



# St Christopher's School

Hampstead

## Counter Bullying Policy

<b>Policy to be reviewed annually</b>		
<b>Reviewed by</b>	<b>Deputy Head</b>	<b>April 2020</b>
<b>Approved by</b>	<b>Board</b>	<b>April 2020</b>

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This policy applies equally to the Early Years Foundation Stage setting, KS1 and KS2 as taught at St Christopher's School. ***This policy is reviewed annually by the Deputy Head and in conjunction with the Head.***

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## 1. Aims of Policy

We aim to create an environment where pupils can grow and flourish without fear. Each pupil has the right to be safe in and out of school and to be protected when she is feeling vulnerable.

We aim:

- To ensure that children learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment, without fear of being bullied.
- To demonstrate that the school takes bullying seriously and that it will not be tolerated.
- To take measures to prevent all forms of bullying in the school and during off-site activities.
- To support everyone in actions to identify and protect those who might be bullied.
- To clarify for all pupils and staff that bullying is wholly and always unacceptable.
- To demonstrate to all that the safety and happiness of pupils is paramount.
- To promote an environment where children feel they can trust and tell adults if they are being bullied or know about any bullying.
- To promote positive attitudes in pupils (including conflict management training).
- To ensure that all staff are aware of their duty of care over those in their charge and the need to be alert to signs of bullying.
- To ensure that all staff are aware of procedures through regular training.

### What informs our policy:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2018
- Behaviour and Discipline in Schools, 2014
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying, 2014
- Cyberbullying: Advice for Head Teachers and School Staff, 2014
- Supporting children and young people who are bullied, 2014
- Equality Act, 2010

## 2. Guiding Principles

The governors value the good relationships between all of the school community as fostered by the school, and expect that every allegation of bullying will be taken seriously. The governors consider that a child should be treated as being bullied simply because she perceives that she is.

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 recognises that it must take note of bullying perpetrated outside school which spills over into school. The school will do what is reasonably practicable to eliminate any such bullying. St Christopher's school aims to promote Emotional Literacy, defined as people being able to 'recognise, understand, handle and appropriately express their emotions' (Sharp, 2001).

We therefore take a strong stance against bullying of any type, since it indicates a lack of appreciation for the feelings of others. Bullying will not be tolerated and will be addressed. Bullying can cause deep distress, to the extent of victims refusing to attend school or even, in extreme cases, attempting or committing suicide.

### 3. What is Bullying?

#### **Definition of Bullying or Peer on Peer Abuse**

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

*(Preventing and Tackling Bullying, Advice for Head Teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies, DfE, 2013, p. 4)*

At St Christopher's we recognise that there is no "hierarchy" of bullying – all forms of bullying should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately. We understand that bullying can take place between pupils, between pupils and staff, or between staff; by individuals or groups; face-to-face, indirectly or using a range of cyber bullying methods. We understand that all children have disagreements with each other and friends fall out for a time. This is not usually bullying.

Four main types of bullying can be identified:

- Physical: hitting, kicking, taking or hiding belongings
- Verbal: name calling, teasing, insulting, writing or sending unkind notes or messages, including cyber-bullying (see later in policy and E-Safety Policy.)
- Emotional: being intentionally unfriendly, excluding, tormenting looks, spreading rumours.
- Cyber: email and internet chat room misuse, mobile phone threats by text, calls, social websites and sexting.

#### **Peer on peer abuse manifests itself in many ways and is taken very seriously.**

*Specific types of bullying include:*

- Bullying related to race or colour, religion or belief or culture.
- Bullying related to special education needs (SEN) or disabilities.
- Bullying related to appearance or health conditions.
- Bullying related to sexual orientation.
- Bullying of young carers or looked-after children or otherwise related to home circumstances.
- Sexist or sexual bullying.
- Bullying of adopted children.
- Bullying using electronic forms of contact (cyber bullying) *see Appendix 1*

#### **Roles within Bullying**

Different roles within bullying have been identified:

- Those relying on social power, dominating others, often with group support (ring leader).
- Others joining in and therefore afraid of ring leader (associates).
- The awareness of a silent majority that bullying is taking place, but feeling unable to do anything about it (bystanders).
- Those who try to stop bullying (defenders).

#### **Styles of bullying include:**

- Intimidation and rude gestures.
- Threats and extortion.

- Malicious gossip and exclusion from the group.
- Telling tales with the express purpose of causing trouble.
- Threatening texts or messages in chat rooms.

### **Signs and Symptoms**

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that they are being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and they should investigate if a child:

- is unwilling to go to school;
- becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence;
- starts stammering;
- attempts or threatens self-harm;
- cries herself to sleep at night or has nightmares/ bedwetting;
- regularly feels ill in the morning;
- begins to do poorly in school work;
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged;
- has possessions go missing;
- has unexplained cuts and bruises;
- stops eating;
- is frightened to say what is wrong;
- is frightened of walking to or from school; or
- changes her usual routine.

All staff should be aware of these possibilities and report promptly any suspicions of bullying to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Annie Stockdale.

