



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

This policy has been written as guidance for staff, parents or carers and pupils with reference to the following guidance and documents:

The Equality Act, 2010

The Children Act, 1989

SEND Code of Practice, 2014

Keeping Children Safe in Education, Sept 2022

Behaviour and Discipline in Schools, July 2013

Behaviour and Discipline in Schools, February 2014

Preventing and Tackling Bullying, 2017

### Introduction

At Rawdah Montessori we are committed to producing a safe and secure learning environment where all children can learn without anxiety. There is no place for bullying at Rawdah. No one should have to 'suffer in silence'. Providing a safe and secure environment is essential to the short and long-term wellbeing of children, to raising achievement, promoting equality and diversity, and ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all members of our school community.

This policy takes into account the non-statutory DfE advice 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (2017) and 'Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff' (2014).

### Aims

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We will ensure that:

- a robust, zero tolerance approach to bullying is implemented by everyone at the school,
- all parents, pupils and staff are aware of the issue of bullying and the long-term effects it can have on the lives of all of those involved,
- measures are put in place to prevent bullying from taking place,
- pupils are involved in developing and reviewing an anti-bullying charter as a means to actively prevent bullying from taking place,
- a peaceful and harmonious community is built with strong shared values,
- prosocial behaviour is actively encouraged,

- pupils are empowered through Islamic teachings, the Montessori peace curriculum, and Responsive Classroom approach to resolve issues of discrimination, ill-treatment and fairness themselves,
- early intervention is prioritised where an issue of potential or actual bullying is raised,
- all parents, pupils and staff know how to implement the anti-bullying policy and procedures,
- all parents are clear about how the school will tackle issues of bullying,
- all issues of bullying are taken seriously, and clear procedures are followed,
- the correct channels for reporting incidents are known to pupils, parents and staff.

## Approach

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At Rawdah, we promote exemplary behaviour and respect for others, tackle all forms of bullying, and prevent them from occurring through effective measures which safeguard the well-being of both pupils and staff. Our goal is to nurture children who will create a society in which everyone is treated with dignity and respect. We use an Anti-Bullying Charter throughout the school to promote all issues relating to bullying, along with effective inclusion of anti-bullying topics within curriculum subjects.

### Definition of Bullying

Bullying is an action taken by one or more children with the deliberate intention of hurting another child, either physically or emotionally. It can be repeated over time or can take the form of a single incident.

Bullying is any behaviour by one child to another that is intimidating, coercive, threatening, or violent. It may be of physical, verbal, or social in nature, or it may be a combination of these. A child who is bullying has reached a stage of cognitive development where he or she is able to plan to carry out a premeditated intent to cause distress to another.

It is recognised that many children will, in the process of developing relationships with other children, experiment with socially unacceptable behaviour. This does not make a child 'a bully' but does require an immediate and clear response from the school. It is also recognised that there are playground games, such as mock fighting, that some children find intimidating. Name-calling is always intimidating and is not tolerated.

## The Effects of Bullying

All forms of bullying are hurtful and may have a devastating effect on those who are bullied.

While some children may recover from bullying, there are others who suffer lasting consequences.

Children who are bullied may see themselves as inadequate and friendless, and suffer from loss of confidence, and low self-esteem.

Bullies may also suffer from long lasting consequences, and if offered no support, may continue with bullying behaviour into their adult lives. For this reason, it is important that they receive support to enable them to change their behaviour.

## Safeguarding Children

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Under the Children Act 1989, a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy DSL in his absence) will report the school's concerns to the Local Authority Safeguarding Children Board. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, the school may need to draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child doing the bullying.

## Identifying Bullying

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### Types of bullying

Pupils can be bullied for a variety of reasons and can also be bullied for no reason.

Specific types of bullying include:

- bullying related to ethnicity, colour, religion, social class or culture;
- bullying related to special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities;
- bullying related to appearance or health conditions;
- bullying related to sexual orientation or assumed sexual orientation;
- bullying of young carers or looked-after children, or related to home circumstances;
- sexist or sexual bullying.

For more details about Cyberbullying see our [E-Safety Policy](#).

