



R.E.A.L Education Limited

Preventing Bullying Policy

(R.E.A.L Education Ltd.)

(R.E.A.L Independent Schools, Hinckley)

(R.E.A.L Independent Schools, Mansfield)

Last Reviewed: 30/06/2024



1. Context

- R.E.A.L Education and its schools (known as R.E.A.L for the remainder of this policy) are committed to providing a caring, friendly and inclusive environment where all of our learners can engage in a safe and productive environment. The culture is one of positive relationships, empathy and respect for diversity, and bullying of any sort will not be tolerated. Interpersonal skills, relationship building and conflict resolution are core elements of what we do.
- R.E.A.L Education believes that every member of our community has the right to be safe and happy and to feel that they will be protected if they feel vulnerable.
- All members of our community must be aware that bullying is always unacceptable and we want to foster an environment where caring and supportive relationships allow individuals to flourish.
- The intense level of support our learners receive at R.E.A.L enables our staff to develop positive and effective relationships. Staff understand that behaviour is a form of communication of the learner's unmet need. A number of our learners have experienced bullying during their life, which needs to be taken into account when we are dealing with specific cases.

2. Definition

“The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online.” Anti Bullying Alliance

Bullying is an anti-social behaviour, it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated by any member of the R.E.A.L community.

Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour:

- **Verbal:** Name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, graffiti, gestures, discrimination against age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race and ethnicity, sex and sexual orientation, religion or belief.
- **Physical:** Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
- **Indirect:** Can include the exploitation of individuals.
- **Threatening behaviour:** For example extorting money with the threat of violence.
- **Online / Cyber:** Posting on social media, sharing photos, threats by text messaging and calls and misuse of associated technology, social exclusion.



- **Emotional:** Being unfriendly, tormenting, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidation.
- **Sexual:** Unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, sexually abusive comments, exposure to inappropriate images or films.
- **Indirect:** Can include the exploitation of individuals.

3. Objectives of the policy

- To act as a framework for learners, staff, parents/carers and other stakeholders if incidents of bullying take place.
- To support learners to understand what appropriate and positive behaviour is.
- To develop a calm and safe environment to ensure that education is the primary focus.

4. Strategies for Prevention Bullying

At R.E.A.L, the awareness and prevention of bullying can be raised through:

The Curriculum:

- Prioritises the need to support learners in the development of skills for building relationships, respect and working appropriately and positively with others.
- Emphasises the positive aspects of all cultures.

Whole School Approach:

- All staff understand and reinforce the preventing bullying policy throughout all aspects at R.E.A.L. The policy is followed in a timely manner if any incident of bullying is reported.
- Through our personalised approach to learning, respect and trust is embedded throughout everything we do. Learners are encouraged to report bullying as they feel safe to do so.
- Ensuring that all learners complete an e-safety module as part of their induction to R.E.A.L.
- Supporting our learners to gain knowledge and understanding of bullying through PSHE topics e.g. safer internet day, anti-bullying week, kindness and disability awareness days.
- Providing staff with training to ensure understanding of the principles and purposes of the bullying policy, its legal responsibilities, and how to recognise, report and resolve issues.
- Working with parents/carers to increase and improve awareness of bullying through individual support and information sharing.
- Working with the wider community and other agencies to tackle bullying and promote appropriate and positive behaviour.



- Celebrating success.
- Monitoring on a day to day basis by the Head of Behaviour and Attitudes, Head of Safeguarding and Standards and Head of Schools.

Interventions:

- R.E.A.L has the responsibility to support learners who are being bullied. The nature of the interventions will depend on individual needs and the circumstances. Some external support may be sourced e.g. CAMHS.
- It is also important to consider the motivations behind the bullying behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator. Where this is the case, the learner engaging in bullying may need support themselves.
- Some learners are more likely to be the target of bullying because of the attitudes and behaviours they have towards those who are different from themselves. For example, those with special educational needs or disabilities, those who are adopted, those who are suffering from a health problem, in care or those with caring responsibilities may be more likely to experience bullying because of differences.
- These learners are often those who might need greater support to deal with the impact of bullying, for example those who are going through a personal or family crisis. In addition, children with special educational needs or disabilities can often lack the social or communication skills to report such incidents, so it is important that staff are alert to the potential bullying this group faces and that their mechanisms for reporting are accessible to all. There will also be a range of other local or individual factors that result in some learners being more vulnerable to bullying and its impact than others.

