



RADLEY

## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

**June 2025**

# Anti-Bullying

Radley is committed to eradicating bullying by acting firmly whenever evidence of bullying is found. This policy takes account of current legislation and guidance including:

- Children Act 1989
- Equality Act 2010
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (2017)
- 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2024)
- 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2023
- National Minimum Standard for Boarding Schools (2023)

There is no legal definition of bullying, however, all members of the College community understand bullying to be:

**behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that causes harm to another pupil or group of pupils, either physically or emotionally.** This unkind behaviour may be physical but is more often verbal, and it includes racist, sexist or homophobic/transphobic remarks made to a pupil or group of pupils. The behaviour can be face-to-face or online.

Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power, or perceived power, in relationships through verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that results in physical, social and/or psychological harm.

The College takes the view that cyber-bullying is, fundamentally, no different to any other form of bullying and should be treated as such. However, it is recognised that with increased access to the internet and with most pupils owning personal electronic devices, there is a heightened risk of this type of bullying. The School's Use of IT policies are designed to provide a suitable framework within which pupils can operate safely and securely, but all dons are reminded that vigilance is always required in this area, both in and beyond the classroom.

Bullying can seriously damage a young person's confidence and sense of self-worth, and they will often feel that they are at fault in some way. It can lead to serious and prolonged emotional damage for an individual and can in some cases lead to lasting psychological damage, self-harm and even suicide. We are mindful of the harm bullying may cause in a boarding environment, where the opportunity to go home and create space between themselves and the cause of the harm, may be more difficult.

Appropriate training across the College is arranged to ensure that all those with responsibility have the necessary skills to deal with cases of bullying. Bullying is not a specific criminal offence but there are criminal laws that apply to harassment and threatening behaviour. Misuse of electronic communications could be a criminal offence. Through the operation of this policy the College aims to create an open and secure environment for the pupils to work together as a whole community, staff, pupils and parents to promote an anti-bullying culture throughout the

school and to comply with the College's duties under the Equality Act 2010. This is particularly pertinent to the support of pupils with protected characteristics.

We are aware that pupils may inflict hurt on each other without always realising exactly what they are doing. Bullying thrives on secrecy and pupils are encouraged to report incidents. Bullying takes many forms and can include:

- Persistent teasing or name calling.
- Indirect emotional upset by excluding from social groups or spreading malicious rumours.
- Complicity that falls short of direct participation by, for instance, manipulating or encouraging a third party to tease or torment someone. It may be overt and intimidatory but is often hidden and subtle.
- Cyberbullying – e.g., email, social networks and instant messenger, text message
- Prejudice-based and discriminatory behaviour
- Making threats.
- Physical assault.
- Initiation/hazing type rituals.

Some incidents of bullying may need to be addressed through Child Protection procedures, and the possibility of serious long term psychological damage is recognised. A bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection issue under the Children Act 1989 when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm' OSCP procedures can be found [here](#).

These concerns must be reported to the Deputy Head (Pastoral), who is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who will notify the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (OSCP).

We believe that everything should be done to ensure that attitudes within the school are firmly opposed to all forms of bullying and that if bullying does occur it will be challenged swiftly and dealt with effectively. The most common form of bullying is the persistent teasing of an individual by a group. This teasing can be both wilful and casual ("we didn't realise it did any harm"). Bullying issues are discussed in a formal manner as part of the PSHE programme in the Michaelmas term of the Shell year and 'Respect for others' and 'Accountability' are important themes in the Shell's induction process.

The College trains its staff to respond effectively to reports of bullying or harassment and has systems in place to respond to it. In the case of cyber-bullying, it endeavours to block access to inappropriate websites, using firewalls, antivirus protection and filtering systems. Where appropriate and reasonable, the school audits ICT communications and regularly reviews the security arrangements in place. Pupils are educated both in the proper use of telecommunications and about the serious consequences of cyber-bullying and will, through PSHE and in ICT lessons and assemblies, continue to be updated in these fast-changing areas.

