ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Note: This policy applies to the Early Years Foundation Stage as well as to the whole school.

Introduction

The governors of Chesham Preparatory School value the good relationships fostered by the School and within its community, placing great importance upon respect, fairness, courtesy to others, tolerance and understanding.

Positive steps are taken to promote the very best behaviour between individuals and groups, amongst all children and adults.

It is recognised, however, that despite the individual and collective efforts and strategies of all involved in the welfare of children and staff, there may be occasions when unpleasant behaviour of a bullying nature can take place. It is the governors' expectation that, in all such circumstances, every allegation will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly and fairly.

The governors consider that children should be given strategies to deal with perceptions of victimisation and to recognise, understand and know how to ask for help.

Adhering to the Independent Schools Standards Regulations (3.(2)(a), the School has a written policy and working practice to both help staff and pupils to prevent bullying and to deal with it effectively when it occurs.

This policy has been drawn up with due reference to:

- **DfE Guidance, July 2017, "Preventing and tackling bullying - advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies";**
- **the DfE document, September 2019, "Keeping children safe in education";**
- **the School Behaviour, Discipline and Exclusions Policy;**
- **the School Complaints Policy and Procedure;**
- **the School policy for e-safety.**

Parents/guardians play an important role in supporting the School in maintaining high standards of behaviour. It is essential that consistent expectations of behaviour exist between school and home, and that they co-operate closely together. Parental acceptance of this policy forms part of our standard terms and conditions.

All staff, pupils and parents should be aware of the negative effects that bullying can have on individuals and the School in general, and should work towards ensuring that pupils can work in an environment without fear. **Bullying is unacceptable in this School and will not be tolerated**. The School also recognises that because of the verdicts in bullying cases it must take note of bullying perpetrated outside school that spills over into the School. The School will do what is reasonably practicable to eliminate any such bullying.

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1. Aims and objectives of this policy

The overall aims of this policy are the prevention of bullying and, should instances of bullying occur, to help staff and pupils to deal with it effectively. In this respect the School seeks to:

- demonstrate that the School takes bullying seriously and that bullying behaviour in any form will not be tolerated;
- ensure that pupils learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment, without fear of being bullied;
- support high expectations of pupils' behaviour, as detailed in the School's Behaviour, Discipline and Exclusions Policy;
- ensure that everyone connected with the School is aware of the nature and types of bullying that may occur, both in and out of school, and their causes and effects;
- take all measures to prevent all forms of bullying in the School and on off-site activities;
- support everyone in the actions to identify and protect those who might be bullied;
- promote an environment where it is right and safe to tell someone about bullying;
- demonstrate to all that the safety and happiness of pupils is enhanced by dealing positively with bullying;
- ensure that everyone is aware of their responsibilities in addressing bullying issues;
- provide regular staff training in relation to the prevention of and response to bullying;
- provide a consistent school response to any bullying and have clear procedures for dealing with incidents, including the recording of any allegations and their outcome;
- provide appropriate support for both victim and bully.

2. Definition of bullying

The Anti Bullying Alliance defines bullying as follows:

"The intentional, repetitive or persistent hurting of one person by another, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power."

Bullying exists in many different forms. It can happen anywhere, both in and out of school, and it can be either physical or emotional in nature. In its worst form, bullying can cause psychological damage and even suicide. (Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws that apply to harassment and threatening behaviour.)

Under the Children Act 1989, a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) should report their concerns to the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). Even where safeguarding is not considered an issue, schools may need to draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any

underlying issue which has contributed to a child engaging in bullying. In cases when the DSL is unavailable, the Deputy DSLs should take on this role, although any member of staff may contact the LSCB, ensuring that they make the DSL aware of their actions and all details pertaining to the issue of concern.