Sexual bullying (including cyber-bullying, sexting and grooming) is recognised as a safeguarding issue. For more details see the our [Safeguarding Policy](#).

## **Signs of Bullying**

Pupils who are bullying may demonstrate emotional and behavioural problems, physical problems such as headaches and stomach pains, or signs of depression. Early identification of bullying of pupils at risk is vital. As a small school, our staff build close relationships with all children. We aim to know our children very well, to enable us to look for signs of bullying throughout the school day. A child may indicate by signs of behaviour that he/she is being bullied.

Children may:

- Be frightened of walking to or from school
- Be unwilling to go to school
- Change their route to school
- Be doing poorly in their schoolwork
- Come home regularly with clothes or books damaged
- Become withdrawn
- Become distressed
- Cry themselves to sleep
- Develop eating disorders
- Have nightmares
- Have unexplained bruises, scratches and cuts
- Have their possessions 'go missing'
- Ask for money or begin stealing money
- Refuse to say what's wrong

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## **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups.

What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim, which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyber-bullying and grooming. However, it is also important to recognise that some young people who are being

sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse. Cases of CSE will be covered by the school's Safeguarding Policy and referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Please refer to the school's Safeguarding Policy for more information and for how cases will be handled.

## Cyberbullying

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

Many young people experience the internet and mobile phones as a positive, productive and creative part of their activities and development of their identities; always on and always there. Unfortunately, technologies are also being used negatively. When children are the target of bullying via mobile phones or the internet, they can feel alone and very misunderstood. They may not be able to identify that what is happening to them is a form of bullying, or be confident that the adults around them will understand it that way either. Previously safe and enjoyable environments and activities can become threatening and a source of anxiety. As mobile phone and internet use become increasingly common, so has the misuse of this technology to bully. Current research in this area indicates that cyberbullying is a feature of many young people's lives.

### What is Cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is the use of Information Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else.

Cyber bullying includes sending or posting harmful or upsetting texts, images or other messages, using the internet, mobile phones or other communication technology. It can take many forms, but can go even further than face to face bullying by invading home and personal space, and can target one or more people.

Cyberbullying can take place both between peers and across generations; teachers have also been targets. Age or size are not important. Bystanders can also become accessories to the bullying; for example, by passing on a humiliating image. Cyberbullying can take place at any time and can intrude into spaces that have previously been regarded as safe or personal. The audience can be very large and reached rapidly. It can include threats and intimidation, harassment, defamation, exclusion or peer rejection, impersonation and unauthorised publication of private information or images.

Forms that Cyberbullying can take:

- Threatening, intimidating or upsetting text messages.
- Threatening or embarrassing pictures and video clips sent via mobile phone cameras.
- Silent or abusive phone calls, or using the victim's phone to harass others, to make them think the victim is responsible.
- Threatening or bullying emails, possibly sent using a pseudonym or someone else's name.
- Menacing or upsetting responses to someone in a chat-room.
- Unpleasant messages sent during instant messaging.
- Unpleasant or defamatory information posted to blogs, personal websites, or social networking sites.

### The Problems with Cyberbullying

The difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages means the scale and scope of cyberbullying can be greater than other forms of bullying. Electronically forwarded content is hard to control and the worry of content resurfacing can make it difficult for victims to move on.

People who cyberbully may attempt to remain anonymous, which can be distressing for those being bullied. The person cyberbullying may never be in the same physical space as their target. Some instances of cyberbullying are known to be unintentional. It can be the result of not thinking (something sent as a joke may be deeply upsetting or offensive to the recipient) or a lack of awareness of the consequences – for example saying something negative online about another pupil, or friend that they don't expect to be forwarded or viewed outside their immediate group.

Reports of cyberbullying will be investigated as with any allegation of bullying, with support for the person being bullied and sanctions for the bully carried out in line with school procedures on a case-by case basis.

### Prejudice-Based Bullying

Prejudice-based bullying is any form of bullying (such as physical, verbal, or cyber-bullying) related to an individual's actual or perceived 'protected characteristics' – race, colour or national/ethnic origin, gender, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age or pregnancy/maternity. One in three students report that they have been bullied because of their identity. The identified 'protected' characteristics – for example, disability, race, religion and sexual orientation – lead to a much greater risk of being the victim of bullying.

