



Anti-bullying Policy

Aim:

The ultimate aim of the College anti-bullying policy is to prevent bullying of any sort and to ensure that everyone can operate in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. All members of the community, including Governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is and be familiar with the College policy on bullying. Bullying is an anti-social behaviour, which affects everyone; it is unacceptable and it will not be tolerated.

Everyone in the community has a responsibility to report any incident of bullying that comes to their attention and these reports will always be taken seriously. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will our pupils be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available at College. This policy is written with reference to DCSF guidance 'Safe to Learn, *Embedding anti-bullying work in schools*'. This policy is applicable to all pupils at Cheltenham College, including those in EYFS.

A copy of this policy is available on the College website and upon request.

Definition:

Bullying may be defined as any deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. Examples of unacceptable behaviour include:

- Physical (including sexual) assault. For example, hitting, kicking, spitting, removing belongings, damaging property.
- Verbal abuse, by name calling, teasing, insulting, writing notes or making offensive remarks.
- Cyber-bullying, which is defined as the use of ICT by an individual or group to support deliberate, repeated and hostile behaviour intended to harm others. Examples include using social websites (such as Bebo and Myspace), mobile phones, text messaging, photographs, video and e-mail
- Indirect emotional tormenting by excluding from social groups or spreading malicious rumours.
- Initiation ceremonies intended to cause pain, anxiety or humiliation.

Bullying may involve complicity that falls short of direct participation by, for instance, manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It may be overt and intimidatory but is often hidden and subtle. It includes actions or comments that are racist, religious or cultural, homophobic, sexist, sexual or which focus on disabilities or other physical attributes (such as hair colour or body shape).

The seriousness of bullying cannot be emphasised enough. Bullying is among the top concerns that parents have about their children's safety and well-being at and on the

way to and from school. Bullying is also a top concern of children and young people themselves. Bullying makes the lives of its victims a misery: it undermines their confidence and self esteem, and destroys their sense of security. Bullying impacts on its victims' attendance and attainment at school, marginalises those groups who may be particular targets for bullies and can have a life-long negative impact on some young people's lives. At worst, bullying has been a factor in pupil suicide.

It is acknowledged that bullies may have complex reasons for their behaviour and may well need help. It should also be recognised that the consequences of being allowed to 'get away with it' can be detrimental to them as well as to their victim. All pupils deserve the opportunity to be helped to understand what acceptable behaviour is. There are criminal laws that apply to harassment, assault and threatening behaviour.

What to look for:

Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting from school. All members of the community must be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it, in accordance with College policy. Surveys have shown that in the vast majority of bullying incidents, MOST people knew that what was going on was wrong. Sometimes people, either through lethargy, peer group pressure, or tacit support for what is going on, fail to take action.

What to do:

The way to stamp out bullying is for people to be aware of the issues involved, and to be clear in their own minds what action to take should cases arise:

If you are the victim:

If you feel able to, confront the bully by verbally making him/her aware that you think that what he/she is doing is wrong. Share your feelings with someone else. If possible talk to any member of Staff with whom you feel comfortable. In the Junior this could be your class tutor, Section Head, HsM, or in the Junior Boarding House could be the Houseparents or matrons. In College this could be your Tutor, the Senior Designated Person for Child Protection (Mrs Ramsay) or the Chaplain about the incident. Boarders may prefer to talk to their Head of House or a Matron. If you would rather not go straight to a member of staff, talk to your friends; talk to senior pupils in your House, a Peer Supporter or one of the Prefects; the School Counsellor, Medical Centre Staff or any trusted adult. They may well be able to advise on an appropriate course of action or will be able to involve other people who can. There are also people outside the College who would be willing to help: Childline: 0800 1111, Kidscape, Get Connected, Samaritans – all are available on the web. In the Junior the pupil organizer contains telephone numbers of confidential contacts.

If you, a pupil, witness bullying behaviour:

Support the victim by offering your friendship and make it clear that in your opinion what is happening to them is wrong. Encourage them to speak out on their own behalf by confronting the bully, or with their permission, confront the bully yourself. Accompany the victim to a trusted adult, or suggest that you see their HsM/Tutor or Class tutor/Section Head in the Junior on their behalf.

All pupils in College are encouraged to read the "Pupil's Guide to Bullying" notice in Houses and the "Personal Matters" contact details which are displayed alongside the pupil guide.

If you, a member of Staff, witness an incident of bullying or it is reported to you:

Reassure and support the pupils involved. Advise them that you are required to pass details on to the relevant member of the pastoral team. (Tutor, HsM, Director of Pupil Welfare, Deputy Head (Pastoral)/Class Tutor, Section Head, Head of Pastoral Care in Junior).

Inform the appropriate member of the pastoral team as soon as possible.

Housemasters/mistresses (Section Heads in Junior) must record all incidents of reported bullying. At College the Bullying Report Form must be completed and passed to the Director of Pupil Welfare. These reports are reviewed regularly with the Deputy Head (Pastoral). At the Junior School the Head of Pastoral Care will keep a central log of all complaints or incidences of bullying and record the way in which they were dealt with.

What will happen:

The victim will be interviewed by their HsM (Section Head in Junior), on their own, and asked to write an immediate account of events. The process for dealing with bullying will be explained clearly to them. The victim is also given the opportunity to discuss his /her own reactions and behaviour towards the bully. The victim is given support and advice and counselling is suggested if deemed appropriate. Once the HsM (Section Head in Junior) is clear that a bullying offence has been committed, the bully and any others involved will be interviewed individually and asked to write an immediate account of events. The process for dealing with bullying will be explained clearly to them. Details of the incident will be recorded on all the pupils' house files. The pastoral team will decide on an appropriate course of action. In the first instance the HsM or (Section Head in Junior) will interview the pupil or pupils whose behaviour has caused distress and give him/her/them a formal bullying warning; making it clear that any further incident (or discussion about the current incident) would be considered to be further bullying. It will be made clear why their behaviour was inappropriate and unacceptable. Support and counselling will be offered. A suitable punishment will also be given. If the HsM (Section Head in Junior) decides it is appropriate, or it is a pupil's second offence, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) or Head of Pastoral Care will become involved and the parents of the perpetrator/s will be informed by letter or telephone.

The following sanctions may be applied in accordance with the Junior/Senior Schools' behavioural policy.

Formal School Warning. The Deputy Head (Pastoral) or Head of Pastoral Care at the Junior School will speak to the pupils involved and will contact the parents or guardians giving details of the offence and inviting them in to College to discuss the matter and to be present when their child is given a Formal School Warning. Their support for the College's actions should be enlisted if possible.

Suspension at the Headmaster's discretion.

Exclusion at the Headmaster's discretion.

These are minimum sanctions. In very serious cases it may be necessary to make a report

to the Police or Social Services. However, it is the policy of the College to attempt to resolve such issues internally using our own disciplinary sanctions, unless the matter is of such gravity that a criminal prosecution is likely.

Prevention:

The College will raise awareness of all the staff through training and take action to reduce the risk of bullying at the times and places where it is most likely to occur. The key points from this policy will be prominently displayed on School notice boards and will be discussed with pupils during Tutor led PSHCE sessions. Anti-bullying will feature as a discussion point for the School Council. It will also be revisited as necessary during PSHCE sessions to all years and reinforced in other areas of the curriculum as the opportunities present themselves e.g. drama, physical education. In the Junior anti-bullying week (November) is used to raise awareness and educate pupils. Junior School Pupil organisers also contain an Anti-Bullying statement which clarifies procedures. Junior and School Prefects are given advice on anti-bullying and pupils are consulted in the review process. Opportunities will also be sought to allow parents to contribute to the College's actions to prevent bullying.

Pupil surveys will be used in Houses to facilitate an understanding of the level and type of bullying that pupils might have experienced. Incidents of reported bullying will be followed up by Housemasters or Housemistresses (Section Heads in Junior) to monitor that the problem has been resolved. The record of bullying offences will be reviewed by the Deputy Head (Pastoral), Head of Pastoral Care and the Pastoral teams regularly to identify patterns and check that the policy is effective. We also operate a Peer Supporters scheme whereby older pupils are encouraged to offer advice and support to younger pupils. Leadership training is provided to College and House Prefects, which specifically covers the importance of offering support and assistance to younger and vulnerable pupils.

Prevention of Cyber-bullying:

In addition to the preventative measures described above, the College:

- Expects all pupils to adhere to its ICT acceptable use policy which they sign on joining the College. Certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and the ICT Department monitors pupils' use.
- May impose sanctions for the misuse or attempted misuse of the internet or e mail
- Adheres to BECTA guidelines regarding E-safety and the internet.
- Has a dedicated senior member of staff (the Director of ICT) responsible for E safety.
- E safety talks are delivered in Houses (relevant Sections in the Junior) by the Director of ICT on a rolling programme offering guidance on the safe use of social networking sites, including keeping personal details safe.
- Cyberbullying is covered in PSHCE sessions.
- Mobile phones are not permitted in classrooms or in public areas of the College. In the Junior mobiles are not permitted during the school day.
- The use of cameras (including those on mobile phones) is not allowed in washing and changing areas or in the bedrooms of boarding houses.
- Further details are given in our Acceptable use of ICT, Mobile Phones and other Electronic Devices Policy.

References:

DCSF Safe to Learn, *Embedding anti-bullying work in schools.*

National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools

www.cyberbullying.org

ISBA Guidance on Anti-Bullying Policy

September 2010

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