CHELTENHAM BOURNSIDE SCHOOL

Policies

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1. Introduction

Cheltenham Bournside School is dedicated to ensuring that our school environment supports learning and the wellbeing of students and staff through a strong sense of community. All members of the school community have the right to feel respected, valued and safe. Bournside's vision of empowering lives through learning can only be achieved in a safe, secure and supportive environment.

Bournside is fundamentally opposed to bullying in all of its forms. It entirely conflicts with the values and principles we work and live by. We aim to raise the profile of the impact that bullying has on the lives of children and young people through our curriculum and work to create a climate in which no member of our community tolerates bullying.

The purpose of this policy is that all members of the governing body, staff, students, and parents/carers will understand what bullying is, how it can affect individuals and what to do once you are aware of bullying taking place. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening will be expected to act in accordance with this policy. The Anti-Bullying Policy is available on the school website in the policy section.

2. What is bullying?

2.1 Bournside students have chosen to adopt the Anti-Bullying Alliance definition of bullying which is: *'The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or through cyberspace.'*

Students and staff at Bournside use the mnemonic STOP - Several Times On Purpose, to help them to identify and respond to bullying behaviour.

As a school we will act swiftly and firmly if we are alerted to any form of bullying. The nature of bullying can be:

- Emotional – including being unfriendly or unkind, behaviour or actions that exclude people, tormenting behaviour (e.g. hiding books, damaging possessions or threatening gestures).
- Verbal – including name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing because of appearance etc.
- Physical – including pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence. Physically intimidating someone or using unwanted physical contact towards someone.
- Cyber – including all areas of internet use, including and not limited to e-mail, text, social media to write or say hurtful things about someone.
- Racist – including racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- Religion or beliefs – including religious taunts.
- Sexual – including unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments or gestures.
- Gender.
- Sexual orientation – including homophobic and biphobic behaviour.
- Gender identity – including transphobic bullying.
- SEND - including learning or physical disabilities.

No form of bullying will be tolerated and all incidents will be taken seriously.

3. Why is it important to act against bullying?

3.1 Bullying can hurt both physically and mentally. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Students, parents/carers and staff should be aware of the warning signs and symptoms that through changes in behaviour may highlight that someone is being bullied or is bullying.

The signs that someone is being bullied can take many forms and it maybe that some of these are observed at home or school or both. It may be that someone:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- does not want to go to school by public/school transport.
- insists on being driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school after previously enjoying being part of the school community
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in schoolwork
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions that are damaged or unexpectedly go missing
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually 'lost'
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home hungry (lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying/ harassing other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what is wrong
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a text message is received
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated. Other signs not listed here may also manifest themselves.

3.2 It is important to highlight that any child can be a victim of bullying. Students bully others, they can be bullied, or they may witness bullying. It is important to understand the multiple roles students play in order to effectively prevent and respond to bullying.

3.3 It is vital to understand why the bullying started in the first instance. Are there underlying issues that lead to the bullying? This should be investigated at the time of the allegations being made.

3.4 The school will respond to allegations of bullying in a fair and consistent way, working together with parents/carers to find a positive outcome for all parties concerned.

3.5 Any perception of bullying, however small it may seem, should be reported to eliminate both short-term and long-term consequences.

3.6 We are proud to be an inclusive school and we recognise the importance of responding to incidents of bullying in a firm, consistent but sensitive way. Each individual case will be investigated carefully and a considered response made in the light of evidence, circumstance and the individuals involved.

4. Dealing with bullying

4.1 If an allegation of bullying does arise students, staff and parents/carers should feel assured that the school will:

- take all reported incidents seriously
- act as quickly as possible to listen to both parties and to establish the facts
- record and report the incident carefully through our Class Charts system.
- provide support and reassurance to the victim through well-established pastoral systems and the work of Anti-Bullying Ambassadors (ABAs)
- support the victim
- make it clear to students displaying bullying behaviour that it will not be tolerated
- identify issues underlying bullying behaviour and, if appropriate provide or refer the student displaying bullying behaviour to the appropriate source of support to enable them to change that behaviour
- use sanctions corresponding to the school Ladder of Consequences
- communicate effectively with the parents/carers of all students involved
- use restorative practice as and when necessary. Restorative practice is a way of working with conflict that puts the focus on repairing the harm that has been done. It is an approach to conflict resolution that includes all of the parties involved.

