



Anti-Bullying Policy Approved July 2017

All school policies are reviewed by Governors annually

1. Introduction

Cheltenham Bournside School and Sixth Form Centre 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. The aims of the school that every student should 'be the best that they can be' 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 effect 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. All members of our community have a right to work in a secure and caring school and have a responsibility to contribute to and maintain such an environment.

1.1 The purpose of this policy is that all members of the governing body, staff, students and parents and 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.

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, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or through cyberspace.'

We will act swiftly and firmly if we are alerted to any form of bullying including;

- **Emotional** - being unfriendly or unkind, excluding behaviour or actions, tormenting behaviour (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- **Physical** - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- **Racist** - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- **Sexual** - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments or gestures
- **Homophobic or gender variant** - because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality or identity
- **SEND**- because of **learning** or **physical disabilities**
- **Verbal** - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing because of appearance etc.
- **Cyber** - all areas of internet use, including and not exclusive of e-mail, text, social media and internet chat room misuse.

3. Why is it important to take action against bullying?

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

These signs can take many forms. 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 money been 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’s wrong
- Is reticent to engage with social media
- 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 bullies often play more than one role. 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 Suspicions of bullying, however small they may seem, should be reported to eliminate both short-term and long-term consequences.

3.5 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 In general, if an allegation of bullying does arise students, staff, parents and carers should feel assured that the school will:

- Take all reported incidents seriously
- Act as quickly as possible to establish the facts
- Record and report the incident carefully through our Pastoral Management system (PAM)
- Provide support and reassurance to the victim through well-established pastoral systems and the work of Anti-Bullying Ambassadors
- Support the victim
- Make it clear to students displaying bullying behaviour that it will not be tolerated
- Use sanctions corresponding to the school Ladder of Consequences
- Communicate effectively with the parents or carers of all of students involved.

4.2 Guidance for staff when dealing with incidents of bullying:

- Encourage students to report all incidents of bullying
- Listen to students who may have been bullied, take what they say seriously and act
- Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying
- Report any concerns to Pastoral Heads and record on PAM promptly and accurately
- Discuss with students the importance of telling an adult about bullying
- Investigate serious events and take statements from those involved and witnesses
- Contact parents/carers and pass details to the Head of Year
- 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 when appropriate to anti-bullying through the taught curriculum including PSCHEE programmes for Years 7-11 and during the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) presentations to students 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
- Direct victims of bullying to the appropriate on-going support through their Head of Year and/or the student support team
- The Head of Year will check with the student, where the student has been supported by this policy, that the bullying has diminished or ceased.

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, through the Anti-Bullying Ambassadors or using the ABA email address. Most students find it easiest to speak first with their tutors.

The ABAs are student Ambassadors in years 10, 11 and Sixth Form 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 meet once a week, with a member of the Senior Leadership Team, and discuss concerns, improve their training and to plan Anti-Bullying events at Bournside School.

ABAs visit tutor groups in years 7, 8 and 9, every 2 weeks and are visible during student social time via their ABA badge. They organise events to raise the profile of their work and promote the anti-bullying message. They also have a Student Frog page that gives students advice and opportunity for a referral and keeps students up to date with current anti-bullying events at the school.

4.4 Guidance for Parents/Carers:

- Parents are encouraged to work in partnership with the school. This policy is available on the school website in the policy section. Parents will be introduced to the policy at Information Evenings and through reminders in the parent bulletin.
- Parents/Carers should make early contact with tutors if they suspect that their son/daughter is being bullied via the staff email addresses on the school website or alternatively telephone 01242 235555 and refer for the attention of the relevant member of staff
- For all serious cases of bullying, parents will be asked to be involved and to support the action being taken by the school.

4.5 Confidentiality:

Thoughtful and sensitive sharing of actions and feelings between aggrieved parties is frequently helpful in responding to bullying. The underlying principle in supporting our students is that all children are listened to sensitively and objectively and all incidents of bullying will be taken seriously. Confidentiality can therefore not be guaranteed.

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.

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:

- Restorative Approaches
- Anti-Bullying icon on student frog page
- Annual Anti-Bullying week and other events
- PSCH EE curriculum
- Specific curriculum input on areas of concern such as Cyber Bullying and internet safety
- Parent groups/extended schools
- ABAs
- Parent information via website and written communication
- Staff training and development for all staff via CPI sessions
- Counselling and/or Mediation schemes.
- HELPLINE numbers (Childline, Kidscape) are displayed in Heads of Years' offices, student support and conduct areas
- Introducing constructive social time activities during lunchtime and breaktime
- ABA email address to report concerns/bullying
- Seek feedback from students and staff through the staff forum and Junior Leadership Council to continually review the anti-bullying strategies
- Review the Anti-Bullying Policy annually after consulting with staff, student and parent/carers.