3.   Types of bullying

Bullying can take various different forms, including:

- Physical **-** kicking, hitting, pushing, punching, intimidating behaviour, interference with personal property or any use of violence.
- Emotional/psychological **-** eg threats, taunts, sarcasm, shunning/ostracism, name-calling/verbal abuse or spreading of rumours, being unfriendly, excluding, ignoring, alienating or tormenting (eg hiding books, threatening gestures).
- Cyber-bullying - this may include abuse online or via text message, interfering with electronic files, setting up or promoting inappropriate websites and inappropriate sharing of images from webcams/mobile phones, email and internet chat room misuse. Cyber-bullying has subsequently been defined as "when the internet, cell phones or other devices are used to send or post text or images intended to hurt or embarrass another person". Cyber-bullying can be carried out through text messaging, e-mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, social media sites and websites.
- Sexist or sexual bullying - the use of verbal insults or negative stereotyping based on gender, name calling or spreading rumours, or unwanted/inappropriate physical contact or sexual innuendo.
- Bullying related to race, religion or culture - this may include physical, verbal, racial taunts, gestures, written graffiti, online or text abuse or ridicule based on differences of race, colour, ethnicity, nationality, culture or language and negative stereotyping, name-calling or ridiculing based on religion, belief or culture.
- Bullying related to sexual orientation - innuendo or negative stereotyping based on sexual orientation or use of homophobic language.
- Bullying related to special educational needs/having EAL - bullying may be physical or emotional and adults should be aware that it might be harder for SEN pupils and those with learning difficulties to build friendships and relationships. This may include name-calling, innuendo, negative stereotyping or excluding from activity based on disability or learning difficulties.
- Bullying related to appearance or health conditions - this might include taunts, name-calling, teasing and put-downs.
- Bullying of a child who is adopted.
- Bullying of young carers, looked after children, or otherwise related to home circumstances.

In any case, bullying can be identified as deliberately hurtful behaviour, whether physical or psychological, repeated over a period of time where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. According to 'Kidscape', it involves deliberate and/or persistent aggression and unequal power relationships, resulting in pain and distress.

4.   Signs of bullying

Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, eg becoming shy, tearful and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be changes in work patterns, a lack of concentration, or truancy. They may include:

- unwillingness to return to school;
- frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class;
- feels ill in the morning;
- displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet;

- starts stammering;
- displays strange eating habits or stops eating;
- failure to produce work, or producing unusually bad work, including homework, that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others;
- books, bags, clothes and other belongings suddenly go missing or are damaged;
- change to established habits (eg giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary);
- diminished levels of self-confidence;
- frequent visits to the School Nurse with symptoms such as stomach pains or headaches;
- unexplained cuts and bruises;
- choosing the company of adults;
- displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact;
- has difficulty sleeping, cries him/herself to sleep, or experiences nightmares;
- talking of suicide (or attempting it) or running away;
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the bully);
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable;
- bullying other children or siblings;
- frightened to say what is wrong;
- afraid to use the internet or mobile phone, or nervous or jumpy when a message is received;
- evasive or gives improbable excuses in relation to any of the above.

All staff should be aware of these signs of potential bullying and should report promptly any suspicions of bullying to the Head of Department, Heads of EYFS, Junior School, Senior School or Deputy Head. They should also inform the DSL in relation to safeguarding concerns. Please refer to the School's Child Protection policy for further information.

Pupils are encouraged to report incidents of bullying through PSHE, assemblies, school anti-bullying literature, workshops, form time and tutor meetings.

5. Responsibilities

"It is a basic entitlement of all children that they receive their education free from humiliation, oppression and abuse. Education is compulsory in our society and, therefore, it is the responsibility of all adults to ensure that it takes place in an atmosphere which is caring and protective." *D P Tattum*

Governing body
The governing body will discuss, review and endorse agreed strategies on the initiative of the nominated governor for safeguarding, and in any case will discuss the Headmaster's annual report on the working of this policy.

The Headmaster
The Headmaster has a legal duty under the Independent Schools Standards to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among pupils.

The Headmaster will:
- determine the strategies and procedures;
- discuss development of the strategies with the Senior Management Team (SMT);
- ensure that the procedures are brought to the attention of all staff, parents and pupils;
- ensure that appropriate training is available;
- ensure that all staff have the opportunity to discuss and review strategies;
- report annually to the governing body.

The Deputy Head will:
- be responsible for the day-to-day management of the policy and systems;
- ensure that there are positive strategies and procedures in place to help both the bullied and the bullies;
- be responsible for initiating and developing with appropriate colleagues an anti-bullying programme as part of the PSHE course;
- keep the Headmaster and DSL informed of incidents;
- arrange relevant staff training;
- determine how best to involve parents in the solution of individual problems.

