

Charlton House Independent School



'Love One Another'

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Reference:

Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE – 2020)
'Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools' (DCSF-00656-2007)
'Bullying – A Charter for Action, (DCSF – 00657-2007)
The Prevent Strategy (2011) and Channel Guidance (2015)
Criminal Justice Courts Act (2015 – IIOC s.33)
Independent School Standards Regulations (2010)
Equality Act (2010)
Prevent and Tackle Bullying (DFE - 2014)

DEFINITION

Bullying may be defined as any deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually but not exclusively repeated over a period of time, which intentionally hurts another pupil, or group of pupils, either physically or emotionally. Bullying not only affects the child or adult that is being bullied but can have a seriously detrimental effect on their close family members too. It should be acknowledged that bullies might also need help to identify why they choose to behave the way they do and these reasons can be complex. Bullying can take place between students, between students and staff, or between staff; by individuals or groups; face-to-face, indirectly or using a range of cyberbullying methods.

Examples of unacceptable bullying behaviour might include:

- Physical (including sexual) assault - hitting, kicking, slapping, theft
- Verbal abuse - including, but not exclusive of, name calling, racist remarks, mobile phone communication
- Hate Crime e.g. race, religion, or culture
- Peer on peer abuse (targeting vulnerable members of the community e.g. someone with autism) and special education needs (SEN) or disabilities, appearance or health conditions, sexual orientation, home circumstances e.g. young carers or looked-after children
- Psychological abuse - texting, e-mail, spreading rumours, excluding someone from indirect social groups
- Cyber-bullying - using social websites, mobile phones, text messaging, photographs, sexting, video and e-mail *
- Pressure or violence from gang members that isolate their victim
- Prejudice based abuse e.g. sexual orientation
- Faith based abuse e.g. Islamophobia or abuse aligned to witchcraft/possession
- Prejudice and discrimination against any of the protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity.

COLLECTIVE APPROACH

Signs that might indicate bullying is occurring include:

- change of friendship groups
- lack of friends or isolation from normal friendship groups
- school rejection – refusing to go to school in the morning or crying when coming to school
- illness at certain times or on certain days
- changes in standard of work
- withdrawal/sudden lack of confidence
- severe case of depression
- physical signs like bruising and cuts

Although the above list is most likely to apply to the victims, changes in behaviour could indicate that someone has developed antisocial traits and may be bullying.

All staff members are asked to note changes in behaviour. All pupils must be encouraged to report any bullying they are aware of; bullying thrives on silence.

Staff should be aware of any changes in behaviour from a student that might indicate bullying is taking place because of religious or cultural reasons. Charlton House Independent School recognises that this type of alienation could lead to a student feeling isolated and, as a consequence, becoming vulnerable to grooming from extremist groups.

If a teacher has a concern for the wellbeing and safety of a child then they must contact the Designated Safeguard Lead (DSL), Louise Blake or the Deputy DSL, Alice Kavanagh, immediately.

***If the Student is a victim of cyberbullying:**

RESPONDING TO CYBERBULLYING

Most cases of cyber-bullying will be dealt with through the schools existing Anti Bullying Policy and Behaviour Policy.

Some features of cyberbullying differ from other forms of bullying and may prompt a particular response. The key differences are:

- Impact: the scale and scope of cyber-bullying can be greater than other forms of bullying
- Targets and perpetrators: the people involved may have a different profile to traditional bullies and their targets.
- Location: the 24/7 and anywhere nature of cyber-bullying
- Anonymity: the person being bullied will not always know who is bullying them
- Motivation: some students may not be aware that what they are doing is bullying
- Evidence: unlike other forms of bullying, the target of the bullying might have evidence of its occurrence e.g. screenshots or text messages
- It is possible that a member of staff may be a victim and these responses also apply to them.
- It should be noted that peer on peer abuse can be misidentified as bullying. If peer on-peer abuse is suspected, then you should inform the DSL/ DDSL immediately.

STUDENTS

Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Immediately ensuring that the student is safe and that any physical violence has stopped.
- Offering an immediate opportunity, or as soon as possible, for the pupil to discuss the experience with a form tutor/class teacher or member of staff of their choice. Completing an investigation statement where appropriate.
- Reassuring the pupil – this might include removing the student from class, with or without a friend, to allow them to calm down.
- Offering continuous support via the Well-being Officer.
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence – this could be through informal conversations with the pupil or a recommendation to parent/carers/carers for counselling.
- If appropriate, advice about how to keep safe on the internet and the appropriate use of social media and modern technology
- Students who have bullied will be helped by:
 - Discussing what happened and completing an investigation statement if appropriate
 - Discovering why the pupil became involved
 - Establishing the wrongdoing and need to change and offering support to help the student change negative behaviours
 - Informing parent/carers or guardians to help change the attitude of the student
 - If appropriate, advice given about appropriate use of social media and modern technology

The school will also open its door to support parent/carers and family members who have been affected by bullying. Charlton House Independent School will work with any external agencies that might offer support to either the bullied or bullying pupil.

