



ST CHRISTOPHER'S SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY
(INCLUDING EYFS)
2018-19
To be reviewed Sept 2019

1 Introduction

Effective anti-bullying strategies involve two separate components: responding to incidents and preventing bullying from occurring.

1.1 It is a Government requirement that all schools have an anti-bullying policy. This policy has regard to the non-statutory DfE advice Preventing and Tackling Bullying 2014. At St Christopher's we also recognise the other publications that address bullying, including Article 28 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child,ⁱ (ratified by the UK in December 1991, and Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 sets out the requirements for governing bodies in relation to the welfare of children in their school.

1.2 This guidance defines bullying as behaviours by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can be direct (either physical or verbal) or indirect (for example, being ignored or not spoken to).

Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, culture, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs and disability, because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities.

With the rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for bullying (known as virtual or cyber-bullying), which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying which can happen at any time, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people can forward content at a click.

Cyber-bullying can be defined as the use of Information and Communication Technology (social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email) deliberately to upset someone else.

In particular, St Christopher's School is committed to prevention of bullying towards all individuals with protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010. These characteristics include:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation.

1.3 This policy should be read in conjunction with our school guidance on e-safety (see separate policy), use of mobile phones, and safeguarding.

1.4 Whilst the Head of School is responsible for staff adherence to this policy, and for updating the policy, it is the responsibility of all staff to look out for potential incidents of bullying. We also expect parents and pupils to bring to our attention any suspected bullying.

2 Aims and objectives

2.1 Bullying is wrong and damages individual children both physically and emotionally. It can be serious and cause psychological damage and even suicide. Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour. All reports of bullying will be dealt with in a serious manner.

Bullying can take many forms from children distancing themselves from another child on the carpet area to physical attack. We therefore do all we can to prevent it, by developing a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable.

2.2 We aim, as a school, to produce a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety, and measures are in place to reduce the likelihood of bullying. All members of staff should challenge stereotypical and prejudiced comments used in lessons and the playground.

2.3 This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.

2.4 We aim to make all those connected with the School aware of our opposition to bullying, and we make clear each person's responsibilities with regard to the eradication of bullying in our school.

2.5 Our school aim, and a key aim of this policy, is that there is an easy mechanism to report any kind of bullying. Each stakeholder has a role here – outlined below. It should be clear to all the various levels of accountability and what the threshold is for involvement of external agencies (e.g. police, social care) in a bullying case. We recognize that bullying can be a child protection issue (i.e. when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm), and require all stakeholders to realize the importance of reporting bullying to enable patterns to be identified.

3 The role of the Head Teacher

3.1 It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher to develop and implement the School anti-bullying strategy, and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the School Policy, and know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying. The Head Teacher reports to the Directors "Inspired Learning Group" about the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy upon request.

3.2 The Head Teacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. The Head Teacher draws the attention of children to

this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, the Head Teacher may decide to use an assembly as the forum in which to discuss with other children why this behaviour was wrong. An Anti-Bullying Assembly is held during Anti-Bullying week in November or at other times during the year, if decided at Staff Meetings. The Headteacher and class teachers will include discussion which emphasise the positive tolerance of differences between people and the importance of avoiding prejudice-based language.

3.3 The Head Teacher sets the School climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

3.4 The Head Teacher provides support for staff in the handling of bullying cases, and the prevention of bullying. This would include training, which covers the identification of ways to reduce the risks of bullying at times and places where it is most likely to occur, sharing of information, ensuring child protection issues is a permanent fixture on meeting agendas, and providing guidance to staff if required.

3.5 The Head Teacher ensures that records of any bullying incidents are maintained, and that if required external agencies are involved. These records provide documentary evidence that can be used to monitor patterns of behaviour as well as consistency in the implementation of policy.

3.6 The Headteacher and SENDCO will ensure that where appropriate, a programme of support is in place for both the child accused of bullying and the child who has been bullied. The programme will support the emotional and educational needs of both children and may overlap with SENDCO provision, PSHEE/SMSC and the school behavioural policy and procedures.

3.7 The school must have particular regard to protected characteristics set out in Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 (see 1.2 above)

4 The role of teachers and support staff

4.1 All the staff in our school take all forms of bullying seriously, and seek to prevent it from taking place by promoting an ethos where children feel able to talk about their lives and feelings.

4.2 Teachers keep their own records of incidents that happen in their class, and that they are aware of in the School. If teachers witness an act of bullying, they will first record it themselves and then refer it to the Head Teacher. Teachers and support staff do all they can to support the child who is being bullied.

4.3 When any bullying takes place between members of a class, the teacher will deal with the issue immediately. This may involve counselling and support for the victim of the bullying, and punishment for the child who has carried out the bullying. Time is spent talking to the child who has bullied: explaining why his /her action was wrong and that child is encouraged to change his/her behaviour in future. If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying other children, staff inform the Head Teacher. The Head Teacher may then decide to invite the child's parents into the School to discuss the situation. Bullying is a serious issue and incidents will be dealt with in a similar manner. In cases of severe and consistent bullying, strong sanctions such as exclusion may be necessary (refer to our Behaviour Policy, and Exclusions Policy).

4.4 It must be remembered that a bullying incident should be treated as a child protection concern where there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. In such incidences, cases of bullying will be reported to the external agencies-CSC or the police. Always refer to the DSL for advice, especially if you are unsure about whether or not the threshold for action has been met

For specific guidance on handling a bullying case refer to **Appendix 1**. (This is currently under review.)