Prejudice-Related Incidents (like bullying) can take many forms including:

- Verbal: Name-calling and ridicule, such as racist or homophobic remarks
- Visual: Graffiti, gestures, wearing racist or sexist insignia, or showing pictures.
- Incitement: Spreading rumours or encouraging others to participate.
- Cyber: Abusive use of technology such as text messages, Facebook, or email.
- Segregation: Excluding, isolating, ignoring or avoiding an individual from the activities or social acceptance of their peer group
- Physical: Hitting, pushing, unwanted touching, kicking, threatening with a weapon.
- Property: Theft or damage to personal property; extortion.

These may arise because an individual is seen to be different. Children may be seen as different because of their:

- Ethnic origin, skin colour, nationality or culture, including Travellers of Irish Heritage and Gypsies/Roma (racism)
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation (homophobia or biphobia)
- Sex or gender identity (transphobia)
- Disability or Special Educational Needs
- Other reasons or perceived difference including appearance, weight etc.

It may be that children are perceived to have a particular characteristic, or they or they are associated with someone with that characteristic. For example, children who don't fit gender stereotypes may experience homophobic incidents and bullying; young carers of disabled adults may be bullied because they are associated with someone with disability. All these types of incidents should be treated as prejudice-related incidents and addressed accordingly.

Rawdah Montessori's bullying forms and logs reference the protected characteristics so that the characteristic can be logged as the reason for bullying. For instance, if a pupil is bullied because they have a disability then the code (d) for disability would be used so that prejudice based incidents can be tracked.

The school has a duty of care towards its pupils and staff, and takes reports of prejudice-based bullying very seriously. Reports of cyberbullying will be investigated as outlined below as with any allegation of bullying, with support offered for the person being bullied and sanctions for the bully, carried out in line with school procedures on a case-by-case basis.

## Prevention of Bullying

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The prevention of bullying is our starting point. The school behaviour policy makes expectations clear to children about their behaviour with others and promotes positive behaviour. Staff pay careful attention to the design of the physical environment (such as the outdoor play space) and the activities available to the children each day, to maximise opportunities for pro-social development.

Rawdah Montessori will prevent incidences of bullying by:

- Promoting good, compassionate and caring behaviour
- Creating a culture where all pupils and staff treat one another with respect, value differences and develop empathy for others
- By reacting to bullying promptly, reasonably and consistently
- By safeguarding and supporting victims of bullying
- Teaching good anti-bullying practice through the curriculum
- Effective use of curriculum opportunities (e.g. SMSC and Citizenship during Morning Assemblies, Morning Meeting and Closing Circle, as well as creative arts and role play)
- Involving the children in developing the school anti-bullying policy
- Promoting a culture of open and honest reporting of bullying among pupils and staff
- Applying clear sanctions to bullying in a consistent manner so that pupils understand that there is zero tolerance of any form of bullying.
- Effective leadership and management
- Good staff training and awareness on anti-bullying, effective behaviour management using Montessori and Responsive Classroom methods, and on teaching SMSC and the equality act 2010.
- Providing pupils with a confidential way in which to report bullying with ease
- Providing staff with training on how to identify and deal with bullying
- Ensuring that senior management and staff are up to date with developments in technology so policies can be revised accordingly.

### Classroom Strategies

- Morning Meeting (circle time, halaqah) with the teacher as facilitator, encouraging the children to raise issues and talk about them
- Creating Class Rules (see our [Behaviour Management Policy](#))
- Raising awareness of bullying and behaviour as an issue through discussion, brainstorming, role play or drama

### Whole School Strategies

- All staff watching for early signs of distress in pupils
- Clarity of approach with all staff
- Assemblies
- PSHE programme
- Developing a school Code of Conduct alongside Class Rules
- Training

### Strategies for Children

- Stay calm
- Be confident
- If they are not happy with what is happening, tell the other person(s) firmly to stop
- Walk away from a situation they cannot resolve
- Tell an adult or friend

All staff will:

