

Anti Bullying Policy

January 2015



THE JO RICHARDSON
— SUCCESS FOR ALL —
COMMUNITY SCHOOL
— ACHIEVE —

1. Rationale

At Jo Richardson Community School we believe that all students and staff have a right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without the fear of being bullied. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable here; it is wrong and will not be tolerated.

At JRCS, we actively promote the personal qualities that we feel our students should be equipped with during their time at the school:

- Aspire to be our best**
- Commit to our learning**
- Hold high standards in everything we do**
- Involve ourselves in our communities**
- Engage with all opportunities**
- Value, care for and respect each other**
- Establish resilience**

The “V” in the ACHIEVE agenda focuses upon how we value, care for and respect each other. Our anti-bullying policy underpins our commitment to ensuring that all JRCS students feel safe and supported at school.

We believe that all learners are of equal worth and should be enabled to achieve their full potential. We recognise that in order to achieve this, children have the right to be educated in an environment where they feel valued, respected and safe.

Bullying deprives students of this right and denies access to the full curriculum. We believe that students who suffer regular, ongoing bullying cannot achieve their full academic or social potential.

2. Bullying needs to be openly discussed and monitored. It will flourish when:

- It is explicitly or implicitly ignored.
- Pupils are under the impression that it is something which they have to deal with themselves.
- Victims are seen as ‘bringing it upon themselves’.

3. Aims of the policy

- To ensure students understand what bullying is.
- To ensure students feel safe enough to report incidents of bullying concerning themselves or others.
- To ensure that we support the victims of bullying, using school interventions or guidance to outside agencies.
- To ensure that we support and guide the perpetrators of bullying, so that they understand the implications of their actions.
- To ensure that parents feel safe and are encouraged to discuss their concerns with all staff.
- To ensure that staff feel supported in dealing with incidents of bullying.
- To ensure that all adults feel safe in discussing bullying from other adults within the school community, and action is taken to deal with this.

4. What Is bullying?

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures or mocking religious beliefs or customs
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality or transgender issues
- Sexism gender stereotyping, comments related to this

- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber All areas of internet, such as email and internet chat room misuse. Mobile threats by text messaging, sexting (images and comments), BBM (Blackberry messaging) and calls. This also includes the misuse of associated technology, ie, camera and video facilities, as well as any social media networks such as Facebook, Tumbler and Twitter.

This is often over a period of time and/or involving a number of perpetrators.

5. Actions by school

When an incident of bullying is reported to school, we will investigate it thoroughly and quickly. We commit to:

- Supporting children who have been bullied as the priority.
- Establish the facts clearly and record them, supported by our CCTV recording system.
- Sanction students using school systems if necessary.
- Agree what will happen once the matter is dealt with, and ask all parties to sign a contract. We call this a 'Record of Staff Intervention in Student Conflict'. This intervention will also be recorded in the planners of all students involved, along with an expiry date if appropriate.
- Exclude students who break the contract, so long as there has been no subsequent retaliation.
- Email a weekly summary of completed Records of Staff Intervention forms to all staff
- Pass completed forms to the Office for photocopying and filing

6. The school will also:

- Involve the police where necessary (in consultation with parents).
- Spend a session on the first day of Year 7 discussing the different types of bullying and how it is dealt with at JRCS. Introduce the school's anti-bullying logo 'See Something Say Something!'
- Help students develop positive strategies and assertion
- Be equally concerned about bullying occurring to and from school
- Utilise trained members of staff and students to implement restorative justice
- Put anti-bullying guidance in the student planner
- Ensure anti-bullying issues are part of the PDE and tutor time programme
- Provide training for students to become peer mentors and mediators
- Encourage students to speak out with regard to bullying issues in the school (See Something Say Something!)
- Take seriously a student complaint about bullying and act as quickly as possible to stop a reoccurrence of the bullying
- Ensure parents are kept informed
- Run events to highlight school procedures during anti-bullying week

7. Bullying outside of school – including cyber bullying

At JRCS we recognise that computers and modern technology enhance the way that we live and interact with each other. Unfortunately, the access that modern technology provides often means that a student can be contacted and cyber bullied anywhere over a 24 hour period.

We recognise that cyber bullying is on the rise and can cause great distress. As a school we are committed to help and support any student who is the victim of cyber bullying.

We believe that the content of a website, including a Facebook or any other social network profile page, is the responsibility of the person who has established and runs it. We also believe that we have a responsibility to inform parents/careers if their son or daughter has established a website or Facebook page that contains potentially abusive, offensive material or comments.

