

Sixth Form Students



Code of Good Practice



Ratcliffe College
2009-2010

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Code of Good Practice

Guidance for Sixth Form Students

Introduction

This booklet outlines the school rules and the expectations we have for all students. It is important that you are fully aware of these rules and expectations so that you can set the appropriate example and gain the maximum benefit from your time in the Sixth Form. The following pages therefore contain details of many of the school's policies and procedures. The policies are largely written for your parents in the Parents' Information Handbook so the language may sometimes sound rather formal.

All organisations require rules if they are to function effectively. School rules cannot necessarily cover every contingency but the following rules apply in order to maintain a safe and well-ordered environment.

The rules flow from the principle that living in a community at Ratcliffe requires politeness, common sense and consideration for others. They also enable the school to fulfil its legal and moral responsibilities regarding the care and well-being of its students.

Therefore anything that contravenes safety, common sense, the law of the land and normal civilised behaviour is automatically forbidden, as is any action that may harm the good name of Ratcliffe College.

School rules apply at all times – during the term (including on travel on school buses), during holidays for any students who are on the school campus, and on all school-organised trips whether in term time or during holiday times.

The following are specifically not allowed:

- The possession of medicines or drugs without permission;
- The unauthorised possession or consumption of alcohol;
- The possession or smoking of cigarettes;
- The possession of any weapon (offensive or otherwise), or replica-type weapon, without school authorisation;
- Gambling;
- Sexual misconduct;
- Public displays of affection;
- Visiting a student of the opposite sex in a boarding house;
- A motor car/cycle, or driving another member of the school, without specific permission;
- Riding a motorcycle or being a pillion passenger, without specific permission;
- Unauthorised absence from school or leaving the school campus without permission;
- Bullying in any of its forms;
- Damage to the property and/or possessions of others or of the school;
- Interference with the fixed installations of the school, electrical or otherwise;
- Interference with fire extinguishers (a fine of £25.00, as well as other disciplinary measures, will be imposed on students who misuse a fire extinguisher);
- Music played at a volume that disturbs others;
- Eating and drinking in the school corridors;
- Chewing gum.

Attendance at School

Attendance at all timetabled lessons, study periods, games lessons and registration (see below) is compulsory for all students at Ratcliffe College, including Sixth Formers.

Registration

The registration of students, both in the morning and in the afternoon, is a legal requirement. All students need to be aware that their attendance at registration is compulsory.

Times of Registration

- Morning registration takes place between 8.45 – 8.50am. **It is essential that all students attend this registration punctually.**
 - **In order to make reasonable allowance for delayed buses, traffic problems, etc., the morning period of registration remains 'open' until 9.30am. Therefore, if you arrive before 9.30am and sign in at reception, you are marked as present in the register by the School Secretary. However, this does not mean that late arrival is acceptable.**
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- Afternoon registration takes place between 2.00 – 2.05pm. All students must also attend this registration as far as possible. However, there may be occasions where Sixth Form students have permission to leave before this time or where sports fixtures or examinations mean that students are away. In these cases, Form Tutors must be informed about absences so that the registers can be marked appropriately. Your parents should inform us of any absence from school, supported by an email or written note to your form tutor.

Signing In and Out

- There may be rare occasions when you arrive at or leave the school at times other than those scheduled. In order to ensure that our monitoring of the whereabouts of students is as complete as possible, we operate a signing in and out system.
- If you arrive after registration or if you come into school once the school day has begun then you **must report to the Sixth Form Centre to sign in**. Likewise, if you leave the campus before 4.20pm then you **must sign out at the Sixth Form Centre**.
- Sixth Formers are allowed to leave school after lunch if you have free periods in the afternoon and if you have written permission from your parents. You must still sign out in the normal way. On all such occasions, you are expected to work at home and you should not come back to school later the same day.
- There might be other occasions when you need to leave the campus during the school day. Your parents have been asked to ensure that your Head of Year is informed of these absences so that he/she can give the appropriate permission.
- Any student who wishes to sign out needs to show that they have this permission. For Sixth Form students, a note from the Form Tutor, Head of Year or Head of Sixth Form is needed, unless you already have signed permission to leave, for example if you have afternoon free periods.
- If you are sent home by the Medical Centre then the Sister on duty notifies reception and posts a notice of the absence in the staff common room.
- If you come into school during holiday time, you must sign in and out at reception so that we know who is on the site.

Senior School Uniform

We expect Sixth Formers to maintain high standards of dress and appearance, thereby setting an example to younger students and demonstrating their increased responsibility within the school. The general principle underlying the Sixth Form uniform guidelines is that students should resemble young professional people, aiming to look smart all day, every day.

Uniform Options - Sixth Form Only

Boys

Shoes	Black leather (not suede or patent)
Suit	Formal style – black, grey or navy blue; either plain or with a subtle pinstripe
Shirt	Plain white or light blue (not denim, striped or check pattern), collar size should be large enough for easy fastening of top button.
Tie	Obligatory, a school tie (see below)
Jumper	Optional, V-neck navy blue or black. Prefects may wear a burgundy V-neck jumper.

Girls

Shoes	Black leather (not suede or patent) with low heels (maximum 2 inches) on the grounds of safety
Suit	Formal style, with either skirt or trousers – black, grey or navy blue; either plain or with a subtle pinstripe. Skirts must be knee-length or mid-calf.
Shirt	Plain white or light blue (not denim, striped or check pattern), with a collar
Jumper	Optional, V-neck navy blue or black. Prefects may wear a burgundy V-neck jumper.

The following ties are acceptable: school tie, Sixth Form tie (available from the School Shop), county or national representation tie.