The role of third parties is also particularly important in identifying, reporting and preventing bullying. The school makes clear to all parents and pupils that they should share with the school any concerns about or evidence of bullying in all its forms.

## Identifying those who have been harmed, or caused harm

Dons are regularly briefed by the DSL and members of the Pastoral Team as to the nature and dangers of bullying. Resources are available to all Form Masters about anti-bullying for delivery through the PSHE programme. All dons are expected to be familiar with this policy and to understand their obligations under it. The school takes seriously its obligations under the Equality Act (2010) and all dons are asked to keep a particular eye on the needs of any pupils that have protected characteristics (e.g., those with special educational needs or disabilities, and those who identify as LGBT+).

Dons are alerted to the need to keep a sharp lookout in the classroom (especially at the beginning and end of lessons) for evidence of bullying and are instructed to take immediate action to curb it and express disapproval of it. They are also asked to let Tutors know at once of such incidents. An individual's judgement as to the relative seriousness of such incidents must not inhibit communication. Tutors, Sub-tutors, Pastoral Housemistresses, Prefects and Mentors are briefed to be constantly vigilant to spot the symptoms of bullying: withdrawal, underachieving, moodiness on the part of the harmed, bossiness and a quickness to criticise on the part of the person causing harm. New pupils have Mentors (from the Sixth Form) to look after them throughout the first year and beyond, and they are instructed to keep an eye open for any signs of bullying, and to report concerns immediately to the Tutor. Pastoral Housemistresses and Prefects who are in close daily contact with all members of the Social are expected to be particularly vigilant in looking after the younger pupils. Concerns over bullying will be communicated appropriately to parents to keep them fully informed. Tutors must inform the Deputy Head (Pastoral) of all bullying incidents.

Indicators that may point to a bullying problem are:

- A pupil who becomes withdrawn (uncharacteristically so)
- Homesickness.
- Frequent headaches or stomach aches, feeling sick or faking illness.
- Changes in eating habits, like suddenly skipping meals or binge eating. Pupils may appear hungry because they did not go to meals in Hall.
- Difficulty sleeping.
- Declining grades, loss of interest in schoolwork, or not wanting to go to lessons
- Sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations.
- Feelings of helplessness or decreased self-esteem.
- Self-destructive behaviours such as harming themselves, or talking about suicide.
- Unexplainable injuries
- Loss or damage to clothing, books, electronics, or disruption of personal space in the boarding house.

Any pupil who is concerned about the possibility of any type of bullying (including cyber-bullying), either in or beyond the school, should report it, to their Form Master, their Tutor, their PHM or any member of staff. They are made aware of their obligations and guidance on what to do is published termly in the school calendar. Mentors and Prefects have been trained to ensure that they pass on the information appropriately and any pupil can report anonymously using an online form **MyConcern** which is posted on the Pupil Hub.

## Dealing with Bullying

The anti-bullying policy aims to provide proper pastoral care through good communications between all members of the community who share a collective responsibility. The pupil causing harm needs to be made aware of what he is doing and why it is not acceptable. The pupil who has been harmed needs to be carefully listened to and supported. Bullying behaviour most commonly occurs between junior pupils as dominant characters compete for influence in their group. For this reason, particular vigilance is necessary in the lower years.

The following guidelines are laid down for adult members of the College.