Heads of EYFS, Junior School, Senior School and Heads of Department will:
- be responsible for ensuring that the School's positive strategies are put into practice;
- know the School's procedure and deal with any incidents that are reported;
- be involved in any agreed strategy to achieve a solution;

All staff will:
- know the policy and procedures;
- be observant and, if concerned, ask pupils what is happening to them;
- deal with incidents according to the policy;
- never let any incidence of bullying pass by unreported, whether on-site or during an off-site activity;
- make themselves conversant with the PSHE scheme of work;
- supervise pupils appropriately during lessons and during free time, monitoring behaviour and supervising any areas where children might seek to misbehave and bully others.

6. Measures taken by the school to prevent bullying

Anti-bullying education in the curriculum

The School will raise the awareness of the anti-social nature of bullying through a PSHE programme, school assemblies, the school council, use of tutorial time and in the national curriculum programmes of study as appropriate. Changing the attitude and behaviour of bullies plays a major part in the strategies used by the School.

- We use appropriate assemblies to explain the School policy on bullying. Our PSHE programme is structured to give pupils an awareness of their social and moral responsibilities as they progress through the School. The programme is structured to enforce the message about community involvement and taking care of each other.
- Other lessons, particularly Religious Education, English and form/circle time, highlight the issue of bullying and reinforce this message by teaching moral and spiritual values that show bullying to be unacceptable and by developing social skills.
- All our pupils are encouraged to tell a member of staff at once if they know that bullying is taking place.
- All reported incidents are investigated immediately. We always record and monitor reported incidents.
- We have a strong and experienced pastoral team of teachers and tutors who support the SMT and are experienced in handling any incidents as an immediate priority, and are alert to possible signs of bullying.
- The School has two trained counsellors, who are an important part of our pastoral support service, providing specialist skills of assessment and counselling through 'Chatline'. They are available to give confidential advice and counselling support to pupils who can refer themselves when they

have social, emotional or behavioural concerns. On occasion, a member of our pastoral team may refer a pupil.

- Staff are always on duty at times when pupils are not in class and patrol the school site, particularly areas where bullying might occur. They are trained to be alert to inappropriate language or behaviour.
- We reserve the right to investigate incidents that take place outside school hours, on school visits and trips and that occur in the vicinity of the school, involving our pupils.
- We welcome feedback from parents and guardians on the effectiveness of our preventative measures.
- Within the EYFS, measures to prevent bullying will be taught to children through the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning and Social and Emotional Aspects of Development.

Cyberbullying – specific preventative measures

In addition to the preventative measures described above:

- As a principle, and as a practical preventative measure, all pupils and parents at the School sign an "Internet Acceptable Use" statement with regard to all forms of computing technology (conducted every September). All pupils are expected to adhere to its charter for the safe use of the internet.
- Certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and our IT Department monitors pupils' use.
- Sanctions may be imposed for the misuse, or attempted misuse, of the internet and we will work in partnership with parents to ensure an effective sharing and monitoring of digital information as part of the philosophy and practice to prevent all forms of cyberbullying.
- The School adheres to the BECTA guidelines regarding e-teaching and the internet.
- Guidance is offered on the safe use of social networking sites and cyberbullying in PSHE lessons and assemblies. This covers blocking and removing contacts from buddy lists.
- Arrangements are made for outside agencies to deliver workshops on e-safety to all pupils (age relevant) and to parents to raise awareness.
- Guidance is given on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details safe. The ultimate protection is in the good sense of young people in the knowledge of what is available to them and the risks to which they may be subject.
- The School ensures that any technological equipment used to support children (individually owned laptops, iPads, tablets, cameras or other) come under the same rigorous systems for safe usage, by use of spot checks, as all computing equipment owned by the School.
- Mobile phones are not permitted in school unless with regard to pupils travelling on the school bus in the afternoons, who then have special permission to walk home, the mobile phone giving them perceived improved security. Parents must apply for permission in writing to the Deputy Head. These phones should be handed into the school office on arrival in the morning and collected again in the evening.

7.   **Investigations into incidents of alleged bullying**

In situations of alleged serious misconduct the Headmaster will appoint an Investigating Officer, (such as the Deputy Head, Head of Senior School, Head of Junior School or Head of EYFS) who will conduct a series of interviews with the individuals concerned. Written notes of these interviews will be taken and passed on to the Headmaster, who will act as the Deciding Officer and determine the appropriate sanction to be applied. (Refer to the Behaviour, Discipline and Exclusions Policy.)

