

Riverside School

'Respect and Protect'

Anti-Bullying Policy

Reviewed and agreed by Governing Board – 22 March 2018

To be reviewed biennially.

Next review – spring 2020 by Governors' Student Development Committee

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Statement of intent

At Riverside we believe that everyone within the school community has the right to work, play and socialise in an environment where they feel safe and happy. Everyone has the right not to be bullied.

Bullying is an unacceptable and insidious activity in schools which can have a profound and debilitating effects on the individuals concerned (as bullies, victims or observers), and on the whole school community.

At Riverside we are committed to dealing with and preventing bullying within the school. We want to empower our students and support them in developing ways of preventing and counteracting bullying.

If bullying does occur at Riverside, we want students to let us know and to have confidence that the bullying behaviour will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We hope and expect that anyone who knows that bullying is happening within the school will tell us. We believe that we are a 'telling' school.

What is bullying?

Bullying is the deliberate, and often persistent use of verbal, psychological, emotional, social or physical aggression with the intention of hurting or undermining another person, usually someone who is powerless to resist. Bullying can be direct or indirect and will almost invariably result in pain or distress to the victim.

Some types of bullying are:

- Physical bullying
- Insulting someone's family or friends
- Racist bullying
- Homophobic bullying
- Sexist bullying
- Teasing someone about their disability
- Ignoring or deliberately leaving someone out of a group
- Insisting someone do something they don't want to do or preventing them from doing something they do want to do
- Malicious text messages , emails or messages via social media
- Making fun of someone because they find something difficult
- Making fun of someone because of how they look and behave
- Deliberately making someone feel bad about themselves

Not all disagreements or arguments between people could be classed as bullying. It is acceptable to have a difference of opinion with someone and tell them what your view is - this is not the same as bullying them.

Bullying is when someone deliberately or persistently tries to make another person feel bad. Staff at Riverside work hard to ensure that not only is all and any bullying reported, but that students understand what it is to be bullied.

Why do some people bully?

Some reasons why people bully are:

- They are being bullied or have been bullied themselves and want to take their anger or frustration out on someone else
- The person they pick on annoys or unsettles them in some way
- They have seen people they respect use bullying behaviour
- They have never been told that this kind of behaviour is wrong
- They feel pressurised into acting this way by other people
- They have already been labelled as a bully and feel that nobody expects any different from them

How we aim to prevent bullying at Riverside

At Riverside we aim create a positive environment where bullying will not happen by ensuring that:

- All students understand and abide by the school rules
- All staff model good behaviour at all times – our staff must be aware of and respect others' feelings at all times.
- All staff regularly explore and examine key points of this policy routinely with students to ensure everyone understands that bullying is not tolerated at Riverside.
- Key points of this policy have been produced in *Communicate in Print* form

What students should do if they feel someone is bullying them:

- Tell or signal for them to stop
- Tell a member of staff
- Tell a friend or any other adult you trust
- Try not to let yourself be provoked into retaliating verbally or physically – this will not help in the long run

What students should do if they think someone else is being bullied

- Tell a member of staff
- Tell a friend or any other adult you trust

Guidelines for Riverside staff

- Always listen to any student who reports bullying
- Always be alert to any situation which could develop into bullying
- Always offer support/intervention if students are unable to resolve disagreements amicably

- Always communicate with all those involved in the disagreement
- Always be sensitive to the location of any discussions that take place, and respect confidentiality
- Always acknowledge the feelings of the students involved
- Remember that an angry or upset student will generally need time out on their own to calm down. Do not try to insist that they apologise for their behaviour before they are ready to do so
- Always report the incident clearly and immediately – the school’s SOLAR System and incidents of discrimination pack may need to be used
- In the majority of cases, (unless there is a sound reason not to), parents should be contacted - ensure this is done sensitively. All incidents will be followed up and monitored by the school’s senior management team

Reparations and sanctions

The school has a wide range of sanction choices to tap into according to the levels of understanding of the students concerned to ensure that the seriousness of the concern is recognised and dealt with so that any bullying is stopped (see *Behaviour Management Policy* for details).

However, the fundamental principles in all cases is reparation and reconciliation so that any student who has been bullied can feel safe, and preferably enjoy the company of the bully after reconciliation. Although this cannot always be guaranteed.

Information for parents

If you worried that your child may have been bullied at school, please inform your child’s teacher immediately. Equally, please inform the school if you are worried that your child may be bullying others. We will always investigate the incident and will report back to you. If you are in any way dissatisfied with our actions, you may follow this up through our complaints procedure.

‘Respect and Protect’ / Anti-Bullying Week

In partnership with Woodside, Riverside holds an annual ‘Respect and Protect / Anti-Bullying Week’ in November where classes, groups and individual students assess and report, (with adult help if necessary), the effectiveness of the school’s Anti-Bullying Policy, procedures, culture and atmosphere.

Team 1 and 2 students discuss issues either wholly verbally, or verbally assisted by various augmented communication approaches such as Makaton.

Students from Teams 3, 4 and 5 deploy a range of other approaches such as pictorial validation exercises, giving an anti-bullying bracelet to a friend, Hands of Friendship circle etc.

Role of the Head Girl/Head Boy

The Head Girl/Boy review the Policy during the *Respect and Protect* week, leading a group of other Team 1 students.

The Head Girl/Boy also share the Headteacher's Post Box, and students (with or without adult assistance) can write to them with any concerns.

For further information about the Riverside's approaches to keeping students safe, please refer to the following policies, all of which can be found on the school's website under the 'Safeguarding' tab:

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

E-Safety Policy

Behaviour Management Policy