Sports Uniform

Boys

- 1 Cap reversible Rugby shirt
- 1 Pair Trinity navy tracksuit bottoms with badge
- 1 Pair navy Rugby shorts with badge
- 1 Mercury white polo shirt with badge
- 1 pair Response navy PE shorts with badge
- 1 Zambezi half zip jacket with badge
- 2 Pairs navy blue games socks with vertical lettering on the sides
- 2 Pairs white ankle socks*
- Either**
- Icon half zip sweatshirt with badge
- Or**
- Sprint 'Hoodie' with badge
- 1 Pair navy blue swimming trunks **or**
- 1 pair blue swim shorts (only shorts bought in the school shop can be worn)*
- 1 Pair rugby/football boots* (approved safety studs only)

Girls

- 1 Navy games skirt
- 1 Pair Trinity navy tracksuit bottoms with badge
- 1 Venus white polo shirt with badge
- 1 Venus navy polo shirt with badge
- 1 Pair Response navy PE shorts with badge
- 1 Zambezi half zip jacket with badge
- 2 Pairs navy blue games socks with vertical lettering on the sides
- 2 Pairs white ankle socks*
- Either**
- Icon half zip sweatshirt with badge
- Or**
- Sprint 'Hoodie' with badge
- 1 navy one piece swimming costume*

***These items can be purchased from any outfitters.**

Both Boys and Girls

- 1 Pair outdoor trainers
- 1 Pair astro trainers (team players must have them)
- 1 Pair indoor trainers (not baseball/basketball boots)
- 1 Hockey stick
- 1 Tennis racket (summer term)
- 1 School bag (max length 18")
- 1 Sports bag
- 1 Pair shin pads
- 1 mouth guard (hockey and rugby) – all students must have a mouth guard; the school recommends O-Pro
- 1 Swimming cap – available from School Shop
- 1 Pair swimming goggles
- White cricket trousers and a white cricket shirt are required by all cricket team players (summer term)
- Tennis whites are required for all team players (summer term)
- 1 Pair outdoor trainers

Appearance of Students

We consider the appearance of students to be of the highest importance. Extremes of fashion are not allowed. Students must wear the correct uniform with top buttons fastened, ties properly done up and shirts tucked in at all times.

Jewellery: girls with pierced ears may wear plain studs or sleepers (one pair only in the lobes). A watch, one ring and a line chain necklace (to be worn out of sight) are allowed. Bracelets may not be worn, with the exception of one plastic charity bracelet. Any jewellery brought into the school is at the owner's risk. Jewellery worn as a result of body piercing, other than that listed above is not permitted at any time. **Jewellery must be removed for all sports lessons and fixtures.**

Make-up Light make-up may be worn by girls in the Sixth Form (Years 12 and 13) when in uniform if they wish.

Hair must be clean, tidy, neatly cut and **must be its natural colour**. All hairstyles must be **reasonable** and hair must appear brushed or combed. Spiked or back-combed hairstyles are not appropriate for school. Boys' hair must not be too long – as a general guideline, it should be no longer than collar length and out of the eyes – nor must it be too short. Boys must be clean shaven.

Shirt sleeve order may be worn in hot weather. Blazers and ties may be removed and sleeves neatly rolled up. Shirt sleeve order may only be worn when officially announced by the Second Deputy Head. Full uniform must continue to be worn for whole school assemblies.

School uniform is required for Sunday Mass, school fixtures and for formal occasions at weekends and in the evening.

We believe our uniform and appearance guidelines offer a common sense approach and we ask parents to support us in upholding these guidelines. **However, please note that in all circumstances it is the school that decides what constitutes reasonable standards.**

Behaviour and Discipline

Introduction

We believe that the effective functioning of our school can only be achieved by developing a culture of co-operation and consideration. The Ratcliffe College 'special atmosphere' and ethos have been created through an approach of combining firm discipline and high expectations with encouragement, praise and motivation; this combination is essential in order that students and staff can work together in a happy, positive environment.

Rewards

Behaviour is improved more effectively through a coherent system of positive reinforcement than negative punishment. There is often an injustice in the amount of time and energy spent on those who misbehave, while students who are meeting the school's expectations may risk being neglected or having their efforts unrecorded. By rewarding good behaviour we are modelling the standards we expect from everyone.

Every opportunity is therefore taken to reward both students' achievement and their good behaviour. This may be through direct praise from a subject teacher or more formal recognition in a Year group or school assembly. Students' work is celebrated through displays within subject areas and also around the school. Students who achieve good Studies Grades, or whose grades show significant improvement, receive a congratulatory letter from the Senior Deputy Head. At the school's annual Prize Day, students receive prizes for achievement in academic subjects, for having consistently good effort grades and for success in extra-curricular activities.

A merit and commendation system is used for all students in the Senior School.

Commendations

Staff aim to be fair and consistent in the system of rewards so that students understand what work and behaviour will result in reward, for example:

- Effort must always be recognised and affirmed;
- Attainable targets must be set for every student;
- Merits are awarded to students for outstanding work, special effort, service to others, for representing the school with distinction and for any behaviour worthy of commendation.
These must be beyond what is normally expected from students.

Students in Years 10-13 receive Excellent Slips instead of Merits. The students with the most slips each half term are recognised with a Certificate of Commendation, awarded in Headmaster's Assembly. A celebratory social event takes place twice a year for those with the most Excellent Slips.

