

CAMBRIDGE HOUSE GRAMMAR SCHOOL



ANTI BULLYING POLICY (Consultation April 2019)

Cambridge House Grammar School believes that each individual pupil has the right to learn and each individual member of staff has a right to work in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied in any manner.

Bullying affects everyone involved, those who observe, those who are bystanders and take no action to assist, those who instigate the event and those who suffer the indignity. In certain instances, relatively minor infractions can lead to more serious incidents and therefore the school does not tolerate a lack of respect on any level. We endeavour to maintain a happy and supportive family ethos in school and work positively to ensure that the home-school and school to school partnerships supports this. As part of the Ballymena Learning Together collaborative partnership, we endeavour to ensure that students develop all aspects of their academic, social, spiritual, moral, physical and social capacity.

SCOPE OF THIS POLICY

This policy includes:

- Bullying of pupils by pupils within school;
- Bullying of and/or by pupils outside school where the school is aware of it and where it is reasonable to expect a response by the school authorities;
- Bullying of staff by pupils within or outside school;
- Bullying of pupils by staff within or outside school.

DEFINITION

Bullying is viewed as deliberately hurtful behaviour, **repeated over a period of time**, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves or put a stop to it. It is defined by the Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum (NIABF) as “repeated use of power by one or more persons intentionally to hurt, harm or adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others”.

The main types of bullying are:

- Physical (hitting, kicking, theft of property, damage to property including graffiti);
- Verbal (name calling, sarcasm, homophobic, racist or sectarian remarks, taunts, offensive remarks, belittling of others’ abilities and achievements);
- Social (spreading rumours, deliberately excluding someone from social groups);
- Cyber bullying (the use of Digital Technology, deliberately to upset someone else);
- Transphobic (name calling, teasing or humiliating using transphobic language, using incorrect pronouns to humiliate, refusing to work or cooperate with someone because of their real or perceived gender identity, inappropriate sexual comments or gestures)

Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, self-harming or taking unusual absences. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting from school. In Cambridge House Grammar School all pupils are actively encouraged to report bullying in school.

AGREED CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Pupils

Pupils have the right to be educated in an environment which is safe, caring and respectful of their individual needs. They have a responsibility to treat other pupils, teachers and support staff with respect, to refrain from engaging in bullying behaviour and to report it if they are aware of it happening. Senior pupils in the school are expected to support younger pupils, particularly in circumstances where school staff cannot always be present (e.g. school buses).

Parents/Guardians

Parents/Guardians have the right to expect that their child will be educated in an environment which is safe, caring and respectful of their individual needs. They have a responsibility **to ensure that their child co-operates with other pupils, teachers and support staff** and to inform the school of any incidents of bullying of which they are aware.

Staff

All staff, teaching and support, have the right to work in an environment which is characterised by respect and caring for all. They have a responsibility to contribute to the creation of such an environment and to work for the well-being of all pupils. Consequently, all staff are asked to be vigilant and to accept their collective responsibility for the pastoral care of pupils within the school community.

ACTION TO PREVENT BULLYING

Emphasis is placed on the quality of relationships in the School between all members of staff and between staff and pupils to encourage an openness designed to allow pupils to speak out where potential problems are perceived.

The pastoral programme provides opportunities for pupils to explore the issues surrounding bullying during the weekly pastoral period and at assemblies, alongside visiting speakers from external agencies. The underpinning values of fairness, compassion, tolerance and forgiveness are encouraged within the Pastoral Form period, Religious Education and reinforced during School Assemblies (Whole School and Year Group). At a practical level, classroom teachers strive to create a positive, well-ordered environment where each pupil feels valued and respected. Teaching and support staff supervise the main areas of the school before class, at break-time, lunch-time and after school at the buses. All supervising staff are asked to be particularly vigilant during these times since some pupils are more vulnerable and bullying is less easily seen.

RESPONSES TO BULLYING

Responding to a Bullying Concern

1. All incidents of, or alleged incidents of bullying behaviour will be investigated and followed up by the member of staff who witnessed the incident or to whom the incident was reported in the first instance.
2. Where there is evidence of persistent, deliberate bullying behaviour, the member of staff should remain calm, take the allegation seriously and respond as soon as possible.
3. The bullied pupil will be offered reassurance and support.
4. Details of the bullied pupil's story will be recorded.
5. Where possible, witnesses to the bullying behaviour should be sought.

Actions and appropriate individual or group interventions will depend upon the level of bullying and staff may wish to refer to the Addressing Bullying in Schools (NI) Act 2016 and the NIAB Forum 2013 Document "Effective Responses to Bullying" for potential strategies.

Dealing with pupils engaging in bullying behaviour

1. The bullying pupil will be made aware of the seriousness of their behaviour and its potential consequences for the bullied pupil and themselves.
2. Efforts will be made to ensure the bullying behaviour stops at once and that the pupils involved are reconciled.
3. Actions may include strategies such as behaviour management programmes, restorative questioning, peer support, shared concern, whole-class strategies, sanctions or others thought to be appropriate. Parental involvement will always feature, in line with the actions taken in school.
4. All involved parties will be kept informed of the incident and action taken.
5. Records will be maintained securely and confidentiality respected in relation to them.
6. Appropriate sanctions (determined by the severity and persistence of the bullying and the attitude of those involved) will be invoked in line with the overall school policy on Behaviour for Learning. Parents may be requested to attend the school for a meeting with the Form Teacher/Head of Year/Head of Key Stage as appropriate.
7. Where such measures fail to prevent further bullying, the Vice Principal (Pastoral) will be informed and further actions taken.
8. Where bullying occurs outside school, including Cyber bullying, other relevant schools or agencies will be informed about the concerns and any actions taken.
9. Repeated bullying is regarded as a serious breach of school rules, liable to result in suspension for the bullying pupil. Repetition of any bullying incident thereafter will be referred to the Board of Governors.

After any initial response the Form Tutor, Head of Year and/or Head of Key Stage will monitor the situation until the bullied pupil feels safe. Where the bullied pupil simply wants to put an incident behind him/her (and the parent feels that this is the best course), the pupil's wishes will be respected.

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- the offer of an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff of their choice;
- reassurance that the bullying will be addressed;
- interventions to restore self-esteem and confidence;
- the use of specialist advice and/or referrals to other agencies (Counselling) where appropriate.

Pupils who have displayed bullying behaviour will be helped by opportunities to:

- discuss what happened;
- examine the specific reasons for their behaviour and the consequences of it;
- establish the wrongdoing and need to change;
- involve their parents to help and support the change of attitude;
- make use of specialist interventions and/or referrals to other agencies (Counselling), where appropriate.

Parents

1. Most concerns about bullying will be resolved through discussion between home and school. Parents are encouraged to liaise closely with Form Teachers/Head of Year and the Heads of Key Stage.
2. Where a parent feels their concerns have not been resolved, they may use the School's Formal Complaints procedure.
3. Where a pupil is involved in bullying behaviour of others outside school, e.g. on the way to or from school **or through use of the internet at home**, parents will be asked to work with the school in addressing the child's behaviour.

LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

The policy is linked to the current Pastoral Care Policy, Child Protection, Health & Safety, Behaviour for Learning, Acceptable Use of the Internet, Use of Reasonable Force and is designed to create a safe and caring environment where all pupils have the opportunity to develop their full potential. Strategies adopted to deal with incidents of bullying include those referred to in the Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum Guidelines "Effective Responses to Bullying" (2013).

The school will review this policy biennially and assess its implementation and effectiveness.

This Policy supersedes the 2014-15 Policy.

Signed: Chair of Board of Governors

Signed: Principal

Date