



# ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

The RAC Saddle Club

Date of Policy January 2026 Date of Review January 2027

## Purpose

This Anti-Bullying Policy explains how The RAC Saddle Club Alternative Provision (RACSC AP) works to prevent bullying, respond to concerns, and keep all students safe. It is grounded in **trauma-informed practice** and aligned with Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership (DSCP) guarding duties.

This policy applies to all students, staff, volunteers, and visitors during:

- Riding lessons
- Yard activities
- Classroom sessions
- Break times
- Off-site visits and events

## Our commitment

At RACSC AP, we believe:

- Everyone has the right to feel safe, valued, and respected.
- Bullying can cause serious emotional harm and may be a safeguarding concern.
- Past trauma and life experiences can affect behaviour and must be met with understanding alongside clear boundaries.

We commit to:

- Taking all bullying concerns seriously.
- Acting quickly, fairly, and consistently.
- Listening to students and involving them in solutions.
- Using restorative and supportive approaches wherever possible.
- Following Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership (DSCP) safeguarding procedures and guidance.

## What is bullying?

Bullying is **repeated behaviour** that is meant to hurt, scare, or control someone. It can be:

- **Verbal** – name-calling, teasing, threats, racist/sexist/homophobic language
- **Physical** – hitting, pushing, damaging belongings
- **Emotional** – excluding someone, spreading rumours, intimidation
- **Online (cyberbullying)** – messages, images, or posts that upset or humiliate someone

Bullying can be based on:

- Appearance

- Disability or special educational needs
- Race, culture, or religion
- Gender or sexuality
- Family background
- Any other personal difference

### What Is NOT Bullying?

We understand that not all conflict is bullying. The following are **not** bullying (though they may still need support):

- One-off arguments or disagreements
- Accidental hurt or misunderstandings
- Falling out between friends
- Playful behaviour where everyone feels safe and respected

### Safeguarding and Child Protection Links (DSCP)

In line with DSCP guidance:

- Bullying may be a **safeguarding concern** if it involves significant harm, exploitation, coercion, discrimination, or emotional abuse.
- Any bullying that raises concerns about a child's safety or welfare must be reported immediately to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**.
- If a crime may have been committed (e.g., assault, hate crime, serious threats), the DSL will seek advice from Children's Social Care or the Police.
- Where an allegation involves a member of staff or volunteer, procedures will follow the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** process.

### Preventing Bullying

We prevent bullying by:

- Teaching respect, kindness, and empathy
- Setting clear expectations for behaviour
- Creating predictable routines and safe spaces
- Encouraging students to speak up
- Providing trusted adults to talk to
- Celebrating differences and inclusion

- Embedding trauma-informed and restorative practice

### What to Do If You Are Being Bullied

Students are encouraged to:

- Tell a trusted adult straight away
- Tell a parent/carer or school
- Use a worry box or reporting system (if available)
- Keep messages or evidence (for online bullying)

You will be:

- Listened to seriously
- Supported and believed
- Protected from retaliation

### What to Do If You See Bullying

If you witness bullying, we ask you to:

- Tell a member of staff
- Support the person being bullied
- Avoid joining in or sharing harmful messages

### How We Respond to Bullying

RACSC AP uses a **trauma-informed, restorative, and safeguarding-led approach.**

#### Immediate Safety

- We make sure everyone is safe.
- We stop the bullying behaviour.
- We separate students if needed.
- We provide medical or emotional support where required.

#### Listening and Investigation

- We listen to all sides calmly and fairly.
- We record all incidents using safeguarding recording systems.
- We assess risk and seriousness.
- We involve parents/carers and referring schools where appropriate.
- We refer to the DSL for all serious or repeated incidents.

## Restorative Support

- We help the person harmed feel safe and supported.
- We work with the person who bullied to understand the impact of their behaviour.
- We agree clear steps to repair harm and prevent it happening again.

## Consequences (If Needed)

Where bullying continues or is serious:

- We use fair and proportionate consequences.
- We create a behaviour support plan.
- We may restrict activities or, in extreme cases, consider temporary suspension.
- All consequences will be explained and time limited.

## Confidentiality and Information Sharing

In line with DSCP guidance:

- We treat information sensitively and share it on a **need-to-know basis**.
- We never promise complete confidentiality if a student is at risk of harm.
- Safeguarding information will be recorded and stored securely.

## Support for All Students

We provide:

- Emotional support for the person harmed
- Guidance and mentoring for the person who bullied
- Check-ins to make sure the situation has improved
- Adjustments to routines or groups if needed
- Referral to external support services where appropriate

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Students

- Treat others with respect
- Report bullying
- Support peers

## Staff

- Take concerns seriously
- Act quickly and consistently
- Record incidents
- Report safeguarding concerns to the DSL
- Follow DSCP procedures

## Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- Lead safeguarding responses
- Liaise with Children's Social Care, Police, and DSCP partners
- Maintain Dorset Children's Services
- Decide when thresholds for referral are met

## Parents/Carers and Schools

- Report concerns
- Work with RACSC AP to support students

## Whistleblowing

Any staff or volunteer who has concerns about poor practice, bullying, or safeguarding failures must report these concerns through RACSC AP's whistleblowing procedures or directly to the DSL.

## Monitoring and Review

This policy will be:

- Reviewed annually
- Updated following serious incidents
- Shared with students, parents/carers, and schools
- Audited against DSCP guidance