St Christopher's School

St Christopher's School
(including the EYFS, Before and After-School Care)

Anti-Bullying Policy
To be read in conjunction with our E-Safety Policy & Safeguarding Policy

This document was drawn up having regard to the DfE document "Preventing and Tackling Bullying", DfE, July 2017

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

At St Christopher's ("the School"), our community is based upon respect, good manners and fair play. We are committed to providing a safe and caring environment that is free from disruption, violence and any form of harassment so that every one of our pupils can develop to his/ her full potential. We expect our pupils to treat members of staff with courtesy and co-operation so that they can learn in a relaxed, but orderly, atmosphere. All pupils should care for and support each other, inside and outside of School.

The School prides itself on its respect and mutual tolerance. Parents/guardians have an important role in supporting the School in maintaining high standards of behaviour. It is essential that there are consistent expectations of behaviour both at school and at home, and that the School and parents co-operate closely together.

This policy is available to parents of pupils and prospective pupils on our website.

Bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination of pupils or staff will not be tolerated by the School. We treat all of our pupils and their parents fairly, and with consideration, and we expect them to respect the staff, the School and each other, in return. All forms of bullying are unacceptable at the School and any instances of bullying will be recorded and, where appropriate, will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

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

Put another way, bullying is the intentional hurting, harming or humiliating of another person. It may take many forms, including physical (including any threat of or use of violence of any kind), sexual, verbal (including cyber-bullying via email, social media, gaming, and SMS or other instant messages), and emotional (including by excluding, being sarcastic, name-calling, tormenting or spreading malicious rumours). It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone, or actions that fall short of direct participation, where someone encourages others to bully, or joins in with laughing at a victim. Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and intimidating, and often involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim whether that be a physical, psychological or intellectual imbalance, or by the perpetrator having the capacity to socially isolate the victim.

Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, and may involve actions or comments regarding a person's race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special education needs or disabilities (SEND), or because of a child's familial circumstances, such as they are adopted, in care or that they have caring responsibilities. Bullying may be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. For example, bullying can still be homophobic if directed towards a child that is perceived to be gay, whether or not this is the case.

Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time and can involve anyone - pupils, other young people, staff and parents.

THE SCHOOL'S RESPONSE TO BULLYING

At the School, we always treat bullying very seriously. It conflicts sharply with the School's social and moral principles, and potentially with its policy on equal opportunities, and will not be tolerated. When incidents of bullying do occur, they are dealt with quickly and taken seriously. The School will never dismiss bullying as banter or horseplay, and all reported incidents of bullying will be dealt with by staff in accordance with this policy.

The School understands that bullying can be so serious that it may cause physical, emotional and psychological damage, such as eating disorders, self-harm and even suicide. Stopping violence and ensuring the immediate physical safety of pupils is the School's first priority, however, the School acknowledges that emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical bullying, and therefore staff will use their discretion when dealing with an incident of bullying within the parameters of this policy and the Behaviour Policy. Whilst bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment, sexual violence and assault, upskirting and to violent and threatening behaviour. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying: everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are victims of bullying will be supported. Pupils who have engaged in bullying behaviour will be subject to appropriate disciplinary sanction and will also, where possible, be supported in learning different ways of behaving.

Bullying which occurs on School trips or outside of the School's premises will not be tolerated any more than bullying on School premises. Teachers will, where appropriate, discuss with parents extreme misbehaviour reported outside School premises and outside School hours.

Philosophy

We have zero tolerance to bullying in our school and we ensure that bullying is prevented as far as reasonably practical.

We believe that:

- bullying behaviour is unacceptable anywhere in our school community
- bullying can have a devastation effect on victims, possibly causing psychological damage and even suicide
- bullying is a deliberate behaviour
- bullying is not restricted to children and can happen in the work place
- bullying can take many forms: physical contact, intimidation, exclusion, comments, interference with property and cyber-bullying
- we have to be alert to the fact that bullying may take the form of abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil and will require immediate action like any child protection disclosure/suspicion, as set down in our Safeguarding Policy
- silence and secrecy nurture bullying
- there is no unique collection of characteristics that adds up to a bully

- to be effective in dealing with bullying we need to work with victims, perpetrators and their parents
- not all aggression is necessarily bullying.
- records must be kept so that it is easy to report bullying, including cyber-bullying outside school and to evaluate the effectiveness of our approach to bullying issues.

