

Chiswick & Bedford Park Preparatory School

Anti-Bullying Policy

Introduction

At Chiswick and Bedford Park Preparatory School (“the School”) we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils. ‘We value highly the pastoral care which we give, and are proud of the warm, nurturing ethos of the School’ (see Aims and Ethos). All adults and children in the School are expected to contribute to the School’s secure and caring atmosphere by treating each other with courtesy and respect. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. (See also *Behaviour and Discipline Policy*, *Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy*, *Complaints Procedure Policy*)

Aims

- To try to prevent bullying, as far as possible, and
- To help staff, pupils and parents deal with bullying when it occurs.

Definition of Bullying

What is bullying?

Bullying is the systematic, deliberate and repeated undermining of someone else’s happiness and confidence. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim. It is an incident within a relationship where power is abused and is not an exchange between equals. Bullying can be direct or indirect and can be:

- **Verbal** – name-calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments, teasing and spreading rumours;
- **Physical** – kicking, hitting, punching, pushing, pinching or any use of violence;
- **Emotional** – being unfriendly, excluding others from groups/games, spreading hurtful rumours, forcing others to do things against their own will and taking/hiding belongings or money, threatening/unkind gestures;
- **Cyber** – offensive text messaging and e-mailing and sending degrading/unkind images by phone or the Internet;
- **Racist or religious**– racist or religious taunts, discriminating statements, gestures etc.;
- **Related to disability** – making someone feel uncomfortable because of a disability, e.g. name-calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments etc.;
- **Cultural** - Making somebody feel uncomfortable because of their cultural beliefs or practices etc.;

- **Sexual/sexist/homophobic** - Sexual innuendos, gestures and sexist comments, disparaging remarks or actions reflecting a person's sexuality etc.;
- **Intellectual** - Making someone feel uncomfortable regarding academic, intellectual performance or ability; and/or
- **Indirect /Manipulative** - Manipulating others to ostracise, marginalise or intimidate individuals. Encouraging others to bully.

The Seriousness of Bullying

Bullying is unacceptable in any form and the School will always respond to concerns and take appropriate action. The impact of bullying, both physical and emotional, can have extremely serious consequences for a child, including psychological damage and loss of self-esteem. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is the School's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; the Headmistress will make her own judgement about each specific case.

Possible Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

A child may indicate that he or she is being bullied by various signs or symptoms. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and should investigate if a child:

- Changes their usual routine;
- Is unwilling to go to school;
- Becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence;
- Starts stammering;
- Cries him/her to sleep at night or has nightmares;
- Feels ill in the morning;
- Begins to do poorly in school work;
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged;
- Has possessions which are damaged or "go missing";
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully);
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises;
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable;
- Is bullying other children or siblings;
- Stops eating;
- Is frightened/unwilling to say what is wrong;
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above;
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone; and/or
- Is nervous when a cyber-message is received.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Bullying- vulnerable children:

The following children may be more vulnerable to bullying than others:

- Children who are "different" in some way e.g. have Special Educational Needs or a disability;
- Children who have recently suffered bereavement, and
- Children with unpleasant or irritating habits.

The following children may be more likely than others to become bullies:

- Children who don't "fit in" with others;
- Children who may have been "spoiled";
- Children who have themselves been bullied e.g. by adults or older siblings;
- Children under great pressure to succeed;
- Children who have no sense of achievement; and/or
- Children who have recently suffered a traumatic event e.g. parental divorce, birth of a new baby, etc.

‘Danger Areas’ within the school:

Bullying is more likely to occur:

- If children are unsupervised;

N.B. It is the responsibility of all members of staff to ensure that children are supervised at all times during the school day, including lunch times and play times.

- Where supervision is more ‘thinly spread’ e.g. playground, during coach journeys etc.
- In places which are ‘out of sight’ – e.g. corridors, toilets, etc.

Measures to Prevent Bullying

We aim to prevent bullying by:

- Fostering a whole school ethos of good behaviour, mutual respect, and consideration;
- Creating a safe, happy, and inclusive environment for learning;
- Encouraging pupils to value diversity and difference, protect the vulnerable, and appreciate how their actions might affect others;
- The setting of good examples of behaviour by all adults;

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- Raising awareness about bullying through opportunities in the curriculum, PSHE lessons, assemblies, and national events such as Anti Bullying Week etc.;
- Developing pupils' social skills, confidence, resilience and self-esteem;
- Making it clear to all that there are effective procedures for reporting, investigating and tackling bullying;
- Making it as easy as possible for pupils who are being bullied to talk to someone they trust;
- Taking pupils' views into account through the School Council, and developing the roles that pupils can play in anti-bullying work (e.g. the Friendship Stop in the playground);
- Ensuring all pupils sign up to the School's 'Acceptable Use Agreement', which make it clear that cyberbullying is unacceptable. This message is regularly reinforced in lessons, assemblies and PSHE lessons; and
- Keeping up to date with guidance from the DfE.

Procedures to follow when bullying is reported

All incidents, no matter how minor, must be logged on 'CPOMS' so that they are dealt with quickly and appropriately.

- The member of staff to whom the incident of bullying is reported or who first discovers the situation will control the situation and reassure and support the child involved.
- This member of staff will then inform the child's class teacher as soon as possible. In all serious incidents the Headmistress will be informed and involved.
- The victim(s) will be interviewed alone and asked to tell his/her side of the story which will be recorded by the teacher.
- The alleged bully/bullies, together with all others who were involved will be interviewed individually and asked to tell their sides of the story and this will be recorded by the teacher.
- The incident will be recorded and filed in the respective children's files .
- Other staff, as relevant, will be informed. The Headmistress will always be informed.
- A member of staff, most likely the class teacher, will interview the victims again at a later stage. This will take place separately from the alleged bully/bullies. They will be offered support to develop a strategy to help themselves.
- A member of staff, most likely the class teacher, will interview the alleged bully/bullies at a later stage also. This will take place separately from the victim and it will be made clear why their behaviour was inappropriate and caused distress. They will be offered guidance on modifying their behaviour, together with any appropriate disciplinary sanctions.
- The parents/guardians of all parties should be informed and invited into school to discuss the matter, if the School sees this to be the next appropriate course of action.

Their support should be sought and they will be kept informed about how the strategies put in place progress through regular meetings.

- Written accounts will be kept of all investigatory meetings, meetings with parents, telephone calls and other relevant information.
- A way forward, including disciplinary sanction(s) and counselling will be agreed. This will recognise that suitable support is needed for the child who is bullied and for the child who bullies. Any sanctions imposed will be fair, proportionate and reasonable, take account of any special educational needs or disabilities that pupils may have, and consider the needs of vulnerable pupils. Sanctions may include a period on a tailor-made Monitoring Sheet, reporting to the Headmistress or exclusion from breaks or specific activities.
- A monitoring and review strategy will be put in place.
- In cases of severe or persistent bullying, and after every possible attempt to change the bullying behaviour, the Headmistress may impose a fixed term or permanent exclusion. In very serious cases and only after the Headmistress has been involved, it may be necessary to make a report to the police or social services. However, it is the policy of the School to attempt to resolve bullying issues internally under the School's own disciplinary procedures, unless the matter is of such gravity that a criminal prosecution is likely.

Additional Information

References and websites providing support and advice:

Government guidance July 2017:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>

<https://www.bullying.co.uk/advice-for-schools/>

<https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/schools-and-teachers/top-tips-teachers-and-school-staff>

<http://www.childline.org.uk/Explore/Bullying/Pages/Bullyinginfo.aspx>

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

www.beatbullying.co.uk

Kidscape