



Ringwood School

Ringwood School Prevention of bullying Policy

POLICY DETAILS

Policy Name	Prevention of bullying policy
Policy Category	Pastoral
Policy Number & Version	October 2021
Replacing/Updating	Prevention of Bullying policy; March 2017
Author	Assistant Headteacher – Student behaviour, personal development and welfare
Statutory, regulatory and/or contractual considerations	
Authorised By	Student Welfare committee – Governing Body
Authorisation date	October 2021
Implementation Date	October 2021
Next Review Date	October 2023 – or earlier in response to any national changes
To be reviewed by	Assistant Headteacher – Student behaviour, personal development and welfare

Policy for the prevention of bullying

1. Rationale:

This policy applies to all students and staff at the school irrespective of their age.

While the policy focuses mainly on the bullying of students by other students, it is recognised that other forms of bullying may occur and this is also addressed.

The policy has been adopted with the involvement of the whole school community.

There is no justification whatsoever for bullying behaviour and at Ringwood School it will not be tolerated in any form.

2. Aims:

- a) To ensure Ringwood School maintain and drive a positive and supportive culture among all students and staff throughout the School by having:
- Respect for others, regardless of differences
 - Care and consideration for other people
 - Honesty and sensitivity
 - The use of reason
 - The readiness to contribute to the welfare of others

Those qualities should be learned and modelled at home and in school. Behaviour which is described as bullying 'flourishes' in the absence of these qualities and takes many forms.

- b) To outline what Ringwood School will do to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying.
- c) To deter any bullying behaviour, detect it when it occurs and deal with it by appropriate and proportionate sanctions including where appropriate fixed term or permanent exclusion.

3. School ethos:

Ringwood School community recognises that bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals; it can create a barrier to learning and have serious consequences for mental wellbeing. By effectively preventing and tackling bullying, our school can help to create safe, disciplined environment, where students are able to learn and fulfil their potential.

4. Responsibilities:

It is the responsibility of:

- The headteacher to communicate this policy to the school community, to ensure that disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, and that a member of the senior leadership team has been identified to take overall responsibility.
- School Governors to take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy.
- All staff, including: governors, senior leadership, teaching and non-teaching staff, to support, uphold and implement this policy accordingly.
- Parents/carers to support their children and work in partnership with the school.
- Students to abide by the policy.

5. **Bullying behaviour:**

Bullying is a behaviour by an individual or a group, **repeated over time** that is **deliberate and persistent** and is based upon **an intention** to hurt, control or adversely affect another person either physically or emotionally. It can include: name calling, taunting, making offensive or prejudicial comments, threats, cyber-bullying, violence, taking belongings, producing offensive graffiti, sarcasm, innuendo, repeating inappropriate memes and lyrics, unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments, exclusion from groups and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.

This includes the same unacceptable behaviours expressed online, sometime called online or cyberbullying. Cyber-bullying is defined as “an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual using electronic forms of contact repeatedly over time against a victim who cannot easily defend himself/herself.”

By cyber-bullying, we mean bullying by electronic media:

- Bullying by texts or messages or calls on mobile phones
- The use of mobile phone cameras to cause distress, fear or humiliation
- Posting threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating material on websites, to include blogs, personal websites, social networking sites
- Using e-mail to message others
- Hijacking/cloning e-mail accounts
- Making threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating remarks in on-line forums

Cyber-bullying may be at a level where it is criminal in character.

It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information in any media including internet sites.

Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by public means of a public electronic communications network, a message or other matter that is grossly offensive or one of an indecent, obscene or menacing character.

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.

If we become aware of any incidents of cyberbullying, we will need to consider each case individually as to any criminal act that may have been committed. The school will pass on information to the police if it feels that it is appropriate or are required to do so.

Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups and might be motivated by actual difference between children, or perceived differences. This is called prejudice based abuse.

Prejudice based abuse or hate crime is any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated by a hostility or prejudice based on a person's real or perceived:

- Disability
- Race
- Religion
- Gender identity
- Sexual orientation

Although this sort of crime is collectively known as 'Hate Crime' the offender doesn't have to go as far as being motivated by 'hate', they only have to exhibit 'hostility'.

This can be evidenced by:

- threatened or actual physical assault
- derogatory name calling, insults, for example racist jokes or homophobic language
- hate graffiti (e.g. on school furniture, walls or books)
- provocative behaviour e.g. wearing of badges or symbols belonging to known right wing, or extremist organisations
- distributing literature that may be offensive in relation to a protected characteristic
- verbal abuse
- inciting hatred or bullying against pupils who share a protected characteristic
- prejudiced or hostile comments in the course of discussions within lessons
- teasing in relation to any protected characteristic e.g. sexuality, language, religion or cultural background
- refusal to co-operate with others because of their protected characteristic, whether real or perceived
- expressions of prejudice calculated to offend or influence the behaviour of others
- attempts to recruit other pupils to organisations and groups that sanction violence, terrorism or hatred.

As a school we will respond by:

- clearly identifying prejudice based incidents and hate crimes and monitor the frequency and nature of them within the school
- taking preventative action to reduce the likelihood of such incidents occurring
- recognising the wider implications of such incidents for the school and local community
- providing regular reports of these incidents to the Governing Body
- ensuring that staff are familiar with formal procedures for recording and dealing with prejudice based incidents and hate crimes
- dealing with perpetrators of prejudice based abuse effectively
- supporting victims of prejudice based incidents and hate crimes
- ensuring that staff are familiar with a range of restorative practices to address bullying and prevent it happening again

Ringwood School recognises that cyber or virtual bullying can occur at all times of the day, with potentially a bigger audience and more accessories as people forward on content at a click. Cyberbullying includes all areas of internet, such as email, social networking sites & internet chat room misuse, mobile threats by text messaging & calls, misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities.

Bullying will not be tolerated as it is contrary to all our aims and values as a school, as well as potentially having lasting consequences including physical harm and undermining of self-confidence. It is harmful to the person that is bullied and to those who engage in bullying behaviour, and those who support them. It can in some cases lead to lasting psychological damage and even suicide. Bullying interferes with a student's right to enjoy their learning and leisure time free from intimidation. Where bullying outside of school is impacting on a student's welfare and learning in school, the school will become involved in the investigation into the bullying.

6. Practice:

6.1: Prevention of bullying:

Ringwood School's response to bullying does not start at the point at which a child has been bullied. Prevention is through the school environment, policy, practice and support as well as education and training.

Ringwood School ensures that students are educated in an inclusive environment where there is an acceptance and tolerance of people with differences to themselves e.g. religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, transsexuality or sexuality and also to those in different situations to themselves. The school challenges the use of prejudice based practice and language which does not uphold the values of tolerance, non-discrimination and respect towards others.

The School celebrates student successes for a wide range of reasons, ensuring acceptance of all our differences is part of a positive ethos and culture. The values of inclusion, respect, tolerance and embracing diversity run through the core of our House system and all members of our school community are expected to uphold these values at all times.

Bullying is a topic that is frequently and openly discussed with all students and staff. Everyone in the school community should understand the term 'bullying' in the wider sense as defined above and should see the eradication of bullying as a shared responsibility.

Staff and student education occurs at:

- **A whole school level** – through assemblies where students will be informed of the school's zero-tolerance to bullying and the actions that will be taken to prevent bullying taking place. This issue will be raised regularly when the whole school will be informed of the progress of the anti-bullying policy and any changes which may be introduced. Students are encouraged to use technology, especially mobile phones and social media positively and responsibly.
- **The school behaviour policy and on-site expectations** encourages students to respect each other, their teachers and their environment, and take responsibility for their actions and the impact these have on others. All staff are committed to consistently upholding the school's behaviour policy.
- **At classroom level** – during tutor time, PSHE lessons and events and within subject topics (where appropriate) students are provided with opportunities to understand bullying behaviours and to develop social and emotional skills, including building their resilience and self-esteem.
- **An individual level** – children who are felt to be at risk of bullying (or who may have suffered from bullying in the past) may be offered additional support and guidance. Peer support is available throughout the school, through our student leadership structure.
- **Involvement in national campaigns** e.g. Anti-bullying week.
- **Work with the wider community and outside agencies** – including Prevent.

All staff involved in the education and/or supervision of students will be made aware of the issue of bullying and the need to apply the School's policy of zero-tolerance consistently when episodes of bullying are witnessed or reported.

The school will continue to develop a "telling" school mentality where bystanders know that it is their duty to inform an adult even if the target is too afraid.

In response to the changing national picture of cyberbullying, Ringwood School frequently evaluates and updates where appropriate its Mobile Technology policy and Acceptable use of ICT policy. This practice includes up-to-date advice and education to all members of the community regarding positive online

behaviour.

Ringwood School recognises that there are particular times when students may feel more vulnerable to bullying – lunch and break times and the beginning and end of the school day. Arrangements are made to ensure that at such times there is adequate supervision available to reduce the risk of bullying incidents. Safe spaces are created for vulnerable young people.