4.2 When dealing with incidents of bullying, staff undertake to:

- encourage students to report all incidents of bullying
- listen to students who may have been bullied, take what they say seriously and act promptly
- be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying
- any member of staff that receives information on an incident of bullying should formally hand it to their tutor or Head of House and record the details on Class Charts promptly and accurately
- discuss with students the importance of telling an adult about bullying and reassure students, that wherever possible, anonymity will be protected and should information need to be shared it will be done with the full knowledge of that student
- investigate events and take statements from those involved and witnesses
- contact parents/carers and pass details to the Heads of House
- work with Police Community Support Officer's (PCSO's) to respond effectively to incidents of cyber bullying
- apply a range of sanctions following a considered response to the circumstances of any case, corresponding to the Ladder of Consequences

- refer, as appropriate, to anti-bullying information that has been taught through the curriculum including PSCHE programmes for Years 7-11 and during the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) presentations in assemblies
- welcome and support the work of the school Anti-Bullying Ambassadors
- follow up with students directly over time to ensure that sustained bullying has stopped or that isolated incidents have not been repeated. This action will be completed by the Pastoral team

4.3 Guidance for students, including through the Anti-Bullying Ambassadors (ABAs)
Students should report all incidents of bullying either directly to any member of staff, and/or through the Anti-Bullying Ambassadors.

The ABAs are student ambassadors in years 7- 13 who are trained to support students who are unfortunate enough to encounter bullying at Bournside. An ABA can be a person who will listen, offer advice or even be somebody to be a voice for students who may not be confident enough to report a problem. They do not replace the teacher and will always encourage students to tell an adult. ABAs will meet with a member of the Senior Leadership Team, and discuss concerns, improve their training and to plan Anti-Bullying events at Bournside School.

ABAs support tutor groups throughout the House system, and are visible during student social time via their ABA badge. They organise events and deliver tutor group presentations to raise the profile of their work and promote the anti-bullying message.

4.4 Guidance for Parents/Carers
- Parents/carers are encouraged to work in partnership with the school. This policy is available on the school website in the policy section.   Parents/carers will be introduced to the policy at Information Evenings and through reminders in the parent bulletin.
- Parents/Carers should make early contact with House tutors if they suspect that their child is being bullied.

4.5 Confidentiality

Staff cannot promise absolute confidentiality if approached by a student for help. Staff must make this clear to students. Safeguarding procedures must be followed at all times when any disclosures are made. An underlying principle in supporting students in our school is that all children are listened to sensitively and objectively and all incidences of alleged bullying will be taken seriously.

4.6 Cyber-bullying
This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's E-Safety and Information Technology – Acceptable Use Policy. Staff will have regard to both policies when dealing with reported incidences of cyber-bullying and bullying through the use of mobile devices.

5. Strategies for Preventing Bullying

5.1. As part of Bournside's on-going commitment to the safety and welfare of our students, we will use the following strategies to promote positive behaviour:

Through assemblies and tutor time activities:

- All members of the school community are asked to use language that is respectful of and kind towards others and that does not perpetuate stereotypes or offend others
- Tutor time provides regular opportunities to discuss issues that may arise in class and for form tutors to target specific interventions
- House assemblies help raise students' awareness of bullying and derogatory language
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- House assemblies help raise students' awareness of bullying and derogatory language
- Restorative practice
- ABAs across the school

Through the curriculum:

- The PSCHE curriculum includes opportunities for students to understand about different types of bullying and what they can do to respond and prevent bullying
- Specific PSCHE curriculum input on areas of concern such as cyber bullying and internet safety.

Through planned activities (students and parents/carers):

- Student voice through school ministries
- Parent/carer groups
- Counselling and/or mediation schemes
- Review the Anti-Bullying Policy annually

Through staff training

- Staff training and development for all staff via Continuing Professional Development (CPD) sessions.

6. Links to other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- E-safety and Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy.