learning to behave in ways which do not cause hurt in the future. Moreover, students need to learn how they can take steps to repair the harm they have caused. All situations of bullying are different and have varying contexts that they occur within and is in line with contextual safeguarding and the school's Behaviour policy.

6. Strategies for the prevention and reduction of bullying

Changing the attitude and behaviour of students involved in bullying is a key objective of the positive procedures used by the School and therefore building the self-confidence and self-esteem of all individuals is the key preventative measure.

The School stands to educate all members of its community to appreciate the importance of mutual understanding and respect in their dealings with each other. This objective may be achieved through any of the following means:

- Raising awareness through assembly talks.
- Consistent and immediate response to incidents.
- Raising awareness through staff training, with regard to the signs of bullying and how to reduce the risk of bullying at times and places when it is most likely.
- Discussion in tutor groups: the care of form tutors, form prefects and mentors.
- Meetings between senior students and members of staff and school councils.

- Communication with parents including the Pastoral Newsletter.
- The use of appropriate teaching materials in PSHME and other curriculum areas.
- The School reserves the right to investigate incidents that take place outside school hours, on school visits and trips and that occur in the vicinity of the school, involving our students.

The School's anti-bullying policy will be displayed:

- In the School Calendar.
- On the School website.
- In the Medical Room where details of various help organisations are also displayed.
- An abbreviated form will be displayed in every classroom.

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at the RGS. This means that any member of the School community who suspects that bullying is happening is expected to tell a member of staff, a prefect or a class mentor.