



Preventing and Tackling Bullying Policy

1. Purpose:

1.1 The Reach Free School Preventing Bullying Policy outlines what The Reach Free School will do to prevent and tackle bullying. The school ethos of Achievement, Community and Enjoyment is untenable if an anti-bullying culture is not established from the outset.

2. Principles:

2.1 The Reach Free School:

- Supports staff to promote positive relationships and identify and tackle bullying appropriately.
- Ensures that pupils are aware that all bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively; that pupils feel safe to learn; and that pupils abide by the ethos of the school.
- Reports back to parents, guardians or carers regarding their concerns on bullying and deals promptly with complaints.
- Encourages parents, guardians and carers to work with the school to uphold the Preventing Bullying policy.
- Seeks to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere and utilises support from relevant organisations when appropriate.

3. Definition of Bullying and Cyberbullying:

3.1 Bullying: is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case. Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online. Low-level disruption and the use of offensive language can in itself have a significant impact on its target. If left unchallenged or dismissed as banter or horseplay it can also lead to reluctance to report other behaviour. Early intervention can help to set clear expectations of the behaviour that is and isn't acceptable and help stop negative behaviours escalating. ("Preventing and Tackling Bullying" DfE July 2017)

3.2 Cyberbullying: The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click.

The Education Act 2011 amended the power in the Education Act 1996 to provide that when an electronic device, such as a mobile phone, has been seized by a member of

staff who have been formally authorised by the headteacher, that staff member can examine data or files, and delete these, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone.

If an electronic device that is prohibited by the school rules has been seized and the member of staff has reasonable grounds to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, they must give the device to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable. Material on the device that is suspected to be evidence relevant to an offence, or that is a pornographic image of a child or an extreme pornographic image, should not be deleted prior to giving the device to the police.

If a staff member finds material that they do not suspect contains evidence in relation to an offence, they can decide whether it is appropriate to delete or retain the material as evidence of a breach of school discipline. ("Preventing and Tackling Bullying" DfE July 2017)

4. Forms of Bullying covered by this Policy

4.1 Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types of bullying including (but not limited to):

- Bullying related to age
- Bullying related to disability
- Bullying related to race, religion or culture
- Bullying related to special educational needs
- Bullying related to appearance or health conditions
- Bullying related to sexual orientation
- Bullying related to gender reassignment
- Bullying related to pregnancy and maternity
- Bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances
- Sexist or sexual bullying
- Cyber bullying
- Identity based bullying

4.2 Bullying behaviour can include the following hurtful behaviours:

- Name-calling, taunting, teasing, mocking and making offensive comments
- The use of prejudicial language, directly or indirectly
- Offensive, threatening or personalised graffiti or other written material
- Excluding people from groups
- Gossiping and spreading hurtful or untruthful rumours
- Kicking, hitting, pushing
- Taking belongings
- Cyber bullying – including sending inappropriate, offensive or degrading text messages, emails or instant messages, setting up websites or contributing content to social networking sites that are designed to embarrass or upset individuals or collective exclusion of individuals from social networking sites.

4.3 It is noted that not all hurtful behaviour is bullying, but all reported hurtful behaviour will be taken seriously and resolved at the earliest opportunity.

5. Preventing, Identifying and Responding to Bullying

5.1 The Reach Free School will:

- Actively provide systematic opportunities to develop pupils' social and emotional skills, including their resilience.

- Consider all opportunities for preventing bullying including through the curriculum, through displays, through peer support and through the Reach Council.
- Work with staff and outside agencies to identify all forms of prejudice-driven bullying.
- Train all staff including teachers, assistant teachers, senior leaders, administrative and premises staff to identify bullying and follow The Reach Free School's policy and procedures on preventing and tackling bullying.
- Actively create 'safe spaces' for vulnerable children and young people.
- Issue consequences to any pupil or group of pupils found to be responsible for bullying another pupil or group of pupils in line with The Reach Free School Behaviour Policy.
- Ensure that where it is considered that there is a serious risk of significant harm to a pupil as a result of bullying, it is reported to the Designated Senior Lead for child protection who will alert the appropriate agencies.

5.2 Involvement of Pupils

The Reach Free School will:

- Ensure pupils know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying.
- Ensure all pupils are aware of the range of consequences, which may be applied against those engaging in bullying.
- Offer support to pupils who have been bullied.
- Work with pupils who have been bullying to address the root cause of their behaviour.
- Regularly canvas pupils' views on the extent and nature of bullying.
- Involve students in anti-bullying campaigns in schools.
- Publicise the details of helplines and websites.