Sixth Form students should be mature enough to set their own targets for achievement and behaviour; nevertheless it is appropriate to recognise excellence regardless of age. Therefore the system of Excellent Slips and Certificates of Commendation is also used for Years 12 and 13. Beyond this, the Prefect and Monitor system provides clear recognition and reward for those who have made positive contributions to school life. Our extra-curricular programme gives opportunities to as many Sixth Formers as possible to demonstrate leadership skills and to hold positions of responsibility, for example through the House system, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, the CCF and on the sports field.

Heads of Year and/or Housemaster/Housemistress, after discussion with students, may institute further rewards above and beyond the merit system. It is believed that if students develop ownership of the rewards system this helps to generate further enthusiasm for it.

Sanctions

The school's discipline is firm and caring with a strong emphasis on trust, courtesy and consideration. Incidents of poor behaviour do not occur often. Usually, any problems are checked by a word quietly administered and every effort is made to maintain the generally excellent relationships between staff and students, and between the students themselves.

Students are expected always to show good manners, be courteous, well turned out, punctual and reliable in fulfilling their obligations. Students are asked to pursue their own goals with enthusiasm but with respect for others. They are asked to treat others with sympathy, understanding and tolerance. They are asked to respond positively to the demands that community life places upon them.

There is a clear policy and strategy for dealing with discipline problems. In the first instance a problem is dealt with by the subject teacher. He or she may wish to ask for help and support from the student's Form Tutor and, if necessary, the appropriate Head of Department. If the situation is regarded as more serious it will be referred to the Head of Year who may then involve the Second Deputy Head. When necessary, parents will be informed and appropriate action will be taken.

This action may involve the student:

- being given a 'Red Slip', a slip to notify the Form Tutor about concerns with a student, either inside or outside the classroom;
- being given a lunchtime detention by the subject teacher, Form Tutor or Head of Year;
- being placed on an Observation Report, which identifies clear academic targets for a student and which is signed by teaching staff and monitored by the Form Tutor and/or Head of Year;
- being placed on another report card, for example a Uniform/Appearance Report;
- being given a Saturday morning detention. For all Saturday detentions, a letter is sent to the student's parents, signed by the Second Deputy Head, who supervises this detention in school. This letter is preceded by a telephone call from the Head of Year or Housemaster/Housemistress to explain the circumstances of the detention.

For more serious offences:

- a student may be suspended from school by the Headmaster for a fixed duration, either internally or externally. During an internal suspension the student carries out additional academic work in isolation under the school's supervision. During an external suspension the student carries out additional academic work at home under the supervision of parents.
- a student may be required by the Headmaster to leave the school.

Drugs

Terminology

In this policy, the term 'drugs' refers to controlled drugs and substances, illegal drugs and substances, including but not limited to cannabis, cocaine, heroin, ecstasy, LSD or amphetamines or substances intended to resemble drugs. In the appropriate context it also refers to anabolic steroids, legal drugs obtainable on or off prescription, and/or all other substances that, when abused, may damage the health, safety and welfare of a student, including but not limited to solvents, alcohol and tobacco. However, the school has separate policies with regard to solvents, alcohol and tobacco and they are not therefore the main focus of this policy. Involvement with drugs includes the possession, use, supplying and dealing with drugs or the paraphernalia of drugs.

Rationale

The drugs policy at Ratcliffe College reflects the aims of the school's Mission Statement, in that it seeks to educate young people and to nurture their God-given talents and potential so that each one may become a confident, responsible and useful member of society. It also seeks to send a clear moral message to students that drugs are dangerous and involvement with drugs is wrong.

The school considers that the use of drugs is likely to undermine a student's health, safety, independence, opportunities and respect for the law. The use of drugs will also damage the integrity of the school community by exposing other students to temptation and to the risk of criminal proceedings. We strongly and actively discourage the use of drugs and a drugs 'culture'.

A continuing and progressive programme of education about drugs is maintained throughout the school, both as part of the PSHCE programme and as part of the academic curriculum. The drugs education programme also provides students with information about drugs, including their effects and dangers, and details of the law concerning drugs.

A student found to have supplied or used or been in possession of drugs must expect to be required to leave the school immediately.

Aims

- To reinforce and safeguard the health, safety and welfare of each student and of the school community
- To ensure legal compliance where it is unlawful for any person to possess, use, supply or sell controlled drugs
- To provide students with accurate information about drugs and other harmful substances and to make them aware of the consequences of drugs and substance misuse
- To promote a healthy lifestyle through informed judgements
- To help develop the moral courage to reject peer group pressures which may lead to experimentation with, and thereby use of, drugs
- To actively discourage the use of drugs and to treat cases of drugs usage by students as serious misconduct which will be investigated and which, if proven, will result in serious sanctions being imposed
- To ensure that all staff, both teaching and support staff, are fully aware of the school's policy towards drugs and that they have received appropriate training and guidance to help them to implement the policy in a consistent manner

Implementation

- All students in the school receive a progressive and age-appropriate programme of drugs education. This is delivered through the PSHCE programme and through academic subjects where appropriate.
- The school is vigilant with regard to drugs related issues, which includes teaching and support staff being alert to warning signs of drugs or other abuse. Staff receive appropriate training to recognise evidence of drugs abuse and to deal with drugs related issues should they arise.
- If any suspicion of drugs use arises, it is reported immediately to the Headmaster who decides if further investigation is warranted. If it is confirmed that there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that a student may have been using drugs, further investigations are conducted, which may require a student to take a drugs test should it be considered necessary.
- The school reserves the right to request testing for drugs if appropriate. If a student or his/her parent/s refuses to consent to a test the school is able to draw inferences as may be appropriate in the circumstances and which may result in the student being required to leave the school.
- The school's policy applies directly whenever the student is in the care of the school or on school premises or wearing school uniform or associated with the school within or outside school hours, including during educational trips and visits away from the school.

Further details of the school's drugs policy are available on request from the Second Deputy Head.

Solvent Abuse

Solvent abuse can take many forms. For the purposes of this policy, 'solvent abuse' includes any activity in which a student deliberately inhales fumes which have an intoxicating or sedative effect. The policy covers lighter fluid, glues and other commercially available products, in addition to organic solvents and products not usually on sale to the public.

Solvent abuse is generally not illegal, though the attendant risks can exceed those associated with abuse of illegal drugs, alcohol and tobacco. A police representative has informed us that 1 in 4 first time experiences of solvent abuse prove fatal. As a school, we believe that it is our responsibility to do all we reasonably can to deter our students from participating in such a potentially dangerous activity.

The school brings the risks of solvent and drug abuse to the attention of students in the following ways:

- As part of the structured PSHCE programme: material appropriate to their age is presented to students, with the opportunity for subsequent discussions in tutor groups.
- For students in Science classes: the broad topic of harmful substances is raised several times in Key Stage 2, 3 and 4 courses.

In cases where students have taken part in solvent abuse the response from the school seeks to meet three aims:

1. To provide a deterrent to the student and to others.
2. To persuade the student not to repeat the activity in the future.
3. To support the student in his/her efforts not to repeat the activity in the future.

Action taken is as follows:

<i>First offence</i>	Student suspended from the school, normally for two days. Discussion of the problem with parents. Student counselled by medical staff. Student placed on social report for one week and warned as to future conduct.
Subsequent offences	As 'First Offence' with longer period of suspension or requirement to leave the school, with a loss of fees already paid.

The response to more serious cases would be as described in 'subsequent offences' in the table above and could involve an immediate requirement to leave the school. Such cases would include any incident of a student supplying solvents to others, or in other ways seeking to persuade others to abuse solvents.

Alcohol

For many, the drinking of alcohol is a sociable and enjoyable part of our British culture and tradition. However, the abuse of alcohol can result in many problems in our society, i.e. crime, violence and accidents. The risks to health posed by alcohol abuse have also long been established. There may also be a risk of addiction. As a school, we believe that it is our responsibility to do all we reasonably can to educate our students about alcohol and prevent them from abusing it or becoming addicted. Consumption of alcohol, purchase and/or possession of alcohol by students (with the exception of the Sixth Form, see paragraph below) is therefore forbidden on the school campus, on school buses and on any school trip or activity involving time spent away from the campus.

The school brings the risks of alcohol abuse to the attention of students in the following ways:

- For each year group, as part of the structured PSHCE programme: material appropriate to their age is presented to students, with the opportunity for subsequent discussions in tutor groups.
- For students in Science classes: the topic is raised several times in Key Stage 3 and 4 courses.
- For all students: medical staff ensure that health promotion posters concerning alcohol abuse are prominently posted. Literature and other advice are freely available to any student who seeks help via an appointment with a doctor or member of the nursing staff.

In addition to the above, the school educates students in the Sixth Form about the use of alcohol in a friendly and family environment. The Sixth Form 'Social Club' is licensed with the local council. Subject to the rules of the club, students may purchase alcohol to accompany a meal which is provided to them free of charge on Bar Nights in the Sixth Form Centre. These events are supervised by staff, in an informal manner.

Students are responsible for ensuring that they do not over-indulge and, in any case, may not consume more than three alcoholic beverages in any one evening. Students may not take alcohol from the Sixth Form Centre. There are special occasions in the school year, e.g. the 'May Ball', when Sixth Formers may consume alcohol under the strict supervision of staff.

In cases where students are found to have purchased, or be in possession of, or to have consumed alcohol, or where a student is found suffering from the effects of alcohol abuse, the response from the school seeks to meet three aims:

1. To provide a deterrent to the student and to others.
2. To persuade the student not to abuse alcohol in the future.
3. To support the student in his /her efforts not to abuse alcohol in the future.

The procedure is as follows:

First offence	Student suspended from the school, normally for two days. Discussion of the problem with parents.
Second offence	As 'First Offence' with longer period of suspension. Parents invited in to discuss the problem, and to suggest sources of help for the student. Student counselled by medical staff.
Subsequent offences	As 'Second Offence' with longer period of suspension or requirement to leave the school, with a loss of fees already paid.

Those found in the company of drinkers will be treated as drinkers and thus dealt with in the same way.

In cases where a student's drinking results in a significant change in behaviour and the safety of themselves or other members of the school community is jeopardised, this is viewed as an even more serious misdemeanour and immediate requirement to leave the school may ensue.

Smoking

The risks to health posed by smoking tobacco have long been established. There may also be an attendant risk of starting a fire. As a school, we believe that it is our responsibility to do all we reasonably can to deter our students from starting, or continuing, a potentially addictive habit. Smoking or the possession of cigarettes by students is therefore forbidden on the school campus, on school buses and on any school trip or activity involving time spent away from the campus.

The school brings the risks of smoking to the attention of students in the following ways:

- For each year group, as part of the structured PSHCE programme: material appropriate to their age is presented to students, with the opportunity for subsequent discussions in tutor groups.
- For students in Science classes: the topic is raised several times in Key Stage 3 and 4 courses.
- For all students: medical staff ensure that health promotion posters concerning smoking are prominently posted. Literature and other advice is freely available to any student who seeks help via an appointment with a doctor or member of the nursing staff.

In cases where students are found smoking or in possession of cigarettes the response from the school seeks to meet three aims:

1. To provide a deterrent to the student and to others.
2. To persuade the student not to smoke in the future.
3. To support the student in his/her efforts not to smoke in the future.