### **4. The Role of the Governors**

- The governors will liaise with the Head over all Counter-bullying strategies, and be made aware of individual cases where appropriate.
- The governing body will discuss, review and endorse agreed strategies and will discuss the Head's report on the working of this policy.
- The governors will liaise with the Head to arrange for a regular programme of staff development, which will include child protection and counter-bullying strategies. This will include training for support staff as well as teachers.

### **5. The Role of the Staff**

#### *The Head*

The Head has a legal duty under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to draw up procedures to prevent bullying amongst pupils.

The Head will:

- ensure that all staff have an opportunity of discussing strategies; and
- review them regularly;
- determine the strategies and procedures;
- discuss development of the strategies with the Senior Leadership Team;
- ensure appropriate training is available;
- ensure that the procedures are brought to the attention of all staff, volunteers, parents and pupils; and report 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 alleged victim of bullying and the alleged perpetrators of bullying;
- keep the Head informed of incidents;
- refer and liaise with inter-agency working groups when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. See Thresholds criteria for legal thresholds at the LSCB: <http://www.cscb-new.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/CSSW-thresholds-criteria.pdf>
- arrange relevant pupil training with the Head, determine how best to involve parents in the solution of individual problems; and ensure proper record keeping.

*Heads of Department will:*

- be responsible for ensuring that the school's positive strategies are put into practice; and
- know the school's procedure and deal with any incidents that are reported.

*Form Teachers will:*

- be responsible for liaising with the Deputy Head over all incidents involving pupils in their forms;
- be involved in any agreed strategy to achieve a solution; and
- teach the counter-bullying programme in the PSHCE lessons.
- Encourage an open dialogue with pupils and offer them many ways to share concerns with a trusted adult. For example, each classroom has a 'Problem Solving Box' to share and dedicated form time is used to address any issues.

*All Staff and volunteers will:*

- know and follow all relevant policies and procedures;
- keep clear records in writing and submit these, firstly and immediately to the Head or Deputy Head verbally and then in writing.
- be observant and talk to pupils;
- 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;
- take action to reduce the risk of bullying at all times and in places where is most likely; and
- discuss from time to time where extra staff might be needed.

**Dealing with incidents**

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be investigated and dealt with immediately by the teacher approached.
- The teacher will record the details of the incident in writing and inform the Head or Deputy Head.
- The Central Bullying Log will be kept on the secure SLT Drive.
- If a racial element to the bullying is suspected the Head/Deputy Head must be informed immediately.
- All the parties will be interviewed and a record made.
- Staff teaching the bullied pupil and the Form Teacher will be informed.
- The appropriate strategy and plan of action to combat the bullying will be decided upon.
- The implementation of the strategy will be overseen the Head or Deputy Head.

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- Parents will be kept informed by the relevant staff.
- Any sanctions will be determined by the Head.

### In any incident of bullying, staff are expected to adhere to the following principles:

- It is important that children who experience bullying can be heard.
- It is important to note that people react differently to bullying and it is often very difficult to tell if someone is upset or hurt.
- If children feel upset, they are encouraged to speak to their teacher or a responsible adult at an appropriate time or put a note in the confidential worry box in each classroom.
- It must be emphasised to the children that they should NEVER take the law into their own hands and should remember that physical aggression is not acceptable.
- They should be reassured that the adult will try to sort out the problem as calmly as possible.
- Abuse is abuse and should never be passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'.
- Gender issues may be prevalent when dealing with peer on peer abuse.
- The most serious incidents are referred to the Head.
- Parents will be requested to come and discuss matters.
- The incident would be noted down and put into the child's personal file on 3sys.
- Pupils will be told always to report incidents of bullying.

### Reporting and Recording

- Reports of bullying will be logged by the form teachers. Bullying Report Forms can be found in 'staff resources' in the Safeguarding folder or requested from the Deputy Head.
- All incidents must be recorded in full, and reported to the Deputy Head who will keep this information centrally on the Central Bullying Log.
- The Central Bullying Log is kept by the Deputy Head on the secure, SLT drive where the Head also has access to the records.
- Incidents will be updated and the names of pupils and staff who are involved will be written out in full and not abbreviated. This record of bullying will enable patterns to be identified.

## 6. The Curriculum

### Counter-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 form time and in the curriculum as appropriate.
- The Head of Pastoral Care is responsible for initiating and developing an anti-bullying programme as part of the PSHE curriculum.
- Heads of Department are responsible for introducing anti-bullying material in their programmes of study as appropriate.
- Changing the attitudes and behaviour of bullies will play a major part in the strategies used by the school. **Children's Emotional Literacy is developed by teaching them a wide vocabulary of words for emotions.** We believe that this makes them better able to express their feelings, helping them to resist attempts at bullying. We also consider that being able to understand and express emotions reduces conflict between children and makes them less inclined to misinterpret others' actions, which can be a factor in bullying.

### Managing transition:

Transition from St Christopher's takes place after 11+ exams. As this can be a stressful and competitive time the school makes sure that all those involved know that:

- They should not ask the girls questions about school choices or exam results.

