

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY



Our Mission Statement – the reason our College exists

“Learning & Growing in the Light of the Gospel”

With Christ at the centre of our learning, we:

- *Help young people to achieve their greatest potential*
- *Guide their intellectual growth, nurture their God-given talents, and inspire them to live in service to others*
- *Aim to develop honest, confident, responsible and compassionate members of society, based on the educational values of Blessed Antonio Rosmini*

‘Begin Here, Go Anywhere’

Ratcliffe’s unique educational offering based on our College motto, “Legis Plenitudo Charitas”, Love is the fulfilment of the Law, provides a perfect context within which young people may acquire the emotional knowledge and interpersonal skills necessary to live happy and purposeful lives. The College’s inclusive Catholic ethos is complemented by the outstanding quality of our College community through which our Mission, “Learning and Growing in the Light of the Gospel”, serves to nurture resilience and develop maturity. Young people leave Ratcliffe with a strong sense of who they are and their purpose in the world, equipped socially, emotionally, morally and spiritually to go forth and make a difference to the communities in which they live and work.

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

This policy has been written for all three sections of the College

Author: James Rainer/Merrony Markham	Receiver: All staff/Governors
Date: October 2025	Next Review: September 2026

This policy is reviewed annually by the Governing body,

Signed..... (Chair of Governors)

Signed (Governor responsible for Safeguarding and Child Protection)

Signed (Deputy Head Pastoral)

The Deputy Head Pastoral is responsible for implementing the anti-bullying policy.

1. Introduction

In *Maxims of Christian Perfection*, our founder, Blessed Antonio Rosmini, states that “*All...are called to perfection, no matter what their state or condition may be... The perfection of the Gospel consists in the fulfilment of the two commandments of love, of God and of neighbour.*” Therefore, it is the expectation of all members of the Ratcliffe College community that they do not bully and that they speak out when bullying does occur for in so doing they live out our Mission that *Love is the Fulfilment of the Law*.

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly, and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We have a zero-tolerance for bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Ratcliffe College. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *TELLING* school. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

Bullying behaviour is always unacceptable and will not be dismissed as being normal or as "banter" or simply "part of growing up". Bullying behaviour will not be tolerated at Ratcliffe College because:

- it is contrary to the *Maxims of Christian Perfection* and therefore all our aims and values, our internal culture and the reputation of the College;
- it is harmful to the person who is bullied, and to those who engage in bullying behaviour, and those who support them, and can in some cases lead to lasting psychological damage; and
- it interferes with a student's unconditional right to enjoy their learning and leisure time free from intimidation and the risk of harm.

This policy has been drawn up having regard to the following guidance and advice:

- Preventing and tackling bullying: Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies (DfE, July 2017);

- Cyberbullying: advice for headteachers and school staff (DfE, November 2014);
- Advice and guidance: How can we stop prejudice-based bullying in schools (Equality and Human Rights Commission);
- Working together to safeguard children (DfE, December 2023);
- Keeping children safe in education (DfE, September 2025);
- The Prevent Duty (DfE, September 2023)
- Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools (DfE, July 2022).

2. Scope

This policy applies to the whole College irrespective of their age and applies at all times when the student is:

- in or at College during school hours and during before-school or after-school activities;
- a boarder, as unlike a day-student, boarders who are being bullied offline may not be able escape their bullies as they are not going home as often;
- representing the College;
- travelling to or from College;
- on College-organised trips;
- associated with the College at any time;

This policy applies regardless of whether students are in the care of the College at the time an incident of bullying occurs. This includes term time, weekends, or school holidays, and whether the incident takes place on or off College premises, online or in person.

This policy also applies to students at all times and places in circumstances where failing to apply this policy may:

- affect the health, safety or well-being of a member of the College community or a member of the public;
- have repercussions for the orderly running of the College;
- bring the College into disrepute.

At Ratcliffe College, **all staff** have responsibility for tackling bullying when it is identified, and all staff have responsibility for supporting and reassuring a student if they report bullying.

The **Deputy Head Pastoral** is responsible for implementing the anti-bullying policy in the Senior School. In the Preparatory School, this responsibility is held by the **Deputy Head of the Preparatory School**. In so doing, they will be supported by the **Senior Leadership Team** and **Senior Management Team** of both schools, particular the **Director of Safeguarding**, as well as pastoral leaders such as **Heads of Year**, the **Senior Housemaster and Senior Housemistress** and the **Student Wellbeing Coordinator**. The **PSHCE Coordinator**, the **Christian Living Subject Leader**, **Class Teachers** in the Preparatory School and **Form Tutors** in the Senior School have particular responsibility for ensuring that students are made aware of this policy in an age-appropriate manner.

The **Headmaster** and, in the Preparatory School, the **Headteacher of the Preparatory School** are responsible for overseeing the implementation of this Policy.

This policy is reviewed annually by the Governing body, particularly the **Chair of Governors** and the **Governor responsible for Safeguarding and Child Protection**. They are responsible for ensuring that Ratcliffe College complies with all legislation relevant to the Ratcliffe College Community, and that this Policy and its related procedures are implemented with due consideration of all available data to consider bullying issues and to ensure that adjustments to policies and practices are made where necessary.

A Governor is appointed as the **Anti-Bullying Lead Governor**. This position is held by Fr Lorence Swamy IC. The Anti-Bullying Lead Governor meets regularly with the Deputy Head Pastoral to review the College's Anti-Bullying Policy and strategy, and will do the following:

- Help to evaluate the College's anti-bullying strategy by reviewing data, such as the annual student voice surveys, and trends from the College's rewards and sanctions system and safeguarding records.
- Support the Deputy Head Pastoral in providing feedback on the College's anti-bullying strategy at Governors' meetings and any appropriate sub-committees.
- Support governors and trustees to understand and interpret the information and data shared by the Deputy Head Pastoral.
- Support student interviews, student voice groups and school council meetings as appropriate.

All parents/careers and visitors are responsible for not engaging in any behaviour that constitutes bullying, and for recognising that Ratcliffe College's Catholic Rosminian charism is incompatible with bullying.

Finally, **all students** should embody our value and refrain from engaging in behaviour that constitutes bullying. They should report bullying behaviour and prejudice-related behaviour, either in person or through the anonymous reporting app, Whisper. They should understand, value and celebrate the diversity of Ratcliffe College, ensuring that it is an inclusive community by rejecting stereotypes and prejudice.

3. Intention of the Policy

We recognise the guidance from *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2023, p 11) that "A child-centred approach is fundamental to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child." As such, the principal aims of this policy are to define bullying behaviour, to protect and safeguard all students at Ratcliffe College from bullying behaviour, and to explain how the College will identify and respond to bullying behaviour should it happen.

This policy will help the Ratcliffe community ensure this school has a zero-tolerance approach to bullying, and ensure that the school provides an environment where every member of that community has the unconditional right:

- To be valued and respected;
- To feel safe and be healthy;
- To be able to enjoy their time at school and reach their full potential;
- Everyone has the right and responsibility to respect themselves and others by not bullying, and to stand up to bullies, whether they are the victim or they are supporting someone else being bullied.

To ensure that all our students have a safe and secure learning environment, Ratcliffe College will always work towards preventing acts of bullying, harassment, aggression and violence as being unacceptable and opposed to the Gospel principles and the Rosminian charism upon which the school is based.

It is also clear that bullying can result in physical, psychological and emotional damage and, as such, is taken very seriously at Ratcliffe College. If such a case arises, the staff will follow the anti-bullying guidelines laid out in this policy. This will enable staff to:

- Identify children displaying unacceptable behaviour and know how to support them so that they can participate in the school community effectively and positively
- Keep all other children safe, happy and confident.

In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education, staff will always be mindful of the fact that bullying could be seen as a safeguarding issue.

4. Defining Bullying Behaviour

Along with other schools in Leicestershire, we use The Anti-Bullying Alliance's definition of bullying. This definition is evidence-based and built from over 30 years of research. Bullying is:

The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online.

Bullying behaviour may be:

- physical - hitting, kicking, pushing people around, spitting;
- verbal - name-calling, taunting, teasing, insulting, or demanding money or possessions;
- psychological – intimidating behaviour, isolating or excluding a person from a group, spreading rumours or writing unkind notes, graffiti, phone texts or e-mails, commenting on appearance or manner, hiding possessions;

Bullying can be experienced as:

- low level disruptive behaviour - tiresome "banter" and "horseplay" that takes place over a pro-longed period of time. Ratcliffe College will never accept "banter" as an excuse for bullying;
- cyberbullying – this is carried out using electronic devices, such as PCs, laptops, smartphones, tablets, gaming consoles or smartwatches, via apps, AI, gaming and/or social media. An incidence of cyberbullying will be dealt with in accordance with the procedures in this policy. The College's separate Student Acceptable Use Policy provides guidance for students about cyberbullying and online safety. Examples of cyberbullying include:
 - Flaming and/or Trolling: Online fights usually through emails, instant messaging or chat rooms where angry and rude comments are exchanged.
 - Denigration: Putting mean online messages through email, instant messaging, chat rooms, or websites set up to make fun of someone.

- Exclusion: Intentionally leaving someone out of a group such as instant messaging, friend sites, or other online group activities.
- Outing: Sharing secrets about someone online including private information, pictures, and videos.
- Trickery: Tricking someone into revealing personal information then sharing it with others.
- Impersonation: Pretending to be someone else when sending or posting mean or false messages online.
- Harassment: Repeatedly sending malicious messages to someone online.
- Cyber-stalking: Continuously harassing and denigration including threats of physical harm.
- harmful sexual behaviours – including sexual harassment and sexual violence.
 - Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that can occur online and offline. Incidences of sexual harassment will be investigated to ensure they are not part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. Sexual harassment can include but is not limited to:
 - Verbal or written behaviour such as sexual jokes or taunting, or talking about or to another person in a sexually inappropriate way;
 - physical behaviour such as deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with their clothes, displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature;
 - online sexual harassment which may include: upskirting, non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos (sexting); inappropriate sexual comments on social media; exploitation; coercion and threats.
 - Sexual violence is any examples of sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, specifically rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault.
 - Sexualised behaviour, such as pretending to make sexualised advances or being sexually suggestive.
 - While some incidents of harmful sexual behaviour may present as bullying, they must always be treated as safeguarding concerns first, in line with KCSIE. The threshold for reporting sexual violence or harassment is lower than that of bullying. The College will always follow the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy in these cases.

5. Prejudice-Related Incidents

At Ratcliffe College, we are proud to be a diverse community. Thus, we are mindful of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. We recognise that the Stephen Lawrence Enquiry outlines that a prejudice-related incident is defined as any incident which is perceived to be prejudice-related by the victim or any other person. In line with the guidance of Leicestershire County Council, it is important to be aware that bullying behaviour may also be:

- Bullying related to appearance - where the motivation for bullying behaviour relates to the target's physical appearance (e.g. their hair colour).
- Bullying related to health conditions - where the motivation for bullying behaviour relates to the target's actual or perceived health condition (e.g. a disfigurement, a traumatic injury, or severe skin condition)
- Bullying related to home circumstance - where the motivation for bullying is based on the target's living arrangements (e.g. being adopted, a young carer or a child in care),

geographic locality (i.e. where they live), their class background, whether they are from a low income family or in receipt of a bursary.

- Bullying related to weight - where the motivation for bullying behaviour related to a target's individual weight or size. It can also stem from negative stereotypes and biases about weight.
- Disablist (based on disability) - where the motivation for bullying behaviour is based on the target's real or perceived disability, special educational need, gift or talent, health conditions, or their association with someone in those categories.
- Racist (based on race or ethnicity) - where the motivation for bullying behaviour is based on the target's actual or perceived skin colour, culture, language, ethnicity or national origin. A person could also be targeted because of their association with someone with the protected characteristic of race.
- Bullying based on pregnancy or maternity - where the motivation for bullying behaviour is based on the grounds of actual or perceived pregnancy or maternity. A person could also be targeted based on their association with someone with the protected characteristic of pregnancy or maternity. This definition applies only to the Senior School.
- Bullying based on religion or belief - where the motivation for bullying behaviour relates to the target's beliefs, faith, or identity. It may also be because of a perception or assumption about religion, belief or lack of belief (which may or may not be accurate), or because of their association with an individual or group of a particular religion or belief.
- Bullying based on sexual orientation - where the motivation for bullying behaviour is based on the target's sexual orientation, or perceived orientation, or that of their family/friends and/or homophobic/biphobic abuse and language used. Bisexual people may experience homophobic bullying, but they are also likely to experience biphobic bullying.
- Sexist (bullying based on sex) - where the motivation for bullying behaviour is based on sexist language, attitudes and behaviours that when expressed demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their actual or perceived sex or gender. A person could also be targeted because of their association with someone with the protected characteristic of sex.
- Transphobic (based on gender questioning and/or reassignment) - where the motivation for bullying behaviour relates to the target being gender questioning, or perceived to be gender questioning, or their gender or gender identity being seen as different to their biological sex. A person could also be targeted because they have a gender questioning family member.

Bullying may also be:

- Age-based - related to a person's age, which may also relate to a power imbalance, a notion of hierarchy, or encouraging a student to act in a way that is age inappropriate;
- Related to a person's relationship status, such as if they are married or in a civil partnership. In the context of the College, this may relate to two students who are in an exclusive relationship with one another;
- Initiation type violence/hazing;
- taking advantage of an imbalance of power or seeking to control someone.

Prejudice-related incidents do not have to meet the thresholds of being intentional or repetitive. If the incident does not constitute bullying, it must still be recorded on CPOMS so that it can be thoroughly investigated and necessary actions taken.

The College will provide and sustain a safe working environment in which everyone is treated fairly and with respect. Those working or dealing with Ratcliffe College must not encounter discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or victimisation on the basis of protected characteristics. Where school staff are victims of bullying by pupils, parents, or other staff, they are supported through the Workplace Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment Policy. Staff who are subjected to bullying from colleagues, students, or parents/guardians are encouraged to report this directly to a senior leader, the Director of Safeguarding or the Headmaster. Allegations will be treated seriously and sensitively, in accordance with internal HR and safeguarding procedures.

6. The Signs of Bullying

The type of behaviour that might be an indication of bullying includes:

- a reluctance to go to school;
- unexplained tummy upsets or headaches;
- showing signs of distress on a Sunday night or at the end of school holidays;
- becoming either quiet or withdrawn, or playing up;
- torn clothes and missing belongings;
- seeming upset after using their phone, tablets, computers etc;
- being over-protective of their phone, tablets, computers etc.
- an unexplained change of habit, such as asking to be dropped off or picked up from school in a different location;
- wanting to leave for school much earlier than necessary or returning home late.

7. Intention

For Ratcliffe College staff, it is everyone's responsibility to ensure, whatever the circumstances, that no one becomes a victim of bullying behaviour. A person may be vulnerable to bullying behaviour because of their age, physical appearance, race, ethnicity, culture, nationality, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief, or disability, or because they are new in the College, appear to be socially uncertain or if they have no friends. They may also become a target because of an irrational decision by a bully.

Some reasons why children might bully someone include:

- They think it is fun, or that it makes them popular or cool;
- They feel more powerful or important, or they want to get their own way all the time;
- They feel insecure or lack confidence or are trying to fit in with a group;
- They are fearful of other children's differences;
- They are jealous of another child;
- They themselves are unhappy;
- They are copying what they have seen others do before, or what has been done to them.

It is important to remember that not all bullying behaviour is deliberate or intended to hurt. Some individuals may see their hurtful conduct as ‘teasing’ or ‘a game’ or ‘for the good of’ the other person. These forms of bullying behaviour fall within the scope of the definition of child-on-child abuse and are equally unacceptable but may not be malicious and can often be corrected quickly with advice and without disciplinary sanctions. This will be done following the Positive Behaviour and Relationships Policies (Preparatory School and Senior School).

If left unchallenged or dismissed, low-level disruption can have a wearing, and significant, impact on targeted individuals exposed to such behaviour.

8. What isn’t Considered to be Bullying?

Young people of school age experience heightened emotions and friendship difficulties. This is a normal part of growing-up and, whilst challenging for children, parents, and other adults, should be supported pastorally and by positive intervention from parents, teachers, and other adults. Therefore, the College does not generally consider changes in friendship groups or one child not liking another child to be bullying. One-off verbal abuse of a student by another student is not bullying. This is unkindness and can be dealt with according to the Positive Behaviour and Relationships Policy, with consideration given to the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. One-off hitting of a student by another student is not bullying: it is assault or similar.

The College is also a place in which it should be safe to make mistakes, supported in correction through the Positive Behaviour and Relationships Policies in the Preparatory School and Senior School. Therefore, isolated arguments between students or isolated acts of unkindness, meanness, or an isolated expression of unpleasant thoughts or feelings regarding others are not generally considered to be bullying. These actions may still require responses akin to a bullying incident, however.

9. Bullying Incidents that occur away from the College Premises

In line with Department for Education guidance (*Preventing and tackling bullying*, July 2017), College 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.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on. The Headmaster should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator in their local authority of the action taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed.

While College staff members have the power to discipline pupils for bullying that occurs outside school, they can only impose the disciplinary sanction and implement that sanction on the

school premises or when the pupil is under the lawful control of school staff, for instance on a school trip.

10. Legality

A person who makes a physical or sexual assault on another, or who steals or causes damage to the property of another, commits a criminal offence. Bullying behaviour may also be regarded as threatening behaviour or harassment which can be either a criminal offence or a civil wrong. Misuse of electronic communications could also be a criminal offence, for example it is an offence to send an electronic communication (such as a text message or e-mail) to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety. If the College considers that a criminal offence may have been committed, they will seek advice and/or assistance from the police in line with the Promoting Positive Behaviour and Relationships (Senior School) policy and Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions policy (Preparatory School).

This policy is written with regard to the Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales. As such, College staff are aware of the risk posed to pupils of radicalisation and that all teachers have a statutory duty to report any concerns of this nature to the Police and the Local Authority.

The Education Act 2011 amended the power in the Education Act 1996 to provide that when an electronic device, such as a mobile phone, has been confiscated by a member of staff who has been formally authorised by the Headmaster, that a staff member may examine data or files, and delete these, where there is good reason to do so. Parental consent is not required to search a pupil's phone, if there are sufficient grounds to do so.

If an electronic device that is prohibited by the school rules has been confiscated and the member of staff has reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, they must pass the device to the Deputy Head Pastoral, Deputy Head of the Preparatory School or the Director of Safeguarding, who will give the device to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable. Only a member of the Senior Leadership Team would be required to view or delete files if they do not suspect it contains evidence in relation to an offence.

Material on the device that is suspected to be evidence relevant to an offence, or that is a pornographic image of a child or an extreme pornographic image, should not be deleted prior to giving the device to the police. A member of staff would never be expected to view any device if there was suspicion that it contained a pornographic image of a child. The Senior Leadership Team can decide whether it is appropriate to delete or retain the material as evidence of a breach of school discipline.

11. Safeguarding

Some behaviour by a student towards another may be of such a nature that safeguarding concerns are raised. Such behaviour may include bullying (including cyberbullying), causing physical harm, initiation/hazing type violence and rituals, sexting or any form of sexual harassment or violence.

The College's policy and procedures with regard to child-on-child abuse are set out in the College's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Concerns about a student's welfare because they are the victim or those who engage in bullying behaviour must be reported in accordance

with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and appropriate action taken, taking into account the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership's threshold arrangements.

A bullying incident will be treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child (whether victim or those who engage in bullying behaviour) has suffered, is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm.

12. Inclusion – the Involvement of Students

A student-friendly version of this policy is published alongside this full policy. It is known as the Student Anti-Bullying Statement. This provides a simple overview of what bullying is, how to report it, and what support is available. It is shared in assemblies, tutor time, and is available within the student planner.

The student Anti-Bullying Committee meets regularly and prepares for key events such as Anti-Bullying Week and presentations to assemblies. The committee also periodically reviews the Student Anti-Bullying Statement.

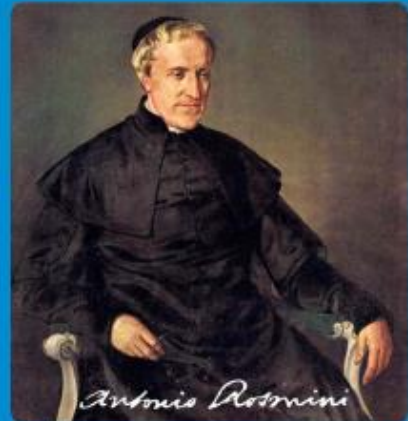


STUDENT ANTI-BULLYING STATEMENT

By the Anti-Bullying Committee

"All are called to perfection, no matter what their state or condition may be. Perfection is the fulfilment of the two commandments of love – love God and love your neighbour."

Blessed Antonio Rosmini



- We are proud that Ratcliffe College is a Catholic Rosminian school.
- Therefore, our school has a zero tolerance towards bullying.
- We stand in solidarity against bullying.
- We talk and learn about anti-bullying during PSHE lessons, assemblies, Celebration of the Word and tutor time.



Bullying is...

- Repetitive and deliberate hurting of others;
- Any form of physical or emotional behaviour which takes advantage of others, makes them feel uncomfortable or threatened;
- In person or online, which is known as cyber-bullying.



Signs that someone is being bullied are...

- Damage or loss to possessions;
- Visible physical harm;
- Reluctant to go to school;
- Appearing generally unhappy.



If I am being bullied or I know someone is, what can I do?

- Tell a friend who will pass the information on to a trusted adult;
- Tell a Student Listener who will pass the information on to an adult;
- Tell your trusted adult;
- Tell your family;
- Keep screenshots or any other evidence;
- Use Whisper, the anonymous reporting app on RM Unify and the School Website;
- Telephone ChildLine 0800 1111 or call the National Bullying Helpline (Monday to Friday 9am to 5am) on 0300 323 0169.



But bullying may also include:

- Threats of violence, both verbal and non-verbal;
- Actual violence;
- Ignoring/ shunning others or deliberately trying to turn friends against one another by spreading false rumours;
- Excluding other people;
- Teasing, ridiculing, mimicking, sarcasm, name calling;
- Interfering with property or deliberately damaging another's possessions or work;
- Racially or sexually offensive remarks and/or behaviour;
- Offensive remarks about a physical disability or someone's learning needs;
- Intimidation or demanding money, material goods and/or favours through force.



What happens to bullies?

Incidents of bullying when reported are always taken seriously and are treated as confidentially as possible.

- Perpetrators of bullying will receive a sanction, and their parents are informed;
- Every case of bullying is different. Your experience will always be listened to. Sometimes the right course of action is for a student to be given a Saturday Detention, other times the right course of action is for them to have a conversation with their Head of Year and take action to make things right;
- Victims of bullying are reassured and supported when they come forward.
- Perpetrators of bullying are helped by the teachers to understand what they have done wrong so they can try and change their behaviour in the future.



13. How should a student report bullying?

What can you do if you are being bullied in school or outside school?

- Read the Student Anti-Bullying Statement and tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied and that it is wrong.
- Try not to show that you are upset; try to look and sound confident.
- Try to ignore those who engage in bullying behaviour; remember that they want a reaction and try not to give one.
- Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
- Inform your tutor or any other member of staff immediately. You will be listened to and taken seriously. The College will deal with those who engage in bullying behaviour in a way which will end the bullying and not make matters worse for you.
- You can report bullying anonymously through Whisper, available on the Student RM Unify portal, advertised around the College, and available on the Safeguarding page of the College website.
- In the Senior School, you can talk to any Student Listener. They have daily drop-in sessions in The Lighthouse Room and are recognisable from their red hoodies and photoboard next to the Medical Department.
- Consider consulting external support, such as the Anti-Bullying Alliance, Childline, the NSPCC, the Children's Commissioner for England and Wales, and Young Minds.
- Call the National Bullying Helpline (Monday to Friday 9am to 5am) on 0300 323 0169.

What can you do if you know someone is being bullied in school or outside school?

- Don't stand and watch, seek help. Tell an adult immediately. Don't be a bystander. Teachers have ways of dealing with bullying without getting you into trouble.
- If a friend tells you that they are being bullied, try to persuade them to tell a teacher themselves. If this does not happen, you should tell a teacher yourself.
- Do not condone or pretend to condone bullying. Show that you and your friends disapprove.
- Be sympathetic and supportive to someone who may be being bullied. Offer to hang out with them and invite them to have breaktime or lunchtime with you.
- Be careful about teasing people or making personal remarks; if what you are about to say may be hurtful, do not say it.
- You can report bullying anonymously through Whisper, available on the Student RM Unify portal, advertised around the College, and available on the Safeguarding page of the College website.
- In the Senior School, you can talk to any Student Listener. They have daily drop-in sessions in The Lighthouse Room and are recognisable from their red hoodies and photoboard next to the Medical Department.
- Get advice from external support, such as the Anti-Bullying Alliance, Childline, the NSPCC, the Children's Commissioner for England and Wales, and Young Minds.
- Call the National Bullying Helpline (Monday to Friday 9am to 5am) on 0300 323 0169.

14. How should a parent/guardian support their child if they have been bullied?

- Watch for signs of distress in your child. For example, they may not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to a normal standard.

- Talk to your child, explain to them what bullying is and what it makes people feel like. Ask your child if anything like this is happening to them and what it makes them feel like.
- If your child discloses that they are being bullied speak calmly and reassuringly to them and discuss what steps should be taken going forward.
- Ask your child what they have already tried to do to stop it.
- Bear in mind many children do not tell their parents because they are frightened that they will approach the school about the matter, make a fuss and make things worse, so it is a good idea to ask your child what they think could be done to stop the bullying.
- Keep making notes of what your child says, particularly names, dates, what happened and where it happened.
- Keep reminding your child that they have done the right thing by talking to you.
- Discourage your child from hitting back as this will only exacerbate the issue.
- Encourage your child to talk to his/her tutor and/or Head of Year about any worries.
- There are some additional steps your child can take if they are experiencing cyberbullying:
 - Keep evidence of the bullying by saving content.
 - Block abusive users.
 - Regularly change your password and never share your password with others.
 - Follow the procedures for reporting abusive content on social networks.
- Outline how you are going to respond to the bullying behaviour, and agree how this will be communicated to your child's Class Teacher, Tutor, Housemaster, Housemistress or Head of Year.
- Consider consulting external support, such as the Anti-Bullying Alliance, Childline, the NSPCC, the Children's Commissioner for England and Wales, and Young Minds.
- Call the National Bullying Helpline (Monday to Friday 9am to 5am) on 0300 323 0169.

15. How should a parent/guardian report bullying?

- If you feel your child may be a target of bullying behaviour from another student, inform the College without delay. Your first point of contact should be your child's Class Teacher, Tutor, Housemaster, Housemistress or Head of Year by telephone via the main School office (01509 817000) or via e-mail, with as many details as you can. Your complaint will be taken seriously, and appropriate action will be taken. If you know the member of staff, you wish to e-mail simply type their first initial and their surname followed by @ratcliffecollege.com
- If you feel your child may be a target of bullying behaviour from a member of staff, you should contact the Headmaster.
- You can report bullying through the Safeguarding Report Form, available on the Safeguarding page of the College website.
- You can report bullying anonymously through Whisper, available on the Safeguarding page of the College website.

16. Guidance to staff dealing with bullying in the Senior School

Step 1: Initial Response

- Bullying is suspected, reported or witnessed - this may occur in or out of school, online or offline.

- Staff must respond immediately. It is not sufficient to simply refer the student elsewhere or rely solely on CPOMS reporting.
- Offer immediate support, reassurance and active listening.
- Avoid leading questions and do not promise confidentiality.

Step 2: Recording and Notification

Take a written account of what happened. This could be:

- A written statement by the student; or
- A staff member's record of a verbal statement, using verbatim language where possible.

Record the incident on CPOMS as soon as possible. In the Senior School, this will alert:

- The Deputy Head Pastoral
- The student's Head of Year
- Housemaster or Housemistress
- Form Tutor

The Head of Year normally coordinates the College's response at this stage.

Step 3: Assessment and Early Action

The Head of Year (or appropriate colleague) will:

- Meet with the alleged victim and offer appropriate support.
- Speak to any witnesses promptly.

The assessment should consider:

- The nature of the behaviour (physical, verbal, exclusionary, online, etc.);
- Whether it was a one-off or part of a wider pattern of behaviour;
- Whether anyone was physically harmed;
- Whether parents or external agencies (e.g. police) need to be informed;
- Whether the alleged bully can be approached on a "no names" basis.

Possible outcomes at this stage:

- Misunderstanding – explanation and advice to both parties.
- Confirmed bullying behaviour – appropriate sanction in line with the Positive Behaviour and Relationships Policy.
- Parents of both parties should be informed of the outcome.

In the Senior School, more serious incidents must be escalated to the Deputy Head Pastoral following the guidance of the Positive Behaviour and Relationships (Senior School) Policy.

All actions must be recorded on CPOMS. Ensure the category is marked as "bullying".

Step 4: Serious Incident Protocol

Where a more serious offence is suspected, the Deputy Head Pastoral may take over or assign a senior colleague (e.g. Assistant Head, Head of Sixth Form, or Director of Safeguarding) to:

- Interview the victim, alleged bully, and witnesses separately.
- Share findings with the Deputy Head Pastoral.

Sanctions at this stage may include:

- Saturday Detention, or
- A higher-level response in line with the Positive Behaviour and Relationships Policy.

The Head of Year will communicate the sanction to parents and may invite them for a meeting.

If Levels 5, 6 or 7 (e.g. internal or external suspension or permanent exclusion) are under consideration:

- The Deputy Head Pastoral must brief the Headmaster (or Senior Deputy Head in their absence).
- The Headmaster will determine the appropriate sanction and the Deputy Head Pastoral or Head of Year will notify parents.

17.Guidance to staff dealing with bullying in the Preparatory School

It is recognised that younger children may require a different response as their understanding of personal relationships develops. The following guidelines are specifically given to staff in the Preparatory School and the Nursery (though many of them are applicable to the Senior School as well):

If there is evidence of a child bullying another child or children, then staff action is as follows:

- i. intervene to stop the child harming the other child or children.
- ii. explain to the child engaged in bullying behaviour why their behaviour is inappropriate.
- iii. give reassurance to the child or children who have been bullied.
- iv. help the child engaged in bullying behaviour to say sorry for their actions.
- v. ensure that the child engaged in bullying behaviour receives praise when they display acceptable behaviour.
- vi. do not label children who have engaged in bullying behaviour.
- vii. when a child has been bullied, this is discussed with their parents and a plan is worked out for handling the child's behaviour.
- viii. when a child has been bullied, this is shared with their parents, explaining that the child who engaged in bullying behaviour is being helped to adopt more acceptable ways of behaving and that their parents have been informed.

18.Range of Action

In all cases where anyone reports bullying, they will be told of the outcome. Where serious action is taken, students and staff will always be informed and the situation explained.

The Deputy Head Pastoral or Deputy Head of the Preparatory School will coordinate the support that is provided to the alleged victim(s) of any bullying, although this may be delegated to a member of the Student Support Services team, such as the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, or to the relevant Class Teacher or Head of Year. The Director of Safeguarding, in their capacity as Designated Safeguarding Lead, will report the matter to the external authorities if it is appropriate in the circumstances. See the school's 'Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy'.

When an allegation of bullying behaviour is upheld, the range of responses will include one or more of the following:

- advocacy, advice and support for the victim and, where appropriate, establishing a course of action to help the victim, as per the Student Wellbeing Policy and the School Counsellor Policy. This intervention may include support from internal Student Support Services or external services where appropriate;
- advice and support to the student who engaged in bullying behaviour in trying to change their behaviour. This may include clear instructions and a warning or final warning, and involvement of the Lay Chaplain or Father President. It may also include a structured process of educative intervention around the area of offence, such as in the case of discriminatory or prejudiced behaviour;
- restorative action, such as a hand-written letter of apology by the student who engaged in bullying behaviour to the victim;
- engaging with the student who engaged in bullying behaviour and the victim in a mediation process, aimed at developing understanding between both parties to facilitate normalised relations in the future;
- a supervised reconciliation meeting between the student who engaged in bullying behaviour and the victim to discuss their differences and the ways in which they may be able to avoid future conflict (with the victim's express agreement);
- consideration of the motivation behind the bullying behaviour and whether external services should be used to tackle any underlying issues of the student who engaged in bullying behaviour which contributed to the bullying behaviour. If these considerations lead to any concerns that the bully may be at risk of harm, the College's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will be followed;
- referral to the Ratcliffe College Counsellor for the victim and/or the student who engaged in bullying behaviour;
- a meeting with the parents of the victim and/or the student who engaged in bullying behaviour;
- action to break up a 'power base';
- confiscation of mobile electronic devices, increased monitoring procedures or limiting access to the College's Internet and e-mail facilities if cyberbullying, with reference to the Acceptable Use Policy;
- moving either the student who engaged in bullying behaviour or victim to another class, tutor group and/or House after consultation with the student, their parents and the relevant staff;
- involving Children's Social Care or the police, when the relevant reporting thresholds are met notifying the parents of one or both students about the case and the action which has been taken;
- such other action as may appear to the Headmaster, Head of the Preparatory School, Deputy Head Pastoral, Deputy Head of the Preparatory School and the Director of Safeguarding to be appropriate;
- noting the outcome in the relevant safeguarding log.

- a disciplinary sanction against the bully, in accordance with the College's Positive Behaviour and Relationships (Senior School) and Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions policy (Preparatory School), as outlined below. In a very serious case or a case of persistent and/or systematic bullying, a student may, after a fair hearing, be required to leave the College permanently in accordance with the College's Exclusion Policy.

In the Senior School, the Positive Behaviour and Relationships policy outlines seven graded levels of sanction, any of which may be applied to bullying:

Level	Sanction
0	Verbal or written warnings
1	Crosses
2	Demerits
3	School Detentions
4	Saturday Detention
5	Temporary Exclusion (Internal Suspension)
6	Temporary Exclusion (External Suspension)
7	Permanent Exclusion

In the Preparatory School, the Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions policy outlines the following sanctions, any of which may be applied to bullying behaviour:

- Removed from an activity,
- Be given a behaviour point,
- Miss playtime(s) and complete an alternative task,
- Write a letter or apology to all concerned (signed by a parent where appropriate),
- Complete a self-reflection form and discuss with an adult at school,
- Carry a progress report (physically) and ask teachers to complete at the end of each lesson/day, to be monitored by the class teacher daily and reviewed by the Deputy Head and parents weekly,
- Asked to report to the Deputy Head of the Preparatory School and serve a lunchtime detention. In this case, parents will be informed.

Sanctions that are applied to bullying behaviour will also take account of whether behaviour is a first offence, a second offence, or a subsequent offence. These definitions may apply equally to an aggressor regardless of whether repeated bullying behaviour is targeted towards the same or different people.

19. Monitoring and Follow-up Action

Victims and students who engage in bullying behaviour should be monitored for as long as necessary thereafter. Action may include:

- Sharing information with some or all colleagues;
- Highlighting the incident at meetings of staff;
- Discussion at Student Support Services meeting;

- Sharing information with some students so that they be alert to the need to monitor certain students closely;
- Ongoing counselling;
- Ongoing pastoral support;
- Vigilance;
- Reviewing vulnerable individuals or groups;
- Reviewing areas of the College;
- Assessing areas of concern through surveys or focus groups;
- Risk assessment, particularly after repeated incidents of bullying where either the victim, the bully, or other factors such as protected characteristics, are a common factor.

20. Risk Assessment

Where a concern about a student's welfare is identified, the risks to that student's welfare will be assessed and appropriate action will be taken to reduce the risks identified. The format of risk assessment may vary and may be included as part of the College's overall response to a welfare issue, including the use of individual student welfare risk assessments (or specific plans to support behaviour, healthcare and education, as appropriate).

Regardless of the format used, the College's approach to promoting student welfare will be systematic and student focused. It may also include the creation of a T.A.S. (Team around the Student) to oversee the improvement of outcomes for the young person.

The Headmaster has overall responsibility for ensuring that matters which affect student welfare are risk assessed and for ensuring that the relevant findings are implemented, monitored and evaluated. Day-to-day responsibility to carry out risk assessments under this policy will be delegated to the Director of Safeguarding and the Deputy Head Pastoral, liaising with the relevant Head of Year, Housemaster or Housemistress, and other staff as needed.

21. Recording Bullying

All reports of bullying in the College should be recorded on CPOMS, usually by the member of staff dealing with the incident in the first instance. In the Senior School, the Deputy Head Pastoral maintains a log which records all reported incidents/allegations of bullying, discrimination and prejudice, including single incidents. In the Preparatory School, the Deputy Head reviews CPOMS incidents logged as relating to bullying, discrimination and prejudice. This is used to assist the school in spotting patterns and trends to target areas of need. After investigation, should there be disciplinary consequences, this will be recorded in SIMS, either through the Class Charts MIS in the Senior School or through direct entry onto SIMs.

Safeguarding records are held on CPOMS. The Director of Safeguarding maintains a log of significant safeguarding incidents which is overseen by the Governing body.

All records created in accordance with this policy are managed in accordance with the College's policies that apply to the retention and destruction of records. The records created in accordance with this policy may contain personal data. The College has a number of privacy notices which explain how the College will use personal data about students and parents. The privacy notices are published on the College's website. In addition, staff must ensure that they

follow the College's Data Protection policy when handling personal data created in connection with this policy.

22.Strategies for Preventing Bullying

As outlined in the Positive Behaviour and Relationships policy, a key approach at Ratcliffe College is that sanction should be educative as well as punitive. However, the approach to bullying at Ratcliffe College is not wholly reactive. Proactive measures are taken throughout each year to educate students about bullying behaviour and this policy. These measures include:

- the PSHCE curriculum and Christian Living curriculum, which includes a whole school focus on anti-bullying during the internal Anti-Bullying Week in the Autumn Term
- The weekly Pastoral Programme in tutor time in the Senior School
- Anti-Bullying and Anti-Cyberbullying messages are given in assemblies and similar moments throughout the school
- The College recognises that children with special educational needs and physical or mental health disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges, including the potential to be disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs. The College will consider extra pastoral support for students with special educational needs and disabilities, as required.
- Staff are trained to recognise that students with SEND may show signs of distress in non-verbal ways, such as changes in behaviour or mood. Pastoral leaders and teachers are encouraged to monitor these students closely, and tailored pastoral or communication support may be put in place where needed.
- The College also recognises that students with SEND may find it harder to report bullying and works to remove barriers to disclosure through visual aids, trusted adult identification, and safe spaces. This includes anonymous or 'faceless' methods, such as the Whisper reporting tool.