Action taken is as follows:

<i>First offence</i>	Letter home to inform parents. Phone call to parents to discuss the problem, and to suggest sources of help for the student. Student put in Saturday detention
<i>Second offence</i>	Student suspended from school, generally for two days. Letter home to parents, stating that on return to school the student will be placed on observation report for week, and that any further infringement may lead to exclusion from the school with a loss of fees already paid.
<i>Subsequent offences</i>	As 'Second Offence' with longer period of suspension or requirement to leave the school, with a loss of fees already paid.

In cases where a student's smoking results in a significant risk of fire, the health and safety of other members of the school community are jeopardised. We view this as an even more serious misdemeanour and immediate suspension from the school may ensue.

Those found in the company of smokers will be treated as smokers and thus dealt with in the same way.

Bullying – ‘Don’t Suffer in Silence’

The school has a policy for dealing with bullying. This document tells you about what the policy is, why we have it, and what to do if you (or someone you know) is being bullied.

Aims of the Anti-Bullying Policy

- To create a happy, well-ordered and caring community;
- To raise awareness among students, parents and staff as to what constitutes bullying behaviour;
- To communicate to students, parents and staff why bullying is unacceptable, that it will not be tolerated and that victims will be supported;
- To reduce incidents of bullying through the implementation of appropriate strategies, preventative and proactive as well as reactive;
- To ensure that students have knowledge of, and access to, a support structure within the school so they can share worries and seek help;
- To implement strategies for treating bullies and victims which effect appropriate behaviour changes.

Implementation

The principle underlying the Anti-Bullying Policy is that a student who is a victim of bullying, or who witnesses an incident of bullying, should feel free to approach any member of staff for help. The member of staff is expected to act in accordance with school policy. All staff have a vital part to play in making it clear that bullying is not tolerated, in being vigilant and proactive if they note what may be developing into a bullying relationship and in being approachable and willing to offer help and support to any student who feels the need to discuss an incident.

Prevention

The school works hard to make sure that bullying does not occur. The following measures are in place to try to prevent bullying:

- Opportunities to reinforce the values of the school's Mission Statement are taken through school and year assemblies, tutor time, and night prayer for boarders.
- The PSHCE programme covers the topic of bullying.
- Appropriate opportunities are taken within the curriculum to consider issues relating to bullying.
- Incidents of bullying are reflected upon and discussed when they occur so that lessons can be learned.
- Information for students about what to do if they are being bullied is displayed around the school, including telephone numbers for the independent listener and other organisations that can help.
- Through appropriate training and induction, all staff are made aware of the school's anti-bullying policy, including new staff and support staff.
- Teaching staff, ancillary staff, prefects and monitors contribute to a suitably deployed supervisory presence around the school.
- All staff are asked to be vigilant and to be willing to take appropriate action if they suspect that a student is being bullied.

Follow Up

Where incidents of bullying do occur, the school follows them up rigorously. Different incidents require different levels of response. However, the following steps may be taken:

- Heads of Year/Housemaster/Housemistress/Head of Junior Department/Head of Nursery School (as appropriate) take responsibility for initial investigations of any reported incidents;
- students are interviewed in order to ascertain what happened;
- written statements may be required from all parties involved, signed and dated;
- if it is decided that further action is required then the Second Deputy Head is informed;
- the students involved (both bully and bullied) may be brought together with a member of staff present to try to talk it through, with the aim of apology and reconciliation, if this is appropriate;
- clear guidelines for future behaviour are issued to both parties and a code of conduct agreed. Students should know that the situation will be monitored and know of consequences for bully if bullying continues. The sanctions which might be applied are set out in the Rewards and Sanctions Policy;
- parents of bully and bullied should be kept informed, where necessary, at appropriate times during an investigation;
- Form Tutors/Class Teachers, Heads of Year/Housemaster/Housemistress/Head of Junior Department/Head of Nursery School (as appropriate) monitor the situation;
- if no improvement is seen then the Second Deputy Head implements further sanctions;
- a student who persistently makes life unhappy for others may face suspension from school or being asked to leave the school in extreme cases.

It is important to note that not all incidents will require use of all of the above steps. In many cases, a quiet word of warning is sufficient to modify behaviour. In all cases, the level of response is determined by the facts that emerge from an investigation into an incident.

Students need to know:

- the aims of the school's bullying policy;
- the school's definition of bullying behaviour;
- the signs to look out for in case a friend is being bullied;
- the ways in which they can report an incident of bullying;
- that they will be taken seriously if they report an incident of bullying;
- that any information they give will be dealt with as confidentially as possible;
- the methods used by the school to prevent bullying from occurring;
- an outline of the school's procedures when an incident of bullying is reported, including the possible sanctions that might be used against those who bully.

Important Information About Bullying

The following information is intended to raise awareness of some of the important signs and symptoms that are displayed by both those who bully and those who are bullied.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is the wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone. Bullying can take many forms – physical, verbal or psychological. It may be carried out by individuals or groups and is characterised by repeated behaviour against the victim. The three main features are:

- deliberate aggression;
- unequal power relationships;
- behaviour which results in pain or distress.

Bullying includes:

- threats of violence, both verbal and non-verbal;
- actual violence;
- ignoring or shunning;
- teasing;
- name calling;
- interfering with property;
- deliberately damaging another's possessions or work;
- racially offensive remarks and/or behaviour;
- sexually offensive remarks and/or behaviour;
- offensive remarks about a physical or other disability;
- incitement by others to commit an act of bullying;
- graffiti designed to intimidate and/or embarrass;
- ridiculing, mimicking, sarcasm;
- demanding money, material goods and/or favours through intimidation or force;
- vandalism;
- intimidation;
- deliberately trying to turn friends against one another by spreading false rumours;
- any other behaviour which is intended to cause distress to others.

What Are the Signs of Bullying?

The following signs may indicate that a young person is being bullied. He/she may:

- suffer damage or loss to items such as clothing, property and school work more often than might be considered normal;
- suffer unexplained injuries;
- become withdrawn and be reluctant to say why;
- display a reduction in educational attainment, either gradually or suddenly;
- be reluctant to go to school;
- be reluctant to travel to and from school by bus, indicating problems during the journey;
- display unusual patterns of behaviour with regard to money and/or possessions;
- become depressed;
- be reluctant to eat or play normally;
- appear generally unhappy, moody and/or irritable;
- visit the Medical Centre more frequently than usual.

Taken individually, the above may not be due to bullying, but a combination of even some of these signs could be a reason to suspect it.

Victims of Bullying

Students who feel that they are being bullied should feel confident about reporting any incident and should have as many ways of reporting it as possible, for example:

- telling a friend who will pass the information on to an adult;
- telling a prefect or monitor who will pass the information on to an adult;
- telling his/her Class Teacher or Form Tutor;
- telling his/her Head of Year/Head of Junior Department/Head of Nursery School;
- telling a member of the boarding staff;
- telling a member of the chaplaincy team;
- telling a member of the senior management team;
- telling any other member of staff.

Incidents of bullying reported by students are always taken seriously. Information reported to staff is treated as confidentially as possible.

Cyber-Bullying

Cyber-bullying is the use of information and communication devices and services to bully, harass or intimidate an individual or group, for example:

- Bullying by texts, messages or calls on mobile phones
- Using mobile phone cameras to cause distress, fear or humiliation, e.g. 'Happy Slapping'
- Posting threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating material on websites
- Deliberately excluding others from friends' lists on social networking sites

Key Safety Advice for Parents

- Be aware, your child may as likely cyber-bully as be a target of cyber-bullying. Be alert to your child seeming upset after using the internet or their mobile phone. This might involve subtle comments or changes in relationships with friends. They might be unwilling to talk or be secretive about their online activities and mobile phone use.
- Talk with your children and understand the ways in which they are using the internet and their mobile phone.
- Remind your child not to retaliate.
- Keep the evidence of offending emails, text messages or online conversations.
- Report cyber-bullying:
- Contact your son/daughter's Head of Year if it involves another student, so that we can take appropriate action.
- Contact the service provider.
- If the cyber-bullying is serious and a potential criminal offence has been committed, after consultation with the school, consider contacting the police.

The school regards incidents of cyber-bullying as it does bullying in any other form and the school's Anti-bullying Policy will be applied in the same way.

Personal Relationships

The school tries hard to promote and encourage friendly and positive relationships between students because this is seen as being one of the keys to a civilised and well-ordered community. The guiding principle on personal relationships for the whole community must be respect for others at all times. This includes respecting those who have different values and opinions. It also includes behaving in a considerate manner that considers the feelings of all. For this reason, excessive displays of affection, apart from normal greetings, are not allowed. Sexual relationships between students are forbidden in any circumstances. Students who overstep the boundaries will face serious disciplinary action.

Areas of School that are Out of Bounds

- Sixth Form areas and other designated Senior School areas, the Newman Building and the Nursery School can only be visited by those in the appropriate year groups, or with express permission from a member of staff.
- The classroom blocks, except during lesson and prep time, can only be visited by those collecting something from their own locker room.

The following areas of the school are out of bounds:

- The sports hall, swimming pool and surrounds, changing rooms, theatre, music hall, all-weather pitch and tennis courts, except for staff supervised lessons and activities.
- The woods and playing fields beyond the cricket nets and score box, the Aerodrome buildings and playing fields.
- The area around the Maintenance Department and the farm.
- The school cemetery.
- All areas around private staff accommodation in the grounds and in the main school building.
- All roofs and fire escapes (except in cases of emergency when the alarm sounds).
- The front and back drives, except for access.
- Boys must not visit the girls' boarding house.
- Girls must not visit the boys' boarding house.
- Day students must not visit either the girls' or boys' boarding houses, or the boarders' lounge.

Cars

N.B. In the following section, the term 'car' is used as a generic term for all motorised vehicles, including motor bikes and scooters. The rules apply equally to all vehicles.

At the start of the school year, a letter is sent to the parents of all Sixth Form students, explaining the school's rules and expectations with regard to the use of cars by students. It contains a reply slip for parents to return to the school if they wish to give their approval for students to drive cars or to be passengers in cars driven by other students. On receipt of this parental approval, the school then gives the appropriate permissions. Spare copies of this letter are available from the Assistant Head, Mr Sharpe.

Students and parents must note that cars are brought to school at the owner's risk. The school's insurance policy does not cover damage or loss from vehicles on the school campus.

- Cars must not be driven to school by students until parental approval has been given and the written permission of the Assistant Head has been granted.
- Cars driven by students must not be used to transport other students until approval from both drivers and the passengers parents has been given and the written permission of the Assistant Head has been granted from both the driver's and the passenger's parents.
- **On arriving at school, drivers must hand in car keys at the Sixth Form Study Centre.** These can be collected immediately before departure at the end of the school day.
- Cars must only be used for transport between home and school.
- Students are only allowed to leave the campus during the school day in exceptional circumstances and with the specific permission of the Head of Year 12, the Assistant Head or the Second Deputy Head.
- Boarders who bring cars to school **must** leave their car keys with their Housemaster/Housemistress.
- Boarders **must** obtain permission from their Housemaster/Housemistress if they wish to leave the school campus in the evening or at weekends. This permission will be granted only in exceptional circumstances. As with day students, boarders' cars are to be used only for transport between home and school.
- Cars must be driven sensibly and responsibly on the campus.
- Cars must be parked in designated parking areas, usually for students on the sports hall car park.
- All speed limits on the school campus must be observed.

