

REPTON SCHOOL WHOLE-SCHOOL POLICIES: P1

ANTI-BULLYING STATEMENT

At Repton we do not accept bullying. We believe that all individuals are of value and worthy of respect. Every pupil deserves to be educated in a safe and secure environment – free from intimidation, threat or harm from any other person. Bullying is unacceptable behaviour at all times.

Bullying is any action that thoughtlessly or deliberately causes pain, humiliation and suffering to another person. It is usually unprovoked, is often repeated and can continue for a long period of time. It can cause great distress to the victim and can take the form of physical acts of violence, persistent taunting and name-calling or exclusion from social groups. It also includes cyber bullying which is abusive behaviour by mobile phone or the internet and the photographing or video-recording of any form of intimidation. Bullying also includes the exploitation of others such as older pupils taking unfair advantage of younger pupils.

If bullying does occur – seek help!

If you are bullied it is important that you seek advice. Bullying thrives on secrecy and does not go away if you do nothing about it. There are many people who are able to help. Your Matron, house tutor, Housemaster/Housemistress, the Chaplain, the Senior Mistress or any other member of staff you feel that you can trust are all experienced in assisting with such situations. You may want to talk to your parents, your house Prefects or enlist the help of a friend.

If you know that someone is being bullied tell one of the above. Your action may save others being the victim of the bully. It is the duty of all members of the community to take action should bullying occur.

Procedures for pupils

(To appear in the Blue Book and on House Notice Boards)

- Always seek help
- Talk to an adult you can trust
- Enlist the help of friends and house Prefects who will ensure that the right help is sought
- Be confident that action will be taken to stop the bullying

PROCEDURES FOR STAFF

Behaviour in pupils that may indicate that they are victims of bullying

- Pupils appear withdrawn, unduly sensitive, cries easily
- Displays lack of confidence and self esteem
- Rapid weight gain or loss
- Truancy
- Physical injuries

NB If pupils display the above symptoms, do not automatically assume that they are victims of bullying. There may be other reasons for such behaviour.

Procedures for members of staff who are approached by the victims of bullying

- Always take the allegation of bullying seriously.
- Do not promise confidentiality but reassure pupils that the situation will be dealt with sensitively.
- Do not tackle the problem on your own; enlist the help of the Housemaster/Housemistress, the Chaplain or the SMT. The SMT and the Housemasters will pass on any information to the Headmaster.
- Always inform the pupil's Housemaster/Housemistress who may consider involving the pupil's parents at some stage.
- Housemasters/ Housemistresses must complete a Bullying Log form which must be sent to the Deputy Head (Pastoral). A copy of the form must be placed in the welfare files of all pupils involved.
- After consultation with the Housemaster/Housemistress suggest strategies to make life easier for the victim.
- Inform pupils what to do if there are any reprisals from the perpetrator.
- Keep written notes of the incident. The Housemaster/Housemistress will keep detailed records of the allegation, the nature of proof, any discussions held and actions taken. These may have to be sent to the Headmaster at a later date if the situation escalates
- After giving assistance to the victim consider the needs of the bully. There must be a commitment from the bully to change his/her behaviour. It is helpful to obtain help from the Chaplain and the Housemaster/ Housemistress. Perpetrators are often emotionally damaged and may require help (professional or otherwise).

If a pupil claims to have been bullied it is useful to ascertain:

- What happened?
- Who was involved?
- Who saw what?
- Where did it take place?
- How often has it happened?
- Do the parents know?
- What proof exists?

It is easier to examine the seriousness of the allegation if the above are known.

Strategies to make life easier for the victim in the short term

Suggest the following:

It is important to tell pupils that the following methods may help to make it easier to cope with the unhappy situation.

- Talk to friends that you can trust.
- Talk to a member of staff.
- Discuss the matter with your parents.
- Do not give in to the bully's threats.
- Try not to be alone with the bully.
- Try to diffuse the situation yourself. Humour could be used.
- In cases of verbal bullying use "blocking" techniques to shrug off the unpleasant remarks.
- Try to remain calm.
- Try not to react in an emotional manner.

Discussions with the bully

When talking to the perpetrator it is important that you do not use bullying techniques to stop the bullying. This may resolve the problem in the short term but in the long term it only reinforces the idea that bullying is an acceptable form of behaviour. It must be made clear to the victim that it is his/her **behaviour** that is unacceptable **not** the pupil him/herself.

Sanctions

Younger pupils sometimes expect a tariff of sanctions to exist for bullying but the older ones realise that this is impossible. The severity of the bullying often depends on the reaction. Pupils should be made aware of this as it prevents the bully from defending him/herself by saying "I was only joking, teasing or play fighting." This may be the case in an isolated minor incident but it is not an acceptable excuse for serious or repeated incidents.

The method of dealing with the perpetrator depends on a number of factors such as the distress of the victim, the severity of the bullying behaviour, the number of incidents, the personal situation of the bully etc. This makes it impossible to list sanctions. However pupils should know that in extreme cases of bullying or in repeated bullying incidents that they risk suspension or expulsion.

Reviewed: August 2010
Date of next review: August 2011



Preventing Cyber Bullying

Introduction and Definition – Cyber bullying

Cyber bullying can be defined as 'the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, to deliberately upset someone else'. It can be an extension of face-to-face bullying, with technology providing the bully with another route to harass their target. However, it differs in several significant ways from other kinds of bullying: the invasion of home and personal space; the difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages, the size of the audience, perceived anonymity, and even the profile of the person doing the bullying and their target.