The following disciplinary steps can be taken (in conjunction with the behaviour policy and exclusion policy):

- Counselling the victim(s) and the bully(ies) via the Well-being Officer, Mrs N Harry, or class teacher
- Official warnings to cease offending – letter or email home
- Minor fixed-term exclusion in conjunction with the Behaviour Policy and Exclusion policy.
- Major fixed-term exclusion at the Headteacher's discretion and in conjunction with the Behaviour Policy and Exclusion policy.
- Permanent exclusion - at the Headteacher's discretion and in conjunction with the Behaviour Policy and Exclusion Policy.

It is the school's aim that all matters to do with bullying will be dealt with sympathetically and professionally. Victims need to have confidence that they will receive a sympathetic hearing and that effective action will follow. Perpetrators need to understand that it is in their own interest to talk openly about their attitudes and behaviour. They should be given the opportunity to modify their attitude to others without loss of dignity themselves.

STAFF BULLYING

It should be acknowledged that adults can also become victims of bullying. Charlton House Independent School does not support or condone bullying in any form. If a member of staff feels that they are being bullied by a colleague, they should inform their line manager or a member of the Senior Leadership Team that they trust. The incident/s will be fully investigated and appropriate measures will be taken to ensure that the situation is dealt with fairly and justly. Similarly, if a staff member feels that a student or parent/carer has used social media in an inappropriate way towards them this should be reported to their line manager or the Headteacher. If the staff member feels they are being bullied by the Headteacher, they should inform the Chair of Governors.

CURRICULUM

Within the curriculum, staff will strive to raise the awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in RE, PSHE, Relationship education, Computing lessons and assemblies as appropriate, in an attempt to eradicate such behaviour.

Allegations of bullying - steps to be taken

This policy should be read in conjunction with the behaviour policy.

- If an allegation of bullying is made by a student, then the member of staff receiving the allegation should establish the level of anxiety. If the level of anxiety is low, then staff should restore cordiality through verbal communication with the complainant and the accused. It is advantageous to bring the students together at this point. If an allegation is made by a parent/carer then the member of staff should make it clear that the best way for the matter to be resolved is for staff to speak with the pupil in question and establish the level of anxiety.
- If the level of anxiety is significant, a written statement may be taken from the student (signed and dated) with the member of staff fielding the allegation. If suspicions are raised by staff or parent/carers/carers, this should also be recorded in writing.
- The allegations and evidence should then pass to the relevant class teacher or Well-being Officer.
- The class teacher or Well-being Officer should offer to conduct a full investigation into the matter. This investigation will include witness statements, and the questioning of the alleged person responsible.
- The class teacher or Well-being Officer may seek the advice and support of the Headteacher during the investigation, and must refer the case to the Head Teacher in the case serious bullying being proven. Parent/carers/carers of both the bullied and bullying pupils will be kept informed either by telephone, letter, or email. If the bullying has been persistent and contact has already been made with parent/carers, then a face-to-face meeting should be held by the class teacher and the Headteacher.

- The Headteacher will agree the appropriate course of action and the behaviour policy will be adhered to when making decisions about sanctions.
- The Headteacher will determine appropriate sanctions for the person responsible (in line with the Behaviour Policy).
- Parent/carers should be informed throughout the process and often will be invited to school to discuss the matter and its resolution. All staff are to make accurate records of interviews and also record the process followed in each case on the behaviour log. If a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm; the investigation should be halted, with only a verbatim record of the child's words. The incident should be immediately raised with the Designated Safeguard Lead or the Deputy DSL and action taken.

Staff should be aware that some types of harassing and threatening behaviour, or communications, could be a criminal offence; if staff feel that an offence has been committed they should seek assistance from the Headteacher and consideration given to the involvement of Police and/or Children's Social Care.

LEGAL DUTIES AND POWERS

- The school has a duty to protect all its members and provide a safe, healthy environment.
- The Headteacher has the power 'to such extent as is reasonable' to regulate the conduct of pupils when they are off-site or not under the control or charge of a member of staff. (Education and Inspections Act 2006);
- If cyber bullying has been used then the school staff may request a student to reveal a message or other phone content and may confiscate a phone; they may not search the contents of the phone unless the Headteacher agrees
- Some cyberbullying activities could be criminal offences under a range of different laws including the Protection from Harassment Act 1997. Any illegal actions will be reported to the Police by calling 111. The DSL should be informed immediately.

Who to contact?

Charlton House Independent School Designated Safeguard Lead: Louise Blake
Deputy Safeguarding Lead, Alice Kavanagh

School office 02380 671739

- <https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/> - Anti-bullying alliance
- <https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/> - for cyberbullying help
- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/bullying-and-cyberbullying/> - NSPCC anti-bullying advice
- <https://www.childline.org.uk/> - Childline

08088002222 - Call Childline
116123 - text The Samaritans

**Reviewed and approved by the full governing body Feb
2021 To be reviewed by FGB Feb 2022**

Date				
Reviewed by				