<i>First offence</i>	Phone call to inform parents. Saturday morning detention.
<i>Second offence</i>	Letter home to inform Drivers: Loss of permission to bring a car to school for a minimum of four weeks. Passengers: Loss of permission to be a passenger in any student's car for a minimum of four weeks.
<i>Subsequent offences</i>	As 'Second Offence' with the likelihood of loss of permission for a longer period of time which may lead to permanent removal of permission.

The Wearing of Seatbelts in Vehicles

In order to ensure that all journeys by Ratcliffe students are undertaken in the safest possible manner, it is the school's policy that **seatbelts must be worn at all times by all staff and students in cars (including taxis), minibuses and coaches**. All staff and students are made aware of this and are asked to adhere to the policy strictly. We will do everything we reasonably can to enforce this policy.

The school uses Ausden Clark for almost all of its coach hire, including the school buses in the morning and evening. Members of staff do not travel on these buses so it is not possible for us to guarantee that seatbelts are worn by students. Depending on the age of the passengers, the current law does not insist that the coach driver is responsible for ensuring that everyone is wearing a seatbelt. We have met with Ausden Clark representatives and we have asked them to make sure that all their drivers are aware of the school's policy, but ultimately each student is responsible for ensuring that he/she is wearing a seatbelt at all times.

We therefore ask parents to help us to reinforce this message about the use of seatbelts to students, so that we can continue to ensure the safety of all students when they travel in vehicles.

Mobile Phones

Mobile phones represent an important advance in communication technology and we recognise the advantages to parents, students and staff. However, the potential disturbance caused by mobile phones in a school environment is the overriding principle in formulating our policies. We are also mindful of security issues arising when mobile phones are brought into school. Students have access to payphones at school and, in case of emergency, are allowed to use a school phone. Messages from parents to students are passed via tutors. For all of these reasons we recommend that students do not bring mobile phones into school, but they are allowed to do so within the following guidelines.

- Mobile phones must be turned off during all lessons, prep times and other school activities.
- They must be used only for genuinely urgent reasons during the day. This would normally be to arrange transport home at the end of the day. They may be used for social calls in the evenings and at weekends.
- The sending or recording of obscene or threatening messages is illegal, as are 999 calls when there is no emergency.
- Possession of another person's mobile phone, without permission, will be considered as theft.
- The school cannot be held responsible for the security of mobile phones unless they have been handed in to Boarding Staff or Year Heads for safekeeping.
- Failure to adhere to these guidelines, **or any misuse of a mobile phone**, is likely to result in loss of permission to bring a mobile phone to school for a specified period of time.

We are aware that the technology with regard to mobile phones is changing rapidly and the school reserves the right to change these guidelines as appropriate.

Personal Music Systems

Although personal music systems are not banned in school, students are strongly discouraged from bringing them in. Items such as mp3 players and ipods must not be used in class, they must not be worn while moving around the school and they must not be used in the refectory.

They may be used by students who stay for prep, and by Sixth Form students during private study lessons, but only if played at a volume that does not disturb others. They may also be used on coaches and minibuses while travelling to away fixtures or on other school trips.

All personal music systems are brought to school at the owner's risk (see section below about personal property). **Students are strongly advised not to bring these items to school.**

Personal Property

All personal property including clothing, shoes, sports kit, calculators, etc, must be clearly marked with the student's name and RC number. Cloth label tapes on clothes must be sew-in not iron-on. We do not advise the use of marker pens on clothing items. **It is inadvisable to bring expensive items to school. They are not covered under Ratcliffe's insurance and we cannot be held responsible for loss, damage or theft.**

Lost Property

Property will sometimes be misplaced. Whenever property is found it should be handed over to the school's care at one of the following places: reception, the laundry or the Housekeeper's office. A record is kept of all items handed in. Items of clothing will be passed to the laundry and, time permitting, will be cleaned. The Housekeeper will store other items. If a student loses property they should report it to the Housekeeper's office, which is open daily for this purpose from 1.15 - 1.45pm.

Students can visit the Housekeeper's office or the laundry in order to claim lost items. Unclaimed named items are collected together each half term and given to the appropriate Head of Year for distribution. Unnamed and unclaimed items are displayed regularly outside the laundry so that students can reclaim lost items. Students are asked to contact the Housekeeper if they know that specific items are missing. All remaining unclaimed items will eventually be given to charity.

Electrical Safety

All electrical appliances in the school are annually tested for electrical safety. Inevitably students bring their own appliances such as 'lap top' computers into school and use the mains electricity supply. In order to fulfil our safety regulations all appliances brought into school must either carry a PAT certificate or appliances must have a circuit breaker placed between them and the mains power outlet. Circuit breakers can be obtained from any DIY outlet or electrical supplier.

Lockers

A locker is provided for all students. Some lockers have their own keys and some require padlocks. Students will be informed at the start of the year whether or not a padlock is needed. Students must take responsibility for their own locker and make sure that their possessions are properly secured. A charge of £7.50 will be made to replace lost keys.