Dealing with incidents

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be investigated and dealt with initially and calmly by the teacher or other adult concerned, reassuring and supporting pupils as appropriate.
- The pupils involved may be asked to write down an account of what has taken place.
- If a racial or homophobic element to the bullying is suspected the Headmaster or Deputy Head must be informed immediately.
- The teacher or other adult will record the details of the incident and inform the Deputy Head.
- The DSL (or Designated Deputy) will interview all the parties and make a record of those interviews.
- Staff teaching the bullied pupil and the child's form teacher and tutor will be informed.
- The Headmaster will determine, in consultation with the form teacher and tutor, the appropriate strategy and plan of action to combat the bullying.
- A way forward, including disciplinary sanctions and counselling, will be agreed. This should recognise that suitable support is needed both for children who are being bullied and for pupils who bully others.
- The tutor will oversee the implementation of the strategy and a monitoring and review strategy will be put in place.
- Both sets of parents will be kept informed by the Headmaster in order that they can receive feedback on the findings of the investigation and give their support to actions moving forward.
- Any sanctions against the bullies will be determined by the Deputy Head or Headmaster.
- A record will be maintained in the School's Anti-bullying file which will also include entries where bullying is suspected or alleged but not proven.

8. Ongoing review of working practice

In order to ensure ongoing best practice and for the sake of any future references to previous instances of abuse, the DSL, in liaison with the Headmaster, SMT and governing body, will ensure that accurate records are kept. Such records will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the approach adopted by the School and to enable patterns to be identified.

Pupils
Pupils who have been bullied will always receive ongoing reassurance along with support determined by the Deputy Head in consultation with the pupil, parents and key staff.

Bullies
Changing the attitude and behaviour of bullies will be part of the responsibility of the positive procedures used by the School. Bullies, however, are also in need of support as often they bully others to deflect their own unhappy feelings caused by others or by emotional distress in their lives. The School recognises, however, that sanctions will also have to be used against bullies.

Sanctions
Any of the School's formal punishments, as detailed and explained in the School's Behaviour, Discipline and Exclusions Policy, will be considered against pupils responsible for bullying behaviour. In extreme cases, this may include exclusion on a fixed term or permanent basis.

Involvement of parents
Parents, as well as all staff and pupils, should know that the School will not tolerate bullying and takes a robust, positive approach to educating pupils to combat it.

Parents of pupils who are being bullied and parents of the bullies will be involved in the solution to the problem as appropriate by the relevant teacher in consultation with the Deputy Head and Headmaster.

Parents will be informed of the policy and procedures and the possibility of permanent exclusion following gross acts of bullying.

Involvement of pupils
Pupils will be involved in the positive strategies through both the school council and form and tutor groups. Pupils will have an input into the PSHE anti-bullying programme, and will be consulted on how it could be developed. A major part of the programme will consist of educating pupils in how to cope with bullying.

Strategies for dealing with bullying
Useful advice can be found in the DfE Guidance, 2017, "Preventing and tackling bullying - advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies". The document gives guidance on whole-school policies, pupils' experiences, finding out about bullying in school, strategies to combat bullying, working with parents, beyond the classroom, and advice for pupils, parents and families, along with case studies and advice on materials. Staff are required to be alert to the possibility that bullying behaviour often happens between lessons.

Counselling
The School is prepared in appropriate cases to arrange counselling for both bullies and the bullied. This will be arranged using the School's own counselling staff and/or external counselling agencies approved by the School.

Reporting and recording
All incidents must be reported and recorded and logged in the School's Sanctions file and Anti-bullying file. Regular monitoring of these and discussion of pastoral matters in the staff briefings will enable patterns to be identified.

Staff and governor training
The Headmaster is responsible for arranging a programme of staff and governor development and raising awareness of all staff through effective training, so that the principles of the school policy are understood, legal responsibilities are known, action is defined to resolve and prevent problems, and sources of support are available.

Where appropriate, the School will invest in specialised skills to understand the needs of its pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities, or LGBT pupils.

This will include training for education support staff and governors as well as teachers.

Monitoring and review
The Deputy Head will keep and consider reports on serious incidents, and make a termly report to the Headmaster. The Headmaster will consider the reports with the SMT to determine what can be learned from the incidents and how they were handled with a view to improving the School's strategies.

The Headmaster will make an annual report to the governing body and the policy will be reviewed annually.

Policy reviewed: September 2019

Next review: September 2020

Person responsible: The Headmaster