4.5 Pupil welfare is the first item on the agenda at all weekly staff meetings and members of staff present, discuss any concerns so that the whole staff is aware of any issues. Teachers or support staff who do not attend staff meetings are able to read the minutes of the meeting and should inform the Head Teacher prior to the staff meeting of any pupils of who the whole staff needs to be aware, or are briefed by the Head, Deputy, or class teacher. This information equips everyone to identify bullying and to follow school policy and procedures with regard to behaviour management. The school places an emphasis on the availability of pastoral care for both the child accused of bullying and the child who is the subject of bullying. Both children will need emotional, behavioural and educational support as well as clear, firm boundaries. The school will work with parents in providing this.

4.6 Teachers use a range of methods to help prevent bullying and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. These include:

Discussion of such matters in class debates, role plays, and assemblies (etc) to help pupils understand the feelings of bullied children, and to practise the restraint required to avoid lapsing into bullying behaviour.

Teachers use educational elements such as personal, social, and health education (PSHE), assemblies, projects, drama, stories, literature, historical events and current affairs to educate children about the seriousness of bullying. Teachers educate children in how to recognise bullying and the ways to avoid it.

Cyberbullying differs to other kinds of bullying as it is an invasion of home and personal space. The ICT teacher informs children and parents about E-safety; the importance to respect others when sending messages by phone or text and to 'think before you send'. Keeping passwords personal and only giving their mobile number or personal website address to trusted friends. Children are advised not to retaliate or reply to bullying messages, to save evidence of persistent cyber-bullying and make sure they tell an adult.

All staff are asked to flag up issues of potential or actual bullying to the Head Teacher as soon as possible. There is also a formalised opportunity for staff to do this each week in EYFS and School meetings. Teachers are asked to record any incidents of bullying.

4.7 Staff are required to attend all available training in relation to anti-bullying. This training will aim to raise awareness of bullying, ensuring that:

- the principles of our school policy are understood, including reporting and recording arrangements.
- legal responsibilities are understood.
- action is defined to resolve and prevent problems, including on-line bullying.
- sources of support are available, particularly to understand the needs of and support pupils with protected characteristics (Including SEND and LGBT).

5 The role of parents

5.1 Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's class teacher immediately. If action is taken immediately it is often possible to deal with the matter at this level.

A parent who is dissatisfied with the way that the School has dealt with a bullying incident can then refer the matter to the Head Teacher and ask him/her to conduct an investigation into the case and to report back. If a parent remains dissatisfied, they should follow the School's Complaints Procedure. The Complaints Policy is available on the School's website.

5.2 Parents have a responsibility to support the School's Anti-Bullying Policy, actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the School. We expect parents to have a clear understanding of the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders.

5.3 Parents are invited to Parent Forums to discuss a range of issues, including bullying prevention. (These were introduced in September 2015.)

6 The role of pupils

6.1 Pupils are encouraged to tell anybody they trust if they are being bullied, and if the bullying continues, they must keep on letting people know.

When pupils witness bullying they need to report it, give support to the victim and not just stand by.

6.2 Pupils know the Head Boy and Head Girl and members of the School Council, and are encouraged to go to them with any problems that they might be experiencing. They are encouraged to act as the eyes and ears of the playground. In this way small incidents can be prevented from escalating into more persistent problems. The Head Boy, Head Girl and members of the School Council, in turn, discuss any concerns with their teacher or the Head Teacher.

7 Monitoring and review

7.1 This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the Head Teacher, who reports to the Directors of ILG on request about the effectiveness of the policy.

7.2 This anti-bullying policy is the responsibility of the Head Teacher, and s/he and the staff review its effectiveness annually. This is done by discussion at staff meetings. A careful watch is kept in particular for racist bullying, or bullying directed at children with disabilities or special educational needs. The staff of the School monitors any incidents of bullying that occur.

7.3 This policy is reviewed annually or earlier if necessary.

Sign off:



Mr. Amit Mehta
Proprietor

Date: 1/1/17

APPENDIX 1

Guidelines to staff handling a bullying case

Following careful consideration by the Head Teacher or Deputy, if bullying is known to have taken place we advise the following steps be followed (bearing in mind that each case is different and professional judgement needs to prevail).

Notwithstanding all the procedures listed below it must be remembered that a bullying incident should be treated as a child protection concern where there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. In such incidences, cases of bullying will be reported to the external agencies-CSC or the police. Always refer to the DSL for advice, especially if you are unsure about whether or not the threshold for action has been met.

1. Discuss the nature of the bullying with the 'victim' at length, recording all the facts. This will require patience and understanding.
2. Identify the bully/bullies and any witnesses.
3. Interview witnesses.
4. Discuss the incident(s) with the alleged bully/ies. Bring to their attention the allegations and ask them to tell the truth about the situation/incident. Make it clear that this is only an investigation at this stage.
5. If the child admits to bullying, make it understood that bullying is not acceptable at St Christopher's School (a zero-tolerance misbehaviour) and what effect it has on the education of the victim and the rest of the children in the class/School. Apply sanctions relevant to the type of bullying.
6. If the allegation of bullying is denied, investigate further. If there is sufficient evidence that the bullying occurred, apply relevant sanctions.
7. Hold separate discussions with parents of bully and victim.
8. Sanctions available to the School for the bully include:
 - Severe verbal reprimand by the Head Teacher;
 - Involving parents where appropriate;
 - Withdrawal from favoured activities, for example a school visit;
 - Loss of parts of break times for a period of between one day and one week;
 - Fixed period of exclusion from school;
 - Permanent exclusion from the school may be used depending on the seriousness of the offence (the LA Exclusions Policy will be used as guidance in such circumstances).
9. The School needs to consider opportunities for reconciliation between the bully and victim including asking pupils to discuss and / or write down what happened, why it might have happened, what needs to happen now.

ⁱ United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989.