Computer Rooms Rules

The following rules are issued to students with regard to the use of the Computer Rooms. The Computer Rooms contain a great deal of expensive and delicate equipment, which is designed to help **your** education in many ways and to ensure an educational atmosphere. The rules are necessary in order to minimise the need for costly repairs and to enable others to benefit as well as yourself.

General Rules

NO sweets, chewing gum, food or drinks are to be brought into the Computer Rooms.

- Students should not be in the Computer Rooms without the knowledge of a member of staff.
- Please minimise the presence of files and textbooks on the computer benches.
- Dress code - no games kit or shorts to be worn in the computer rooms.
- Do not touch any of the cables or connectors associated with the computing equipment. Do not misuse or damage the computer mouse. These items are expensive to replace.
- Any problems with equipment must be reported to the teacher in charge **immediately**.
- Computers will normally be switched on when you come into the room. On **NO** account must you switch computers on or off unless you are told to.
- Any person who introduces a program to the network from the Internet or memory stick will no longer be allowed access to the network.
- Your directory forms part of your assessment. It should contain **only** your coursework, which should be identified by sensible file names.
- Passwords - your password is your security, and must be taken seriously. If it is found that others know your password, then it will be changed immediately.
- **Any misuse of equipment or software will result in a total ban from network use.**
- Teachers will, from time to time, check the contents of your user area. Any files which are frivolous or offensive will result in a ban from network use.
- The use of the Internet is your right. But, with rights go responsibilities. In using the Internet you are expected to behave in a responsible way. The Internet and Email are liable to be checked and censored. Anything considered offensive will be intercepted and will result in your removal from the Internet and Email. Note that Hotmail is not available in school.
- Laptop computers may only be used with the consent of the teacher in charge. Consent will only be given to those who have been granted permission by the Examination Boards. They must **not** be plugged into the mains without permission.

Users are not able to access the network without agreeing to the school's 'Acceptable Use Policy'. You must read this before accepting it.

Laptop Computers

Parents should be aware that students are not permitted to use laptops in lessons unless they have been assessed as having a Special Educational Need which recommends the use of a laptop.

If you feel that your child has a Special Educational Need, which requires the use of a laptop, please do not hesitate to contact our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, Mrs J Cluley, who will be able to advise you.

Other students do not need to use laptops in school because the school's provision of computing facilities, together with the very generous time provision for Core ICT, are more than adequate for their needs. Those with computers at home can transfer work between home and school on memory sticks, subject to virus-scanning. At least one of the computer rooms is open every lunchtime, and during prep, for students to work. For boarders, the rooms are also open every evening and throughout the weekend.

We recognise that it is increasingly the norm for computing facilities to be available in the home. At school, our computers have Microsoft Office 2003 running on Windows XP. You may wish to ensure that your home computers are compatible with this. Those students who are producing coursework should ensure that up to date versions of this are saved on the school network. For many courses, this is an examination board requirement.

Please bear in mind the following points:-

- **Laptops are brought in at the student's own risk, especially as there is no safe storage for these machines, other than lockers. They should be adequately insured against loss or damage.**
- As with other electrical equipment, they must be electrically tested, before being brought to school.
- Students will have this extra load to carry around with them all day. It has been noticed that there is an increasing tendency for laptops to be left lying around in Common Rooms and corridors.
- There are not always the facilities to plug them in, and batteries may well not last all day.
- Student's work on a laptop will not be as secure against loss or corruption as it is on the network, where all work is backed up five times a week.
- Laptops can be a potential distraction in lessons, not only for the user but also for other students.
- **Any inappropriate use of a laptop computer will result in a student being banned from bringing one into school.**

Use of the Internet

The school encourages use by students of the rich information resources available on the Internet, together with the appropriate skills to analyse and evaluate such resources. These skills will be fundamental in the society our students will be entering. In addition, every student has his or her own Email address, providing a window to the world of communication.

Access to on-line resources enables students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, and bulletin boards while exchanging messages with people throughout the world. Both the school and the service provider we have chosen, Research Machines plc, do as much as possible to filter out material of an offensive nature. There is monitoring of the content of Emails. Nevertheless, the nature of the Internet means that sites which contain offensive material are constantly changing, and no filtering system can be guaranteed to be perfect.

However, the school believes that the benefits to students from access to information resources and increased opportunities for collaboration exceed the disadvantages. The Head of Information and Communication Technology, Mr H Midgley, prepares appropriate procedures for the use of the Internet and for reviewing and evaluating its effect on teaching and learning. The school has developed a set of guidelines for Internet use which are given to all students, and kept under constant review. A copy of these guidelines is available on request from Mr Midgley.

School Meals and Food

At lunchtime a wide selection of meals is provided for all students. At tea time (4.20pm-4.45pm) a drink and a snack are available for those students staying in school for prep and activities after school.

The School Shop sells tuck at breaktime and lunchtime and the Rosmini Sixth Form Centre has a café on the ground floor, selling a range of drinks and snacks. Students also have access to vending machines which sell drinks, including water, sweets and snacks. The vending machines are fitted with timing devices which do not allow students access to them during lesson time. The school tries to ensure that a balanced range of products is available to students and we have introduced 'healthy options' wherever possible.

Drinking water machines are located at various points around the school and the refectory is open at breaktime for students to have a drink of water if required.

All students are expected to attend lunch in the refectory at their designated time and the importance of healthy eating is stressed through both academic subjects and in the Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education programme.

Students must not take food or drink out of the refectory. Items from vending machines must be consumed in designated common room areas or outside the school buildings, and all litter must be disposed of in the bins provided. On safety grounds, students must not drink from cans or bottles or eat sweets, especially sweets on sticks, while moving around the school.



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