Christopher Whitehead Language College & Sixth Form

Anti-Bullying Policy

1. Rationale

Christopoher Whitehead Language College and Sixth form is committed to safeguarding all members of its community. Bullying is not tolerated, is reported, and tackled at the earliest opportunity. This policy has been developed in collaboration with the School Council and reflects input from students, parents, teachers, support staff, technical staff, and governors.
We aim to create a culture where bullying cannot occur or thrive, and where all individuals feel safe, respected, and supported.

2. Aims

- To eliminate bullying in all its forms.
- To enhance the Behaviour Policy and reinforce school expectations.
- To involve all members of the school community in countering bullying.
- To ensure students, staff, parents, and governors understand what constitutes bullying and their responsibilities.
- To minimise the risk of peer-on-peer abuse through proactive strategies.
- To ensure parents feel confident that bullying will be firmly and fairly dealt with.
- To send a clear message that bullying behaviour will not be tolerated.

3. Definition of Bullying

Bullying is defined as **repetitive, intentional hurting** of one person or group by another, where there is an **imbalance of power**. It may be physical, verbal, psychological, or cyber-based, and can occur face-to-face or online.

A **bully** is someone who habitually seeks to harm or intimidate those perceived as vulnerable. One-off incidents, while distressing, do not constitute bullying but are still addressed seriously in line with the behaviour policy.

Types of bullying include:

- **Psychological**: exclusion, spreading rumours
- **Verbal**: name-calling, threats, racism, homophobia/transphobia
- **Physical**: hitting, kicking, pushing, throwing objects
- **Cyber**: abusive messages, online harassment
- **Prejudice-based**: targeting race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or identity

Some forms of bullying may constitute criminal offences and be reported to the police, including:

- Assault or violence
- Theft
- Repeated harassment or intimidation
- Hate crimes

4. Prevention Strategies

We believe prevention is key. Our proactive measures include:

- **Curriculum Integration**: Anti-bullying themes in PSHE, English, Drama and Religious Studies.
- **Guidance Time & Assemblies**: Reinforce British Values and school ethos.
- **Anti-Bullying Week**: Dedicated awareness and education.
- **Mobile Phone Restrictions (no phones allowed on between 8:30am- 3:20pm)**: Reduce opportunities for cyberbullying.
- **Staff Vigilance**: All staff trained to identify early signs and challenge.
- **Seating Plans**: Strategically designed and reflected upon to reduce conflict.
- **External Speakers**: Address racism, homophobia, and other forms of discrimination.
- **Inclusion and Diversity working party –** Highlighting key themes in line with national/regional trends.
- **Posters & Signage**: Promote diversity and respect.
- **Home School Agreement**: Outlines responsibilities including respect for others.
- **Community Engagement**: Work with police and children's services when necessary.

We recognise that certain groups are more vulnerable to bullying, including:

- Students with SEND
- Young carers
- BME students
- LGBTQ+ students

Our prevention efforts are tailored to address the specific challenges these groups may face.

5. Reporting Bullying

We encourage all to "call it out!" Students, parents, and staff are encouraged to report concerns promptly.

Students can report to:

- Learning Mentor
- Director of Studies
- Designated Safeguarding Lead (Mr Thacker Smith) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads.
- Any member of staff including site team, pastoral team, operational staff and teaching staff.
- Online Anti bullying portal
- Displayed QR codes to anti bullying reporting system.

Parents/Carers can report via:

- Learning Mentor
- Director of Studies

- Head of Sixth Form (for Years 12/13)
- Any staff member, who will escalate to the Pastoral Team
- Online Anti bullying portal

Staff must:

- Record concerns via email, in person or via behaviour systems.
- Pass all concerns to the Director of Studies or Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Report using the CPOMS system.

6. Investigation Process

Investigations are discreet, sensitive, timely, and thorough. Depending on severity, they may involve:

- Support Officers
- Learning mentors
- Pastoral staff
- Directors of Study
- Senior Leadership Team
- External agencies (e.g. Police)

Steps include:

- Interviews with victims, witnesses, and accused perpetrators.
- Statements and evidence collection
- Parental involvement and updates
- Behaviour file logging and appropriate sanctions distributed in line with behaviour policy.
- Clear communication that bullying is unacceptable

7. Outcomes and Support

For Victims:

- Emotional support
- Access to counselling
- Referral to external agencies (e.g. CAMHS) if needed

For Perpetrators:

- Sanctions per Behaviour Policy (detentions, fixed term suspensions)
- Behavioural interventions
- Restorative meetings to rebuild relationships

For Parents:

- Clear communication of process and outcomes

- Involvement in support and resolution plans

8. Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is treated seriously and includes:

- Harassment via social media, messaging apps, or email
- Sharing harmful content or images

Staff have powers under the **Education Act 2011** to confiscate a student's mobile phone for the purpose of preserving potential evidence. Parents/carers will be notified through behaviour systems and contact.

We do not encourage the deletion of harmful messages/images, and should there be the need for police involvement, this forms vital evidence to support any allegations.

9. Staff and Governor Responsibilities

- Regular CPD on bullying recognition and response
- Immediate action is expected—**doing nothing is not acceptable**
- First response and first call systems in place
- Pastoral team to investigate as appropriate
- Support staff for vulnerable groups (e.g. nurture groups, LSAs)
- Governors monitor trends and data

10. Headteacher Responsibilities

- Publicise anti-bullying measures
- Act on behaviour outside school premises
- Ensure school remains signed up to the Anti-Bullying Charter

11. Monitoring and Review

- Annual review of policy with stakeholder input
- Weekly behaviour monitoring by pastoral team
- Termly reports on bullying incidents
- Feedback from students and parents via surveys