- There should be no comparison to one another.
- Any pupil who makes inappropriate comments will be asked to see the Head with her parents.

## 7. Supporting Pupils

**Bullied Pupils:** Staff who deal with pupils who have been bullied must always offer reassurance. Pupils who have been bullied will be given support.

**Bullies:** It is recognised that support must also be given to the perpetrator. Changing the attitude and behaviour of bullies will be part of the responsibility of the positive procedures used by the school. However, the school recognises that sanctions will also have to be used against bullies.

All the children concerned should be fully involved in the discussions leading up to the solution and should not be left feeling isolated. Honest group discussions that involve both bullied and bully with other children of their choice attendant and encouraged to participate, help the children to resolve the matter themselves with support and vigilance from the staff and is the most effective way. Parents will need to be kept fully informed.

- Pupils will be involved in the positive strategies through both the school council and form groups. Pupils will have an input into the counter-bullying strategy.
- A major part of the strategy will consist of educating pupils in how to cope with bullying.
- Pupils must know to whom they should go if they are being bullied or if they are concerned about another child.

## Involving Parents

- Parents, as well as all staff and pupils, should know that the school will not tolerate bullying and takes a positive, active approach to educating pupils to combat it. Parents will be informed of the policy and procedures.
- Parents of pupils who are being bullied and parents of the bullies will be involved in the solution to the problem as appropriate.

## 8. Sanctions

Where pupils do not respond to preventative strategies to combat bullying, tougher action will be taken to deal with persistent and violent bullying. Sanctions are determined by the nature of the bullying on a case to case basis. Sanctions might include:

- Writing a letter of apology
- Removal from the group (in class);
- Withdrawal of break and lunchtime privileges;
- Withholding participation in any school trip or sports events that are not an essential part of the curriculum;
- **Fixed term and permanent exclusion from school.** An exclusion would only be considered in a case of **extreme and continuing** bad behaviour, bullying, etc. Any exclusion for even a short period would be discussed and agreed by the Chair of Governors and the Head.



## 9. Monitoring Our Approach

The Head and the Senior Leadership Team will consider reports of bullying to determine what can be learned from the incidents and how they were handled, with a view to improving the school's strategies. These reports will also enable patterns to be identified. The Head will report to the governing body.

## 10. Cyber Bullying

### What is it?

“Cyber-bullying is an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual using electronic forms of contact repeatedly over time against a victim who cannot easily defend him or herself.”

Report to the Anti-Bullying Alliance by Goldsmiths College, University of London.

### Types of Cyber Bullying

There are 7 identified categories of cyber bullying:

- Text messaging bullying
- Picture/video clip bullying via mobile phone
- Phone call bullying via mobile phone
- Email bullying
- Chat room bullying
- Bullying via websites
- Bullying through instant messaging

### Combating cyber bullying

- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Telecommunications Act 1984

### School Policy on Cyber Bullying

- No pupil mobile phones are allowed in school.
- However the school recognises that many pupils have mobile phones and access to the internet outside school and to that end:
- The school holds an E-Safety week each year, in which the risks of technology and cyber bullying are discussed in depth. The school arranges internet safety workshops, addressing the safer use of the net and mobile phones.
- Responsible Technology Use agreements are reviewed annually with all pupils in school and at home, so that they have a good understanding of how they must behave online.
- The Head and E-Safety Coordinator update policies and provide parents with advice, helping them to understand how children can use technology safely, as well as the risks and consequences of mobile phone use.
- Staff have a duty to make sure that they are familiar with their role in dealing with cyber bullying.
- Victims should keep emails and text as evidence for tracing and possible police action.
- The school has a code of conduct for use of the net and access is screened by a variety of blocks which are updated regularly.
- Teachers must teach safer internet use and strictly apply all school policies.

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Balance and perspective are essential as is a whole community approach to ensuring safer use of the internet. The responsibility for this is both the school's in educating their pupils for safer use on the net, and the parents' in understanding that they need to monitor and manage their children's use of the net.

Useful websites for community use:

- [www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com)
- [www.digizen.org](http://www.digizen.org)
- [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

Children should understand that they must tell an adult if they are being bullied in these ways, that they should not delete any bullying messages or texts, but they should never respond to these. Please also see E-Safety Policy

This Code of Conduct is non-contractual and may be updated by the School from time to time. However, please note that any significant and/or deliberate breach of this Policy by a member of staff may be treated as a disciplinary matter including, in the most serious cases, for gross misconduct. If you are unclear about any part of this document please contact the Head or the Bursar.

### **Remote Learning**

During the remote learning phase of learning, the school maintains the same expectations of its pupils in regards to their online conduct, which will be routinely monitored wherever possible. Peer-on-peer abuse, or concerns around behaviour which may be perceived as such, will be referred to the DSL. Parents and pupils will be supported in their awareness of the importance of online safety through regular communication. Sanctions for inappropriate behaviour will be adjusted to suit the remote circumstances as determined by the Head. Please also see the child protection, behaviour and online safety policies.