1. It is a safeguarding duty, incumbent on all staff, to prevent unkindness from developing into bullying behaviour.
2. Staff are asked to be always on the lookout for bullying. If there is any doubt as to the nature of unkind behaviour, staff should always consult with the pupil's Tutor or a member of the pastoral team.
3. **Early intervention is key** to minimising the harm which can result from bullying and staff are asked to be alert of changes in a boy's behaviour that might suggest a bullying problem.
4. Staff should endeavour to cultivate a strong feeling of trust in their pupil/teacher relationships, thereby encouraging pupils to talk about any difficulties they may be experiencing.
5. Reassure the person who has been harmed that action will be taken to help him, making it clear that other people will have to be involved.
6. Listen carefully to the pupil who has been harmed and make a factual record of all incidents. It is important that the detail of incidents is accurately recorded, using the pupil's words and phrases. Notes should be passed to the Deputy Head (Pastoral) or another member of the pastoral team, and recorded in CPOMS.
7. If bullying behaviour is witnessed at first hand, make clear to the pupil causing harm the unacceptable nature of the behaviour and separate him from the pupil he has harmed until such time as an initial investigation has been carried out. Both pupils will be interviewed by a member of the pastoral team. The process for dealing with bullying will be explained. It may be appropriate for pupils to be given the opportunity to discuss their own reactions and behaviour with one another. Both pupils will be given support and advice, and counselling may be suggested if deemed appropriate.
8. Bullying is a safeguarding matter and as such, reports of bullying cannot be kept confidential, and the DSL must be informed. Every effort will be made to handle the disclosure with sensitivity, but information about a bullying incident must be shared appropriately in order to safeguard the welfare of the target and the person causing harm.

## **Intervention**

The key to successful outcomes is early intervention. Bullying behaviour evolves from unkindness and we should always aim to deal with the former before it becomes the latter.

When unkind behaviour is identified, all those involved will be spoken to, either individually or in small groups. The process for dealing with unkind behaviour may involve a wider group than just the harmed and the person causing harm. The need to intervene will be explained clearly to all those involved. It will be made clear why the behaviour was unacceptable. Initial discussion will focus on recognition of the problem, developing empathy and acceptance of collective responsibility.

There are key principles, set out in the [Code of Conduct](#) that are likely to have been breached, namely:

1. Stand for what is right at all times
2. Treat all members of the community with kindness
3. Value and celebrate variety and difference
4. Take responsibility for my own actions and performance

Parents will be informed of the pastoral concerns and their assistance in reinforcing the unacceptable nature of unkind behaviour may be sought.

In the first instance, those who are causing harm will be made aware of the harm they are doing and consequences, should it continue further. An initial conversation of this kind is likely to be between the pupil and his Tutor.

A repetition of unkind behaviour will be treated as bullying behaviour. A similar approach to that detailed above will be followed, with assistance from members of the Pastoral Team. Parents will be notified of any concerns which are addressed as bullying behaviour. It is likely that the pupil causing harm will be spoken to by the Head of Year with clear instructions as to the changes in behaviour which need to be made. Parents will be notified, in writing, of the behavioural expectations that have been identified.

Any repetition of bullying behaviour will be investigated by the Deputy Head (Pastoral) / Sub-Warden and referred to the Warden.

## **Support for pupils**

The school recognises that both the harmed and the pupil causing harm will need support to recover from the cause and effect of bullying behaviour. The school provides opportunities for pupils to talk about their experiences and difficulties with adults and senior pupils. Adults able to support include Tutors, PHM, Resident Sub-Tutors, Form Masters, and wider college staff. Boys will develop different relationships with different members of staff, all should feel able to approach a trusted adult for support. The boarding environment might present difficulties in the immediate aftermath of a bullying incident, in that creating distance between pupils can be more problematic. Tutors will endeavour to organise room allocation with sensitivity to relationships that may have suffered damage because of bullying behaviour. Where possible, Tutors will seek to create appropriate distance and support groups around pupils who need it, by allocating rooms in different areas of the boarding house. Space apart might also be facilitated by a more flexible

approach to Leave Out of college, though we would encourage pupils who have had trouble in this area to work at rebuilding trust, rather than avoiding interaction.

Counselling support should be considered for both target and the person who has exhibited bullying behaviour.

### **Sanctions**

The management of unkind behaviour will usually be addressed through pastoral conversations and coaching, whereas persistent bullying could lead to suspension for a period of time, while the individual(s) reflects on the impact of their behaviour on others. Once the details of the bullying have been established, a report will be written, and a clear warning issued about the ramifications of any repetition of the behaviour.

- In the first instance, low level unkindness will be addressed by the Tutor and in most cases, pupils will respond well to the advice they are given. If the behaviour involves a group of pupils from different Socials, the Head of Year may become involved at an early stage.
- Occasionally, pupils fail to heed an initial warning, and a second conversation may be needed. This will often be done in conjunction with the Tutor (who will notify parents/guardians), the Head of Year and/or the Deputy Head (Pastoral). Failure to heed a second warning will result in a disciplinary meeting with the Sub-Warden for a formal warning.
  - Formal Warning: The Sub-Warden will speak to the pupils involved. Parents or guardians will be contacted in writing and will be given details of the incident(s) and an opportunity to discuss the matter. Parental support, in reinforcing the school's actions, will be enlisted. A Formal Warning will make clear that further bullying type behaviour will most likely result in a meeting with the Warden and possible suspension.
- Suspension is at the Warden's discretion (see the School's Exclusion, Suspension, Removal and Review Policy).
- Exclusion is at the Warden's discretion (see the School's Exclusion, Suspension, Removal and Review Policy).

An incident of bullying will be treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. In 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 further action is required.

After bullying incidents have been dealt with, careful monitoring takes place to ensure that the problem has been resolved.

### **Record keeping and monitoring**

The Pastoral Team meet regularly to discuss welfare issues and identify any trends or concerns. Regular informal briefings between staff who teach/coach a pupil who has been the focus of bullying, help to monitor the situation.

In addition, every complaint or report of bullying must be reported to the Deputy Head (Pastoral) who monitors records of incidents on CPOMS to enable patterns to be identified, both in relation to individual pupils, across the school and over time. Pupils involved in a bullying incident will

be monitored for 12 months, or longer if there is an ongoing risk. Monitoring ensure that changes can be made to both policy and approach through effective evaluation of outcomes.

In addition, the Warden and Designated Safeguarding Lead review the records regularly and a summary of bullying concerns are reported to the Council on a termly basis.

### **Anti-Bullying (Social noticeboards)**

Radley takes bullying very seriously and will take all necessary steps to prevent it and to make sure that the College is a place where every pupil can feel safe and develop without fear that he may be physically, verbally or emotionally hurt by another pupil or group of pupils.

Bullying is best described as behaviour exhibited by an individual or group that causes hurt to another pupil or group of pupils, either face to face or online. This unkind behaviour may be physical but is more often verbal or anti-social. Bullying behaviour usually has three common characteristics in being:

- Intentional
- Repetitive
- Unkind

Bullying is often a by-product of arrogance., where pupils who do not respect those they are harming. Bullying can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over others who feel unable to stop it from happening. When such behaviour is causing distress to another pupil, and most especially when that pupil asks for it to stop, the behaviour must stop immediately. To continue to behave in a manner that is hurtful to others, is bullying. A failure to recognise the hurt that is being caused, is not an acceptable defence for those who engage in bullying type behaviour.

All members of the Radley College community are asked to take immediate action to stop any bullying behaviour and to report incidents to Tutors and to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. This can be done using the **'MyConcern'** form on the Pupil Hub, which can be completed anonymously.

All pupils have a duty to prevent bullying by:

- Refusing to participate in any behaviour which might be hurtful to another pupil.
- Asking the individual or group behaving in this way to stop.
- Alerting an adult or senior pupil to any incident, they witness or become aware of.

Pastoral support will be given to all those involved.

Radley will help the perpetrator(s) to understand why their behaviour is unacceptable. However, all pupils must understand that the intentional repetition of hurtful behaviour (bullying) could lead to those responsible being suspended or being asked to leave the school.

Unkind behaviour can quickly develop into bullying if no one is prepared to talk about what is happening. Secrecy creates the conditions in which bullying can develop, and Radley expects all pupils to help prevent this.

The Pupils' Code of Conduct sets out expectations for behaviour and all new pupils sign a Register to say that they have read, understood and agree to abide by the Code of Conduct.