- Encourage self esteem
- Reassure each child that they are valued
- Give them responsibilities to make them feel valued
- Praise their achievements
- Listen carefully to them
- Make sure they know that bullying is not their fault
- Encourage them to do things they are good at
- Encourage them to play with others if they feel isolated

### Working With Parents

We will work with parents /carers to:

- provide a clear message that we do not tolerate bullying
- ensure that parents know the procedures to use if they need to report any concerns they may have about their child being bullied
- ensure that parents feel confident that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously and investigate and resolve it as necessary

Parents can help by:

- Encouraging their children to speak openly by asking them directly and saying they are concerned and want to help,
- Not promising that anything will be kept a secret, but reassuring their child and they will help them sort out the problem,
- Observing their reactions and helping them to develop social skills and confidence if required.

## Raising a complaint

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Much of the behaviour which leads to both bullying and intimidation is difficult to observe, or can be seen as innocent when it is not. It is therefore essential that staff listen carefully to what children say and watch for any signs that a child may be being intimidated. The staff must always pass on their concern to the other members of staff working with the child and report these concerns to the Headteacher.

The following information is conveyed to pupils to ensure that they know what to do if they or someone else is being bullied.

### 1. If you feel you are being bullied

- Tell someone.
- If you feel you are being bullied, you can tell a member of staff and/or your parent/carer (anyone you feel safe to talk to). It is not weak to do this.
- If you cannot tell anyone at school, you can tell your parents.
- Friends of those who feel bullied should let staff know of bullying incidents.
- No one deserves to be bullied. You have a right for this not to happen to you.

### 2. If you are a pupil and witness bullying behaviour.

- Support the child who you observed being bullied by offering your friendship and making it clear that in your opinion what is happening to them is unkind.
- Encourage them to speak out on their own behalf, and if the situation is safe make it clear to the bullies that this behaviour is not right and not supported by others
- Accompany the child who you observed being bullied to a trusted adult, or suggest that you speak to an adult on their behalf.

### 3. If you are a member of staff

- Reassure and support the pupils involved
- Advise them that you are required to pass details on to their Class Teacher and/or to the Behaviour Officer
- The named person will keep a log of all complaints or incidences of bullying and record the way in which they were dealt.

### 4. If you are a parent

Bring the issue to the attention of any member of staff, or to the Headteacher, or the Behaviour Officer/Deputy.

#### Anti-Bullying Procedure

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1. The child who has experienced the bullying will be interviewed by their class teacher, who may ask them to write an immediate account of events.

The class teacher may also invite the child to discuss their own reaction and behaviour towards the child who bullied them. The process for dealing with the incident will be clearly explained to them. The class teacher may give them further support and advice, if deemed appropriate.

2. Once the class teacher is clear that a bullying incident has occurred, the child who was responsible for the bullying will be interviewed, as will any others related to the incident. Each will be asked to write or tell an immediate account of events. The process for dealing with the incident will be clearly explained to them. Details of the incident will be recorded in all the pupils' files.
3. The Behaviour Officer is copied in, and will record the incident as a bullying incident. The class teacher will discuss with the Behaviour Officer what the appropriate and most helpful course of action is. This may include:
  - A formal bullying warning where it is made clear what the bullying incident was, and what would constitute a continuation of the bullying, including discussion of the incident or process in a hurtful way.
  - Clear strategies on what work would help both children (or groups of children) to be kind and loving with each other.

4. If the Behaviour Officer decides it is appropriate, or if it is a pupil's second offence, the Headteacher may become involved and the parents of the child who was bullying will be informed by email or telephone.
5. If the incident was very serious and required further action, then the following sanctions may be applied in accordance with the school's Behaviour Management Policy:
  - i. Formal school warning.
  - ii. Suspension
  - iii. Exclusion
6. If the pupil is suspected to be suffering from or is likely to suffer from significant harm as a result of a bullying incident, staff will report their concerns to the MASH safeguarding team. (see Safeguarding Policy). If the bullying is not a safeguarding issue, the advice of external agencies may be sought to support the pupil or to tackle an underlying issue which has contributed to a pupil engaging in bullying.

