



**ROWAN WOOD**  
SCHOOL

**ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

Reviewed policy agreed by GB on:	Autumn 2025
Reviewed policy shared with staff on:	Autumn 2025
Policy to be reviewed again on:	Autumn 2027
Committee responsible for review:	Policy Committee

## **Introduction**

Rowan Wood School is committed to promoting equality, diversity and an inclusive and supportive environment for its children and young people and staff, affirming the rights of individuals to be treated fairly and with respect. We recognise that the most effective way of minimising bullying is to provide a positive atmosphere of caring, respect and friendship, through the ethos of the school. Every child and young person and member of staff at Rowan Wood School should be valued and be able to learn and work without anxiety or fear from any form of bullying and/or harassment. This policy is linked to Rowan Wood's Safeguarding including CP Policy 2024-25 as any form of child-on-child abuse is likely to involve bullying.

## **Aims**

Bullying is unacceptable at Rowan Wood School and as such we aim to:

- develop a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable and that everyone has a responsibility to be proactive in ensuring that bullying is challenged and reported
- provide a safe and secure environment where all members of the Rowan Wood School community can learn and work without anxiety, humiliation, harassment, oppression or abuse
- respond swiftly and effectively to any bullying or child-on-child abuse incidents that may occur
- ensure the school community is aware of our opposition to bullying and know that appropriate action will be taken if bullying or child-on-child abuse does occur
- ensure that everyone takes responsibility for the prevention and elimination of bullying or child-on-child abuse in our school

## **What is bullying?**

Bullying (or child-on-child abuse) is rarely a single incident and tends to be an accumulation of many small incidents, each of which, when taken in isolation and out of context, can seem trivial. There are many definitions of bullying, but most have three things in common:

- It is deliberately hurtful or threatening behaviour
- It is repeated; often over a period of time
- It is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves

Bullying can take many forms, but the main types are:

- Physical – for example, hitting, kicking, taking belongings
- Verbal – for example, name calling, insulting, belittling or using unkind or discriminatory remarks
- Social – for example spreading nasty stories about someone, excluding someone from social groups, tormenting, staring or threatening gestures
- Emotional – for example, isolating others, tormenting, hiding possessions, threatening gestures, ridicule, intimidating, excluding, manipulation and coercion

- Cyber – this can take many forms and is outlined in greater detail in the school's Online Safety Policy. It may include posting on social media, sharing photos, sending unpleasant text messages or social exclusion
- Sexual – for example, unwanted contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) abuse, exposure to inappropriate materials, sexual harassment or sexual violence
- A combination of the above – for example extortion (forcing someone to give up money or belongings) or intimidation (making someone frightened because of threats)

Any of these may also have contexts that discriminate in relation to race, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, SEN, or disability.

### **Our Children and Young People**

All children and young people at Rowan Wood have special educational needs and present with a range of complex learning difficulties. Our approach to anti-bullying therefore needs to take into careful consideration on the one hand, the impact of inappropriate behaviours on our physically and emotionally vulnerable children and young people, while on the other, the influence of specific types of special needs on the behaviour of some children and young people. While the school recognises this dilemma it is also dedicated to combating both the rare cases of 'true bullying' that may occur and the possible, while unintentional, incidents that may make children and young people feel threatened, unsafe or afraid.

We distinguish between the inappropriate behaviours to others that arise through the impact of special educational needs and associated social or behavioural problems and those that occur through bullying. While not underestimating the impact of any inappropriate behaviour on the physical, mental and emotional well-being of the recipient, the approach to the management of bullying will differ. Although this policy relates to the management of bullying within the school, inappropriate behaviours that impact on the physical, mental and emotional welfare of others is unacceptable whatever the cause or context and will be addressed immediately.

At Rowan Wood we recognise that any type of bullying or cyber bullying should be taken seriously but that it also requires additional thought due to our children and young people's level of understanding and cognition. To have an understanding of a child/young person's intent, is very important when deciphering meaning behind a behaviour. An understanding of Intent usually doesn't appear until a child/young person is 4/5yrs of age. Most of our children are cognitively working at an early developmental age and so it is important to bear this in mind when looking at the intentionality behind a behaviour or action. As stated above behaviour is seen as a form of communication and so it is important that we rule out and appropriately respond to behaviour with the right strategies/interventions and responses so that the child and young person can learn from the situation.

## **STRATEGIES TO PREVENT BULLYING**

- The complexity of needs of children and young people at Rowan Wood do not lend themselves to having the capacity to cause intentional harm.
- Our curriculum is aimed to develop the whole child and young person; developing their understanding of themselves and others at an appropriate level. Our curriculum is highly personalised, enabling children and young people to learn about themselves, relationships with other people and the world around them at an appropriate level. Essential Skills is a core area of the Rowan Wood curriculum. This consists of the four components: Communication, Learning Skills, Social Skills and Self-Help Skills. All four areas are key to understanding of self and others.
- Our school values underpin all we do and guide the promotion of positive behaviour between staff and children and young people; and establishing a culture of mutual respect
- Any bullying between adults is reported *to an appropriate person*. This may be the Head Teacher, a DSL or a governor. In the case of an allegation of bullying by the Head Teacher, this should be reported to the Executive Head Teacher or Chair of Governor's.
- Bullying involving member(s) of staff will be dealt in accordance with the Staff Code of Conduct and the school's Disciplinary Policy

### **How staff at Rowan Wood deal with incidents of bullying in or outside of school**

By providing children and young people with the space and time and communication tools to share any concerns, worries or issues with their teaching assistant or teacher.

By ensuring that staff are always supervising and monitoring children and young people so that they can quickly intervene should an incident occur in our outside of the school site

By ensuring children and young people always feel safe and secure and that relevant risk assessments are in place

By ensuring multi professional working across health, social and education services and the police where needed and appropriate

By ensuring that staff members have all the facts and information necessary to carry their concern forward.

By ensuring class teams have a clear understanding of children and young people's cognitive understanding and intentionality so that they can utilise the best strategies/interventions that will support their child in understanding what has happened.

By ensuring that parents are informed and involved in decision making and next steps

By ensuring that staff have access to continued professional development in the area of bullying and cyber bullying

By ensuring teaching assistants and teachers are aware of their responsibility in reporting any form of bullying or cyber bullying.

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

Bullying differs from discrimination in that the focus is rarely based on gender, race, or disability. No child and young person or member of staff at Rowan Wood School should be bullied or belittled, whatever their special educational needs, race, gender, sexual orientation or religion.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Head Teacher is responsible for:

- overall monitoring of bullying and the anti-bullying policy within the school
- dealing with incidents of bullying between adults
- following up any situations not satisfactorily resolved in the view of the DSL, parent or any concerned member of staff
- ensuring accurate record keeping

All staff are responsible for:

- ensuring the safety of children and young people who, because of the impact of their special needs struggle to communicate any issues that arise
- informing a DSL of any incidents of bullying or child-on-child abuse observed, disclosed or suspected
- Informing the headteacher who will in turn report this to governor's and or trustees.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

This policy will be monitored and the effectiveness will be evaluated in the light of the numbers of bullying incidents recorded, staff response to bullying behaviour. The Governors with oversight of this policy are the Local Governing Body to whom numbers of incidents will be reported annually, to coincide with the policy review.

## **RELATED DOCUMENTATION**

- Behaviour and Relationships Policy
- Safeguarding (including Child Protection) Policy
- Online Safety Policy

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct