



Anti-bullying Policy

Rygaards School will not tolerate bullying in any form and will make every effort to prevent it happening. As a Christian school everyone (staff, students and parents) is encouraged to care for all people, for their feelings, their beliefs, culture and their belongings. Active re-enforcement of these values will help foster an environment where bullying is known to be unacceptable.

One of the chief aims of Rygaards School is to create an atmosphere of mutual respect and caring in a Christian spirit where everyone can grow in a positive social environment. This demands action against any form of threatening behaviour and bullying. At Rygaards, we aim to tackle unwanted behaviour long before it becomes bullying.

Definition of bullying

Bullying is the willful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone else repeatedly, or over a period of time to put someone else in a state of anxiety. This behaviour, which wrongly uses a position of power in order to physically or emotionally hurt others, is considered to be bullying. This can include cyber bullying.

Teasing and minor conflicts among children are part of children's social learning process and will be addressed specifically depending on the nature of the incidents.

Prevention

We aim to prevent bullying by following our programme for Social and Preventive Learning:

1. **Having a shared understanding of the policy** on bullying to which staff, students and parents are committed.
2. Upholding and building on the school's Code of Conduct.
3. Working together on promoting our school's Christian ethos which teaches:
 - a. the value of the individual
 - b. the importance of developing feelings of self-esteem, worth and respect
 - c. the importance of being part of a community and taking responsibility for one's actions within that community.
4. Raising awareness through the curriculum and the student council.
5. Creating opportunities for students to discuss bullying in general.
6. Maintaining watchful supervision in problem areas in the building and in play areas.

All teaching staff will be alert for signs of distress in students – frequent unexplained absence, isolation, the desire of the smaller children to remain with adults, erratic attendances or deterioration of work.

In response to reported bullying, Rygaard's staff will:

1. Take the report seriously.
2. Listen carefully to all parties.
3. Make it clear to all involved that the whole school disapproves of this kind of behaviour.
4. Support the recipient(s) by putting the school's bullying procedure into action.
5. Counsel and support all parties through the class teacher, friends, parents and school counsellor.
6. If punishment is given, it will be made clear why.
7. Teaching colleagues will be advised of the outcome.
8. Staff and parents will be aware at all times that we are role models for our students.

Recording Bullying

The following steps will be followed in recording repeated incidents of bullying:

1. The school will keep a record of discussions with all parties and put them in the students' files
2. In the case of bullying, the necessary consequences will be initiated according to Rygaard's Behaviour and Sanctions policy.

Approved by the board of governors in March, 2024.