Not all “bullying” is deliberate or intended to hurt. Some individuals may see their hurtful conduct as “teasing” or “a game” or “for the good of” the other person. These forms of bullying are equally unacceptable but may not be malicious and can often be corrected quickly with advice and without disciplinary sanctions. A student who does not respond appropriately to advice or sanctions would receive a sanction commensurate with the actions they have taken.

Ringwood School is proactive at gathering information between students where there might be conflict and develops strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place. The Guidance and Achievement team also invest in specialist skills to ensure all staff understand the needs of all of our students, including those with special educational needs and/or disability and LGBTQ students.

The school will conduct a yearly survey to assess students and parents’ perception of bullying within the school.

Where appropriate the school will liaise with the police and Children’s Services if the bullying is particularly serious or persistent and where a criminal offence may have been committed.

6.2: The role of students:

Students are involved in policy writing and decision making, to ensure they understand the school’s approach and are clear about the role they play in preventing bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders.

Students are involved in anti-bullying campaigns and days throughout the school year.

Students provide peer to peer support when needed through drop in sessions.

Ringwood School will ensure that students know:

- how to express worries and anxieties about bullying
- that there are a range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying behaviours
- how to access internal and external support and websites.

6.3: Parental involvement:

Ringwood School is firmly committed to working in partnership with parents/carers and believes that the best outcomes emerge when professionals and parents/carers are able to work together when bullying occurs.

Through the home-school learning contract, parents/carers are aware that the school does not tolerate bullying and of this policy.

Parents/carers should be aware that any information about bullying in school should be given to the appropriate Guidance and Achievement Leader who will decide who is the best person to resolve the problem. All expressions of concern will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. The old adages – ‘say nothing or you will make it worse’ and ‘stand up for yourself’ should be seen as counter-productive and discouraged.

Parents are encouraged to reinforce the value of good behaviour at home.

It is everyone's responsibility to ensure, whatever the circumstances, that no-one becomes a victim of bullying.

6.4: Responding to bullying:

Ringwood School follows a framework for dealing with bullying incidents to ensure a consistent and appropriate approach across the whole school.

Within the framework, the following steps may be taken when dealing with all incidents of bullying reported to the school:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be passed on by the member of staff who has been approached or witnessed the concern to the Guidance and Achievement Team.
- The school will provide appropriate support for the person being bullied – making sure they are not at risk of immediate harm and will involve them in any decision-making, as appropriate.
- Appropriate members of staff (usually within the Guidance and Achievement Team) will interview all parties involved.
- The designated safeguarding lead will be informed of all bullying issues where there are safeguarding concerns.
- The school will inform other staff members, and parents/ carers, where appropriate.
- Sanctions (as identified within the school behaviour policy) and support for individuals will be implemented.
- If appropriate, and if students agree, a supervised restorative conversation will take place to ensure all students involved have a voice. This gives students the opportunity to reflect on their actions, consider the impact of their actions, and take steps to ensure they are able to move forward positively and to prevent similar incidents occurring again.
- If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved, such as: the police (if a criminal offence has been committed) or other local services including Early Help or Children's Services (if a child is felt to be at risk of significant harm).
- Where the bullying takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including cyberbullying) that has an impact on the daily running of the school, the school will become involved in the investigation. Appropriate action will be taken, including providing support and implementing sanctions in school in accordance with the school's behaviour policy.
- A clear and precise account of the incident will be recorded by the school. This will include recording appropriate details regarding decisions and action taken. The incident will be recorded appropriately, clearly identifying prejudice based incidents and hate crimes.
- If appropriate, wider implications of prejudice based abuse for the school and local community will be recognised and acted upon.
- Arrangements to review the progress for the students involved.

6.5: Cyberbullying:

When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the school will:

- Act as soon as possible after an incident has been reported or identified.
- Provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.
- Encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation.
- Take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible. This may include:
 - looking at use of the school systems;
 - identifying and interviewing possible witnesses;
 - contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary.
- Work with the individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading

and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation. This may include:

- support reports to a service provider to remove content if those involved are unable to be identified or if those involved refuse to or are unable to delete content;
 - confiscating and searching students' electronic devices, such as mobile phones, in accordance with the law and also the school's searching and confiscation policy;
 - requesting the deletion of locally-held content and content posted online if they contravene school behavioural policies.
- Ensure that sanctions are applied to the person responsible for the cyberbullying; the school will take steps to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any additional help that they may need.
 - Inform the police if a criminal offence has been committed.
 - Provide information to staff and students regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online. This may include:
 - advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply;
 - providing advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists;
 - helping those involved to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain.