In addition to this, in the Senior School there are a range of pastoral intervention opportunities for students to access if they or others are being bullied:

- The Pastoral Hub is staffed each breaktime and lunchtime by at least one Head of Year 7-11. Students can speak to staff in privacy in the Pastoral Meeting room;
- The Sixth Form Centre is staffed throughout the day by at least one of the Assistant Head, Head of Sixth, the Deputy Head of Sixth Form, the Assistant Head of Sixth Form, and the Sixth Form Student Support Manager;
- The Student Wellbeing Coordinator is available in their office in the Maths 2 hexagon building at breaktimes, lunchtimes and activities times, as well as by appointment, to support students with either general anxieties or in relation to specific concerns such as bullying;
- The Medical Department is centrally located opposite the Refectory and is staffed by a nurse throughout the day;
- The Lay Chaplain and Resident Chaplaincy Assistant are available in the Rosmini Room throughout the day. From time-to-time, Father President and Deputy Father President are available in their study next to the Chapel;
- The Housemaster, Housemistress, House Matrons and other House staff are available for boarders before, during and after school hours;
- The Director of Safeguarding's office is located in the Maths 2 hexagon building;

- The offices of the Senior Deputy Head and the Deputy Head Pastoral are located in the South Cloister next to Media Studies 3, where many students congregate at free time to use the benches;
- The Learning Support landing is softly furnished as a space for nurture, given students a safe space for time-out with support available from Learning Support staff including the SENCO, Deputy SENCO and HLTAs.
- A number of teaching staff are on duty each breaktime and lunchtime, whilst there is a well-established system of co-curricular activities and academic support classes which ensures that students have somewhere to go if there is a problem;
- Students can also self-refer to the school counsellor.

In the boarding context, additional support includes:

- Access to pastoral care through House Matrons or staff on duty
- Pastoral check-ins
- Use of the Whisper app and the Orah app for discreet reporting
- Room moves where appropriate
- Contact with the Independent Person.

These measures help ensure boarders feel equally safe, supported, and able to disclose concerns, regardless of the time of day or week.

A number of these pastoral intervention opportunities apply equally to students in the Nursery and Preparatory School. These include the Director of Safeguarding, the Medical Department and the Chaplaincy team. In addition to this, in the Preparatory School there are further pastoral intervention opportunities for students to access if they or others are being bullied:

- Support from any member of staff, particularly class teachers and teaching assistants,
- ELSA sessions.

Students can also seek help independently of Ratcliffe College:

- The Independent Person is also available for boarders to contact;

The following telephone numbers are also posted around the School and in student planners:

- | | | |
|---|----------------------|---------------|
| • ChildLine | www.childline.org.uk | 0800 1111 |
| • Children and Young People Services | | 0116 253 1191 |
| • Drug Helpline (11 to 19yr olds) | | 0800 776600 |
| • Alcohol Helpline (11 to 19yr olds) | | 0116 222 9545 |
| • Eating Disorders Association – youthline - BEAT | | 0845 347650 |
| • Bereavement care – youthline | | 0808 8081677 |
| • Samaritans | | 08467 909090 |
| • Children’s Commissioner for England | | 0800 528 0731 |

Students can also report bullying anonymously on the Whisper app or make contact through the antibullying@ratcliffecollege.com email address.

The Senior School also makes use of peer-led systems of intervention:

- Sixth Form Student Listeners are available each breaktime and lunchtime in the Lighthouse Room. These students are trained externally and wear red hoodies once a week to highlight who they are so that students might be comfortable approaching them. Student Listeners are assigned to year groups and, from time-to-time, a Head of Year may approach a Student Listener to intervene as a listener to a specific student.
- Students in Years 9 and 10 are trained by the Student Wellbeing Coordinator as Peer Mentors. They may be used in a targeted way after an incidence of bullying.

Members of staff undertake regular anti-bullying training as part of the College's approach to continuing professional development, as well as training in response to emerging trends or areas of concern. Through induction, all new staff are made aware of the School's anti-bullying policy, including new staff and support staff.

23. Review

The Deputy Head Pastoral will, with assistance from the Director of Safeguarding, the Deputy Head of the Preparatory School and any other relevant members of staff, review and revise this policy on an annual basis, or more regularly as required, taking into account the results of the reviews as set out above, as well as any changes in legislation and/or statutory/non-statutory guidance.

The Deputy Head Pastoral will also take account of feedback gathered through surveys and focus groups, such as with students, parents, carers, and guardians. Where appropriate, areas of the policy may be reviewed within staff committees, such as the Pastoral Meeting, Heads of Year Meetings, Student Support Services meetings, e-safety staff meetings, and Senior Leadership Team meetings.

Students are asked about emerging trends relating to bullying behaviours through student voice opportunities, such as the annual student surveys in the Spring Term. Student committees, particularly Year Group Focus Groups, are also given opportunity to contribute to feedback about bullying behaviours in school.

Discussion with other stakeholders, such as parents and governors, may also prompt review of this policy.

From time-to-time the Deputy Head Pastoral may work with external agencies to review and develop the College's approach to anti-bullying. For example, by working with Leicestershire County Council's Beyond Bullying Award scheme. The policy was last reviewed by Leicestershire County Council in September 2025, and the amendments made in October 2025 are a consequence of this review.

Any revisions, as recommended by the Deputy Head Pastoral, will be confirmed by the Headmaster. Furthermore, the Governors will consider the revisions made as part of its collective responsibility to carry out an annual review of safeguarding.

24. Links to Other Policies

Many policies are accessible through [the College website](#).

- Acceptable Use Policy
- Child on Child Abuse Policy
- Complaints Procedure Parent Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Disability Policy
- English as an Additional Language Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Independent Pastoral Support for Students Policy
- Independent Person Policy
- Positive Behaviour and Relationships (Preparatory School) Policy
- Positive Behaviour and Relationships (Senior School) Policy
- Prevent of Bullying and Harassment at Work Policy
- Prevent Risk Assessment
- Privacy Policy
- PSHCE Policy
- Records Management Policy
- Relationship and Sex Education Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- School Counsellor Policy
- Special Education Needs Policy
- Spoken Languages Policy
- Statement of Boarding Practice and Principles (Boarding Policy)
- Storage, Handling, Use, Retention and Disposal of Information Policy
- Student Complaints Procedure
- Student Wellbeing Policy
- Supervision of Students Policy