### Record Keeping and Monitoring

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We strive to ensure that bullying plays no part in our school community and is not tolerated in any form. However, we acknowledge that it may be inevitable that bullying in some form will take place. All staff must be vigilant in looking for bullying, addressing it straight away, and passing it on as appropriate, so that it can be dealt with promptly and thoroughly, and support can be given to all involved.

All possible bullying incidents are recorded, however minor, so that incidents can be accurately recorded without fear of labelling a child. These incidents are monitored for patterns and evaluated over time to identify whether the incidents fall into the category of bullying. Bullying records are made and stored in the school's 'Anti-Bullying Log', which is kept and stored securely and only accessed by the Senior Management and Leadership Team. This enables Leadership and Management to have ongoing oversight, to review, look out for patterns and evaluate our approach to the prevention of bullying.

Some forms of bullying are illegal, and in these instances should also be reported to the police or to children's social care.

## Criminal Law

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These are minimum sanctions. In very serious cases it may be necessary to make a report to the Police or Social Services. However, it is the policy of the school to attempt to resolve such issues internally using our own disciplinary sanctions, unless the matter is of such gravity that a criminal prosecution is likely.

It is important to note that although bullying is not a criminal offence in the UK, some types of harassing or threatening behaviour or communications could be a criminal offence, for example under the protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003 and the Public Order Act 1986.

If unsure whether a criminal offence has been committed, then assistance should be sought from the police, by the Behaviour Officer or a member of the Senior Management Team. For example, under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety; or to send an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive; a threat; or information which is false, and known or believed to be false by the sender.

The staff will discuss this policy and its implications on their practice at least once every year. Where possible, parents will be invited to contribute to the school's policy and procedures to prevent bullying. The records of bullying offences will be reviewed by the Senior Management Team once a year at their final Review Meeting at the end of each school year.

## Bullying outside of school premises

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When bullying takes place outside of school, it may be by pupils at the school, pupils at other schools, or people not at school at all. Teachers have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises to an extent that is considered "reasonable".

Where the bullying is by pupils at the school, it should be brought to the attention of the child's class teacher by a pupil or parent, or a member of the Senior Management Team. The SLT will investigate the issue in accordance with this policy, and take action if appropriate—though only on school premises, and at times when the pupil is under the lawful control of the school (see our Behaviour Management Policy). The Headteacher will consider whether it is appropriate in these cases to notify the police. If the behaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will always be informed.

In these and other cases, we will advise parents of further steps they can take, including:

- Talk to the local police about problems on local streets
- Talk to the transport company about bullying on buses and trains
- Talk to the head of another school whose pupils are bullying off the premises
- Map safe routes to school, and tell pupils about them
- Talk to pupils about how to handle bullying outside the school premises

#### Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner or if there is any change in statutory guidance or legislation. See 'Policy Review Schedule'.

Adopted in a meeting at Rawdah Montessori on xxx

Signed: xxx and xxx

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#### APPENDIX

##### Our Anti-bullying Charter

"We want Rawdah Montessori to be a safe and secure place where everyone is supported and encouraged to be the best they can be."

How can we keep our school a safe and happy school?

- 😊 Respect each other
- 😊 Include one another
- 😊 Be friendly and polite
- 😊 Show consideration
- 😊 Share with others
- 😊 Make people feel welcome
- 😊 Support each other
- 😊 Don't make people feel alone
- 😊 Keep your eyes open to make sure others around you are okay
- 😊 Help each other in situations that upset them
- 😊 Take responsibility for your own actions

All people deserve to:

- Feel safe
- Have friends
- Be ourselves
- Be accepted for who we are
- Have our own opinion
- Be heard
- Be cared for, helped and supported
- Know we're not alone
- Be happy

We understand that bullying is an unfair use of power, which is done on purpose and keeps happening.

We know that the best thing to do if you are bullied or witness bullying is to tell a teacher.

We agree to all the above and will help to make our school a safe and happy place for everyone.

Signed by:

[Signed by all new Pupils annually]

## Review of Policy Dates

REVIEW DATE	REVIEWED BY	SIGNED OFF
31 Oct 2025	Governing Body	Chair: Sohaib Tanvir
	Headteacher	tbc on appointment
Next Review Date	Governing Body	Chair:
31 Oct 2026	Headteacher	