The following policy document has been produced with reference to 'Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools' produced by the DCSF.

This should be read in conjunction with the appropriate Repton School Policies.

- Anti-Bullying Statement,
- The Child Protection Policy,
- Pupil Behaviour policy as well as the
- Acceptable User Policy

Repton School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils in its care. As is made clear in the Anti-Bullying policy, Repton rejects any and all forms of bullying behaviour.

Cyber Bullying is a form of bullying, although there are some particular features which set it alone from bullying. The key differences are:-

- **Impact** – The scale and scope of cyber bullying can be greater than other types of bullying
- **Targets and Perpetrators** – The people involved may have a different profile to traditional bullies and their targets.
- **Location** – the 24/7 and anyplace nature of cyber bullying
- **Anonymity** – The person being bullied will not always know who is attacking them.
- **Motivation** – Some pupils may not be aware that what they are doing is bullying
- **Evidence** – unlike other forms of bullying the target of the bullying will have evidence of its occurrence.

Procedures to help prevent cyber bullying

As with all aspects of pastoral care, education lies at the heart of our approach. Issues associated with the appropriate use of ICT are discussed both inside and outside the classroom. All pupils follow a structured programme of ICT in the B Block (year 9) and A block (year 10) where pupils are instructed on the responsible use of technology. This

work is supplemented by lessons held in the Lower School Tutorial programme. It is timetabled in for the B Block (year 9) and A block (year 10). In addition to this, pupils are reminded of the need to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain and that they need to show both personal responsibility and accountability in the use of the ever advancing technological field that is open to them. Further reminders of the use of ICT in education is made available via the house system, chapel services and via the use of external speakers.

Where incidents of cyber bullying do occur they are monitored and recorded in the same way as all other forms of bullying.

Support for those being bullied

Cyber bullying is a particularly pernicious aspect of bullying and is recognised as posing significant risk to the welfare of children. Current research into the extent of cyber bullying indicates that it is a feature of many young people's lives. Cyber bullying can have a seriously detrimental impact on a victim for a number of reasons.

- The sense of invasion of an individual's home and personal space.
- The anonymity (at least initially) of the bully.
- The difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages.
- The ability to broadcast upsetting messages and images to a potentially huge audience.
- The opportunity for others to become involved in the bullying activity.

Examples of Cyber Bullying may include

- Threats and intimidating messages sent via computers or mobile phones.
- Cyber-stalking – repeatedly sending unwanted texts or instant messages.
- Pupils who set up website pages and invite others to post derogatory comments about a pupil.
- Pupils who film fights or assaults and circulate them via mobile phones.
- Pupils sending, insulting and vicious text messages or messages of a sexual nature
- Pupils posting fake and/or obscene photographs of the victim on a social networking site.

Advice to Staff

- Tell the target not to retaliate or return messages but keep the evidence
- Give emotional support to the target
- Remind pupil of the need to think about the information they put in the public domain
- As a final resort advice the target to change their contact details or mobile number although impress on the individual that they must not feel they are being punished.
- Try to contain the incident by removing the offensive material from the web.(see LA)
- Contact the host site (social networking site) to make a full report.

Working with the Bully

Once the person responsible has been identified, it is important that sanctions are applied and that the perpetrator is supported in trying to understand the need to change their attitude and behaviour.

Responding to cyber bullying and records

The guiding principles and practices outlined in The Anti-Bullying Statement will underpin our approach when responding to any and all forms of bullying.

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Procedures and Sanctions

- Once the person responsible has been identified, steps are taken to ensure they understand and appreciate the impact of their actions. This is particularly important when dealing with examples of cyber bullying, as the bully may not witness directly the effect their behaviour has had on the victim.
- Pupils are also reminded that misconduct of this kind outside school will be subject to school discipline if the welfare of other pupils or the culture or reputation of the school are placed at risk.
- Misuse of ICT is subject to the school's disciplinary regime.
- Sanctions may include confiscation of mobile phones or restrictions on the use of the internet.
- In serious cases the Headmaster may consider suspension or indeed permanent exclusion.
- Where there are concerns that a criminal act has been committed or that a pupil has been subject to child abuse, the matter may need to be referred to the police and / or children's services.

Cases of Cyber bullying are treated very seriously and appropriate sanctions will always be taken.

- Records of all incidents involving ICT are logged either through the IT coordinator (misuse) or the Pastoral Deputy Head (bullying).

Cyber Bullying and the Law

Although cyber bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws that can apply in terms of harassment as well as threatening and menacing communications. The police will be contacted if there is evidence to suggest the law has been broken. Pupils are entitled to their freedom of expression and respect for their private lives but they must not infringe the rights of others.

Infringement includes, among other things,

- libel and slander,
- bullying,
- harassment and victimisation,
- inciting hatred on racial, religious and homophobic grounds,
- breach of confidentiality and
- breach of copyright.

The following pieces of legislation may have a bearing in any of the above examples.

Obscene Publications Act 1959,

Protection of Children Act 1978,

Public Order Act 1986,

Malicious Communications Act 1988,

Computer Misuse Act 1990 and the

Protection from Harassment Act 1997.