5.2 Liaison with Parents, Guardians and Carers

The Reach Free School will:

- Ensure that parents, guardians and carers know whom to contact if they are worried about bullying.
- Ensure parents, guardians and carers know about the complaints procedure and how to use it effectively.
- Ensure parents, guardians and carers know where to access independent advice about bullying.
- Work with parents and the local community to address issues beyond The Reach Free School gates that give rise to bullying.

5.3 Bullying which occurs outside school premises

School staff members have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises. Sections 90 and 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 say that a school's disciplinary powers can be used to address pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff, but only if it would be reasonable for the school to regulate pupils' behaviour in those circumstances. This may include bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and acted on. The headteacher will consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will be informed.

6. Procedure

6.1 The Reach Free School will build positive relationships through discussions and activities in REACH Time, Community Common Room, assemblies and all subject areas. There are specific 'relationships' and 'anti-bullying' units in the REACH time programme (see scheme of learning).

- We will provide additional support for groups of pupils who require self-esteem and assertiveness development.
- We will operate clear rewards and consequences procedures across The Reach Free School in relation to preventing and tackling bullying.
- We will encourage pupils to speak out – not just victims but the 'silent majority' also.
- All adults in the school will be prepared to respond to information offered.
- Expectations around behaviour are dealt with at the Transition Parents Meeting for incoming year 7 pupils and during the in-year admission process.

Instances of bullying will be dealt with in the following way:

6.2 Initial Problems

Step 1a - Report to any adult in the first instance or use the Report Bullying form on the school website

Step 2a - Deputy Head of House takes statements from all involved

Step 3a - Deputy Head of House (with support from another member of staff if necessary) conducts a restorative justice meeting (if pupils feel comfortable to do so)

Step 4a - Deputy Head of House calls parents to inform them of what has taken place and logs details on Arbor

Step 5a - Appropriate consequences issued

6.3 Recurrent Problems

Step 1b - Report to Deputy Head of House or Head of House or use the Report Bullying form on the school website

Step 2b - Head of House meets pupils

Step 3b - Head of House calls parents and directs pupils to records on Arbor

Step 4b - Head of House logs on Arbor

Step 5b - Appropriate consequences issued

6.4 Continued Problems

Step 6 - Head of House seeks advice from Deputy Headteacher

Step 7 - Meeting held with parents

Step 8 - Risk Reduction Plan drawn up

In the event that the bullying is ongoing, despite previous interventions, sanctions and meetings, the matter will be dealt with by the Headteacher, which may result in exclusion.

7. Responsibilities

7.1 This policy is only effective if it ensures that the whole school community understands that bullying is not tolerated and understands the steps that will be taken to both prevent and respond to bullying.

7.2 It is the responsibility of:

- School Governors to take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy.
- Governors, the headteacher, senior leaders, teaching and non-teaching staff to be aware of this policy and implement it accordingly.
- The headteacher to communicate the policy to the school community and stakeholders
- Pupils to abide by the policy.

8. Links with Policies:

Behaviour policy
Complaints policy and procedure
Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
PSHE policy
Equality Scheme
SEND policy

9. Monitoring & Review

The Reach Free School will review this policy at least once every two years or when incidents occur that suggest the need for review.

Created: January 2013

Revised: November 2022

Ratified by the Governing Body: October 2013

Date of Last Review: November 2022

Date of Next Review: Autumn 2024

Change History	Date	Change(s) Made	Change Author	EDI ¹
V1.0		Policy created	NSI	
V1.1		Minor amendments to the wording of the policy	RBO	
V1.2		Updated to reflect Preventing and tackling bullying (July 2017) and online reporting.	ASM	
V1.3		Updated to include Cyberbullying definition, reflect STEPS therapeutic approach to behaviour management and introduction of Deputy Head of House role. Minor amendments to the wording of the policy.	ASM	
V1.4		Included reference to identity based bullying	SHO	
V1.5	Nov 2022	Policy reviewed - minor changes to the wording in sections 3.2, 4.2, 5.3, 6.1 and 7.2	RBO	Yes

¹ Any changes or revisions to the policy have considered equality, diversity and inclusion.