JRCS has a strict policy relating to its involvement in events that occur outside of school. If these events have a direct impact upon the progress of a JRCS student, then the school will take the appropriate action which may include:

- exclusion
- informing parents/careers of the problem
- requesting that the website is closed down or edited if cyber bullying is reported
- in more extreme cases, inform the police including passing on screenshots of websites and copies of abusive messages
- use the school's anti-bullying procedures to deal with the website's owner

As a school we are committed to help students stay safe online and so have incorporated the CEOP report abuse alert button on our homepage. We also cover cyber bullying and 'keeping yourself safe online' as part of the ICT curriculum and assembly programme.

8. If students report an incident or assault that occurs on the way to or from school, staff should:

- record the incident
- ensure that parents/carers are informed of the incident
- request that parents/carers come to school to collect the student if necessary
- inform the HOY/SLT

The school will take action where students have been involved in incidents outside school whilst wearing their school uniform. The school will also take action where students have been involved in incidents outside school which have a significant impact on students' progress in school.

9. Advice for students, staff and parents to combat bullying

The information below is to help staff, students and parents deal with bullying and includes useful phone numbers to seek advice and guidance.

10. Signs and symptoms of bullying

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

11. What do you do if someone is being bullied?

- Take action! Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own.
- If you feel you cannot get involved, tell an adult immediately. Teachers will deal with the bully without getting you into trouble. Parents can call and speak to teachers at school on your behalf.
- Do not be or pretend to be friends with a bully.
- Speak to a peer mediator.

12. How a student should react to bullying

- Remember that your silence is the bully's greatest weapon.
- Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied and that it is wrong.
- Be proud of who you are, it is good to be individual.
- Try not to show that you are upset. Stay calm and look as confident as you can.
- Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
- Be firm and clear – look them in the eye and tell them to stop. Walk confidently away. Go straight to a teacher or member of staff.
- Fighting back may make things worse.
- Generally it is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. You will get immediate support.
- Teachers will take you seriously and will deal with the bullies in a way which will end the bullying and will not make things worse for you.
- Tell your parents or somebody that you can trust.
- If you are scared to tell a teacher or an adult on your own, ask a friend to go with you.
- Use the school peer mediators and mentors or speak to one of the student voice volunteers who wear blue lanyards.

13. If you experience bullying by mobile phone, text messages or email

- Tell a parent, friend or teacher.
- When necessary, encourage your parents to report incidents to the police.
- Be careful who you give your mobile phone number, BBM PIN, social media user ID or email address to. Make sure that you follow the advice given out in PDE and ICT.
- Make a note of exactly when a threatening message was sent and save it to your phone. Do not delete the message as it can be used as evidence against the bully. The same applies for Facebook posts, BBM, etc.
- If you feel in danger or threatened whilst online, then you can report the person by clicking the red 'report abuse' button on the school homepage.

If you find it difficult to talk to anyone at school or at home, ring ChildLine: freephone 0800 1111 – the phone call is free. Alternatively, you can go on their website www.childline.org.uk where you can either chat 1-2-1 with an online counsellor or send them an email. ChildLine provides a private and confidential service.

14. Staff strategies for dealing with bullying

The following is a list of actions available to staff depending on the perceived seriousness of the situation. Ensure the victim knows the situation will be dealt with. The emphasis is always on a caring, listening approach as bullies are often victims too – that may be why they bully.

If bullying is suspected we will:

- talk to the suspected victim and perpetrator and any witnesses
- ensure the victim is supported and knows where to get help
- identify the bully and talk about what has happened to discover why they became involved.
- if the bully owns up, then procedures outlined in the Behaviour Management Policy will be followed. This will include sanctions and an intervention being put in place.

- incidents of bullying will be recorded by the Head of Year on the online behaviour system.
- if the suspected bully does not own up, we will investigate further. If it is clear that they are lying, they will have sanctions applied according to the Behaviour Management Policy, including exclusion from school.
- continue monitoring the situation to ensure no repetition. Record follow-up findings.
- attempts will be made to help the bully or bullies change their behaviour. Where necessary, other professionals will be asked to work with the class group or individual children.

Every student and member of staff in the school has a responsibility to eradicate bullying in school.

This should be read in conjunction with the JRCS Equalities Policy and the relevant sections in the Student Planner.

HELP ORGANISATIONS:

ChildLine	0800 1111
Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)	0808 800 5793
KIDSCAPE	020 7730 3300
Family Lives	0808 800 2222
Youth Access	020 8772 9900
Broken Rainbow (domestic violence in Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Trans gender relationships)	0300 999 5428