5. Reporting and Recording Incidents

Reporting:

The ability to report and record incidents of bullying behaviour is a crucial part of our preventing bullying strategy.

- At R.E.A.L, we aim to make it as easy as possible for our learners to report incidents of bullying and actively encourage them to report anything they see, hear or experience that makes them feel uncomfortable.
- The mechanism for our learners to report bullying should they feel they are being bullied is to their 1:1 support, Learning Manager, group staff, Duty Manager, Designated Safeguarding Leads or Head of Schools. Creating an environment where our learners feel safe to report bullying is an essential part of our ethos, and the way we support a learner to do so and



respond to their reports of bullying is dependent upon their particular learning and communicative needs.

Recording:

- Staff are required to complete a Significant Incident Report Form that can be found on our CPOMS system. These reports are sent to a central system which is managed, analysed and acted upon by the Headteacher, Health and Safety Lead, Designated Safeguarding lead, Behaviour and Attendance Lead and Learning Managers.
- Discussions and follow-up is recorded on CPOMS in line with the low, medium or high risk matrix rating of the incident. Areas of concern are discussed at Senior Leadership Team meetings.
- Significant incidents of bullying and actions are reported to Governors and Directors.
- Records of online bullying are discussed and actioned at the ICT strategy group as a standing agenda item.

Follow-up measures:

Learners who are bullied must be assured that their concerns are taken seriously.

- They will have the opportunity to discuss them with the most appropriate member of staff.
- A multi-disciplinary approach is crucial due to the range of social communication and interaction needs that many of our learners have.
- They will be given support and strategies to deal with their option effectively
- Parents/carers will be informed and involved in every stage of support.

Learners who use bullying behaviour will be helped to see that their actions are totally unacceptable and have serious, possibly long term consequences.

- Learners will be fully supported in recognising and understanding the reasons behind their behaviour and the impact it may be having on others.
- Help and support will be based on the low, medium, high response of the significant incident processes.

In some serious cases of bullying, R.E.A.L Education may conduct a formal investigation, and sanctions will be imposed in line with the behaviour policy. R.E.A.L Education will always be alert to identify the threshold at which bullying becomes a Child Protection matter, at which point it will be formally referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will take things forward in line with the School's safeguarding procedures.



6. Safeguarding children and young people

When there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm', a bullying incident will be addressed as a child protection concern under the Children Act 1989. Where this is the case, the R.E.A.L staff should discuss with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead, report their concerns to their local authority children's social care and work with them to take appropriate action. Full details can be found in Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education in 2024

However, external support can be given to pupils whether or not it is deemed a child protection concern. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, then R.E.A.L 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 engaging in bullying. Full details can be found in Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education and Chapter 1 of Working Together to Safeguard Children.

7. Criminal law

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that 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 school staff feel that an offence may have been committed, they should seek assistance from the police. For example, under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, any person who sends 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, is guilty of an offence if their purpose in sending it was to cause distress or anxiety to the recipient.

8. Bullying which can occur outside school premises

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.

9. Support for staff who are bullied



It is important that schools take measures to prevent and tackle bullying among learners. But it is equally important that schools make it clear that bullying of staff, whether by learners, parents or colleagues, is unacceptable. The department has published a separate advice note which provides advice for headteachers and all school staff on how to protect themselves from cyberbullying and how to tackle it if it happens. Our staff Code of Conduct, whistleblowing procedures and allegations management processes support staff if they are bullied by colleagues.

10. Determination by the Head of Schools of the Preventing Bullying Policy

The Head of Schools will respond within 10 days to any request from a parent/carer to investigate incidents of bullying. It is the responsibility of the Head of Schools to ensure that the Preventing Bullying Policy is published on our website and a copy is available on request. The Preventing Bullying Policy will be reviewed annually.