Aims

We endeavour to:

- educate in order to prevent bullying
- create an ethos where bullying is spoken about openly
- make known ways in which victims can seek help within school
- take all complaints of bullying seriously
- thoroughly investigate all suspected cases of bullying and react in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way
- act promptly to de-escalate and stop any continuation of harmful behaviour
- keep parents of victims and perpetrators fully informed and, where necessary, trigger sources of support from outside agencies
- raise awareness of staff through training to promote the effective implementation of this policy

We do this by:

- using assemblies and PSHEE, especially Time to Talk time, to discuss bullying: prevention and 'what to do if …'
- using stories to inform the children about bullying
- providing training for staff , including annual updates regarding e-Safety
- being aware of 'hot spots' for potential bullying, eg the playground
- providing a Blue Bench together with monitors, to support lonely or concerned children
- listening to children and taking them seriously
- teachers knowing the children in their class and being alert to signs and symptoms
- staff sharing knowledge/concerns about individuals during staff meetings
- making our policy known to parents
- providing procedures to be followed
- keeping up-to-date with advice, guidance and support materials
- having knowledge of support available from outside agencies
- keeping up-to-date records in our Bullying Incident Log
- providing annual Safer Internet Guidance to both children (Safer Internet Day) and parents (Information Evening)
- providing a Good Digital Citizen programme for Year 2 children

Signs and Symptoms

The following signs and symptoms the cause of which **may** be bullying, should prompt staff and parents to investigate possible causes, particularly by talking to each other:

- reluctance to go to school or other activity
- decline in standards of school work
- unexplained bruises or scratches
- possessions are damaged or go 'missing'
- becoming anxious, withdrawn or lacking in confidence
- friendship problems
- difficulty sleeping or experiencing nightmares
- bed wetting
- increased aggression
- frequent headaches and stomach aches
- development of nervous habits
- lack of appetite
- inability to say what is wrong

This list is not exhaustive and all changes in behaviour should be investigated and considered with bullying and child protection in mind.

Procedures

The School promotes an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat each other with respect at all times, inside and outside of School. 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 messages about community involvement and taking care of each other. It focuses on the importance of equality and diversity and pupils are encouraged to avoid prejudicial and exclusionary language. We also proactively promote teamwork. We value and reward caring, considerate behaviour. We talk openly about bullying as a whole school community in assemblies. So that it is easy to report bullying, including cyber-bullying and bullying outside school, we records of all incidents and reflect on these to recognise patterns and identify offenders.

Children should:
- support other children when they need help
- never join in with bullying or go along with it
- say "no", "stop it", "go away"
- tell their teacher, Headteacher or parent if they feel they are being bullied
- tell their teacher, Headteacher or parent if they know of another child being bullied.

Parents should:
- listen to their children
- take all allegations seriously
- promptly discuss any concerns/suspicions with their child's teacher or Headteacher
- keep an open mind until all the facts are established
- remember not all aggression is necessarily bullying
- avoid taking matters into their own hands
- never tackle the alleged perpetrator
- work with the School to resolve/monitor the situation
- inform the School if their child has been bullied in other situations away from school.

Staff should:
- be aware that children with SEND may not have the confidence or understanding to recognise or report bullying
- be aware of pockets of the playground where children with SEND may be isolated and subject to bullying
- include topics on bullying, valuing differences and team work in the curriculum
- be alert to possible bullying
- listen to children
- take all allegations/complaints seriously
- record all reported or observed incidents of bullying in the **Bullying Incident Log** (see Appendix 2) so that patterns may be identified and the effectiveness of our approach can be judged
- have no preconceived ideas about any parties possibly involved
- investigate all complaints thoroughly
- inform the Headteacher
- devise strategies and action for the bully and victim with the Headteacher
- involve and inform parents of all children concerned
- implement and monitor agreed action plans
- in cases of cyberbullying, preserve evidence by keeping a diary of events, including date, time and site information. The Headteacher will inform the police either via a police station or by contact CEOP (www.ceop.police.uk). See also the E-Safety Policy.

Action Plan for Dealing with reported Bullying

We acknowledge that every action plan will vary according to the circumstances of the bullying. Every action plan must, however, lay down how the victim is to be supported and protected and clearly state the steps to be taken with the bully including possible future action. Any action plan will broadly follow these steps but not necessarily in this order. The teacher of the victim, with the knowledge of the Headteacher, should drive the action plan.

Step 1
Reassure the person who disclosed the possible bullying and thank them for bringing it to your notice. Reassure the victim that you will support them and inform them what will happen next.

Step 2
Teacher of the victim to fill out Bullying Incident Log and **inform the Headteacher**, then set up protection for the possible victim. This should be done so that only staff and the victim are aware and could take the form of a general staff alert and/or giving the victim help routes.

Step 3
Promptly investigate the allegation without prejudice. The investigation should start with the victim and include interviews with any possible child witnesses, parents and staff, as well as those involved. Check for other recorded incidents. Inform parents of the victim.

Step 4
Discuss the outcome of the investigation with the Headteacher. Agree next steps.

Step 5*
Headteacher or teacher of perpetrator(s), bystander(s) and accessories to inform their parents. Remember this will most likely come as a shock and be difficult for the parents to accept, so be sensitive. Stick to facts and avoid judgements.

Step 6*
Inform the parents of the victim what the school is planning to do.

Step 7*
Inform the perpetrators of any immediate sanctions. Actions should always include a personal apology to the victim in the presence of staff. Also inform the perpetrators of future sanction should behaviour be repeated, emphasising the School's 'zero tolerance' policy towards bullying.

Step 8*
Inform the victim of sanctions against the perpetrators. Support the victim with strategies to deal with any possible future incidents. Emphasise that teaching staff will always support them and the School will not tolerate bullying. Inform the parents of suggested strategies and offer them book lists to help discussion of bullying with their children.

Step 9*
Monitor the situation and feedback weekly to involved parents and children. Continue to make the victim feel safe and rebuild their confidence and resilience.

* To emphasise the serious view taken by the School to bullying, the Headteacher will usually take over steps 5 to 8.

Sanctions

These will be tailored to the individual circumstance but may include missing playtimes or being closely supervised during times when bullying occurred. Sanctions in the school area are always, when possible, stepped to give the offender the incentive to improve and to show that we believe they can behave well.

For example:
The initial punishment may be the initial telling-off by the Headteacher, missing three days play, saying sorry to the victim and the Headteacher informing parents. Parents would also be asked to support the School by perhaps banning television for a set number of days.
The next stage would be reintegration into the playground for morning break only and all staff reporting back on behaviour. The class teacher would fill in a "smiley chart" to be shared with parents. While at home, perhaps certain TV programmes would be reinstated.
After this, full playtimes would be reinstated, but still on formal report with "smiley chart".
Finally, the child would return to full play on informal report and full TV allowance.

If at any time behaviour recurred, the sanctions would be re-instated.

We always expect success but it should be noted that the School does take bullying seriously. Persistent bullying, along with lack of support and co-operation from the parents of the perpetrator could result in fixed-term or permanent exclusion from School. **Please refer to our Behaviour Policy and our Misbehaviour and Exclusion Policy.**

Cyber-bullying

Cyber-bullying is a "method" of bullying, rather than a "type" of bullying. It includes bullying: via text message; via instant messenger services and social network sites; via email and via images or videos posted on the internet or spread via mobile phone. It can take the form of any of the previously discussed types of bullying, i.e. technology can be used to bully for reasons of race, religion, sexuality, disability etc. Though the evidence base is narrow, UK studies indicate that around 20% of children and young people have suffered cyber-bullying. Prolonged campaigns of harassment can occur, aimed at both pupils and staff. There is some evidence of a strong transition in cyber-bullying; those who have been bullied can go on to do the bullying themselves. Further information may be obtained from Cyber Bullying: Advice for Headteachers and Staff (2014).

This policy should be read in conjunction with our E-Safety Policy.

Complaints

We hope that you and your child do not have any complaints about the operation of our Anti-Bullying Policy, but a copy of the School's Complaints Procedure is on the School website or can be sent to you on request.

Signed   *H Crossley*   September 2020
                Mrs H Crossley
                Chair of Governors

Signed   *A C Thackray*   September 2020
                Mrs A C Thackray
                Headteacher

Reviewed   September 2020
Previous review September 2018
Next review   June 2022

Appendix 1

Further Information and Resources for Staff and Parents

Anti-bullying Alliance

Educate Against Hate

Kidscape

Advice for parents on cyberbullying – from the DfE

BULLYING INCIDENT LOG

Date	Child/Children involved	Description of Incident	Action Taken	Follow-up