6.6: Supporting students:

Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Reassuring the student and providing continuous support.
- Offering an opportunity to discuss the experience with their teacher, the designated safeguarding lead, or a member of staff of their choice.
- Being advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how respond to concerns and build resilience as appropriate.
- Working towards restoring self-esteem and confidence.
- Providing ongoing support; this may include: working and speaking with staff, offering formal support, engaging with parents and carers, restorative conversations with other students involved.
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this could include support through Early Help or Children's Services, or support through Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

Students who have perpetrated the bullying will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change.
- A restorative conversation with other students involved
- Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child.
- Providing appropriate education and support regarding their behaviour or actions.
- If online, requesting that content be removed and reporting accounts/content to service provider.
- Sanctioning, in line with school behaviour policy; this may include official warnings, detentions, and removal of privileges (including online access when encountering cyberbullying concerns), isolation and fixed-term or permanent exclusions.
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this may include involvement from the Police, PREVENT or referrals to Early Help, Children's Services, or Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) as appropriate.

6.7: Supporting adults:

Our school takes measures to prevent and tackle bullying among students; however, it is equally

important to recognise that bullying of staff and parents, whether by students, parents or other staff members, is unacceptable. Adults (staff and parents) who have been bullied or affected will be supported by:

- Offering an opportunity to discuss the concern with the designated safeguarding lead, a senior member of staff and/or the headteacher.
- Advising them to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to concerns and build resilience, as appropriate.
- Where the bullying takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including online), the school will still investigate the concern and ensure that appropriate action is taken in accordance with the schools behaviour and discipline policy.
- Reporting offensive or upsetting content and/or accounts to the service provider, where the bullying has occurred online.
- Reassuring and offering appropriate support.
- Working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance.

Adults (staff and parents) who have perpetrated the bullying will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened with a senior member of staff and/or the headteacher to establish the concern.
- Establishing whether a legitimate grievance or concern has been raised and signposting to the school's official complaints procedures.
- If online, requesting that content be removed.
- Instigating disciplinary, civil or legal action as appropriate or required.

7. Monitoring and evaluating:

Each incident of bullying falling within the school definition will be recorded and if applicable any trends monitored. This is reported termly to the Student and Welfare Governors committee and an annual report created.

The Leadership Team and Governors will evaluate the effectiveness of the policy and agree adjustments that may be necessary to address any ongoing concerns. These will be shared with staff, parents/carers and students.

The policy will be reviewed against any new government guidance and will be updated as necessary.

The policy is written with assistance from guidance issues in:

- Department for Education (DfE) "*preventing and tackling bullying*" (DfE- July 2017)
- Cyberbullying: advice for headteachers and school staff
- DfE Behaviour and Discipline in Schools Guidance
- "Supporting children and young people who are bullied: advice for schools".
- "Keeping Children Safe in Education" (DfE 2016)
- "Cyberbullying: Understand, Prevent and Respond: Guidance for Schools". Childnet

With legislative links to:

- Education and inspections Act 2006, 2011
- Equality Act 2011 – section 149
- Children's Act 1989

Working alongside our:

- Behaviour, rewarding and exclusion policy
- SEND policy
- Safeguarding policy
- SMSC and BV curriculum.
- Complaints policy
- Acceptable use of ICT policy
- Mobile technology policy

Useful links and supporting organisations

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Childline: www.childline.org.uk
- Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk
- Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
- MindEd: www.minded.org.uk
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
- The BIG Award: www.bullyinginterventiongroup.co.uk/index.php
- Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk
- The Diana Award: www.diana-award.org.uk
- Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk
- Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk
- Young Carers: www.youngcarers.net
- Changing Faces: www.changingfaces.org.uk
- Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk

Cyberbullying

- Childnet International: www.childnet.com
- Digizen: www.digizen.org
- Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk
- Think U Know: www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk
- The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-forchild-internet-safety-ukccis

Race, religion and nationality

- Anne Frank Trust: www.annefrank.org.uk
- Kick it Out: www.kickitout.org
- Report it: www.report-it.org.uk
- Stop Hate: www.stophateuk.org
- Tell Mama: www.tellmamauk.org
- Educate against Hate: www.educateagainsthate.com/
- Show Racism the Red Card: www.srtrc.org/educational

LGBTQ

- Barnardos LGBT Hub: www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/lgbtq.htm

- Metro Charity: www.metrocentreonline.org
- EACH: www.eachaction.org.uk
- Proud Trust: www.theproudtrust.org
- Schools Out: www.schools-out.org.uk
- Stonewall: www.stonewall.org.uk

Sexual harassment and sexual bullying

- Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAW) www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk