

CHRIST'S HOSPITAL

PUPIL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Aims

1. The aims of this policy are:
 - to state the School's position on all types of bullying of pupils by pupils;
 - to explain the School's procedures for dealing with unkindness and bullying;
 - to explain what actions the School takes to prevent bullying.

Introduction

2. Christ's Hospital promotes a culture of inclusion, kindness and consideration for others. We are committed to providing a safe and caring environment that is free from violence, intimidation, or any form of harassment so that every pupil can develop their full potential. We expect our pupils to treat one another with courtesy and mutual respect, and to care for and support one another.
3. Bullying, harassment, victimisation or discrimination of any kind is unacceptable.
4. Parents/guardians have an important role in supporting the School's commitment to inclusion and kindness. Acceptance of this policy forms part of our standard terms and conditions.
5. This policy has been drafted with reference to the DFE's guidance documents, *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, *Preventing and Tackling Bullying* and *Cyberbullying: Advice for Head Teachers and School Staff*, and to the Equality Act 2010.
6. This policy concerns bullying by pupils. If a pupil believes that they or a friend are being bullied by a member of staff, they should report their concern to a Deputy Head, the DSL or Assistant DSL (the Child Protection & Safeguarding Team), or their houseparent.

Definition of bullying

7. Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, in person or online, **repeated over time**, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms. It can involve violence, intimidation, humiliation, manipulation, interference with a person's property or personal space, unkind, discriminatory or belittling language, spreading rumours or lies, or deliberate exclusion from a group. It can be motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities.
8. Bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals. It can be a barrier to their learning and have serious consequences for their mental health. Bullying which takes place at school does not only affect an individual during childhood but can have a lasting effect on their lives well into adulthood. Serious bullying of pupils by other pupils is a form of peer-on-peer abuse.

9. A single, isolated act of unkind behaviour, physical, verbal or online, including discriminatory language or behaviour, does not constitute bullying, but will be taken seriously. Single acts of physical harm or significant unkindness or discrimination, such as racist, sexist or homophobic verbal abuse, either in person or online, will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Such incidents will usually be managed with a restorative approach in the first instance, but serious individual incidents may result in formal school sanctions, including suspension.

Specific types of bullying

10. **Racist bullying**
Racist or xenophobic language or behaviour used by any Christ's Hospital pupil, and directed towards, or used about, any individual or group of people, including online, is unacceptable. Repeated use of racist language or behaviour constitutes racist bullying. Pupils who engage in racist bullying will be suspended from School. Pupils who engage in a serious, deliberate, individual instance of racist language or behaviour are also liable to suspension. Pupils must take care not to use racist language and refrain from using words if uncertain of their meaning or connotation, seeking guidance from their houseparent or tutor if necessary. Pupils must take particular care not to engage in so-called 'banter' about racist language, such as enticing others into using such language as a 'joke'. Such behaviour is unhelpful, unkind and liable to cause misunderstanding and hurt.
11. **Sexism**
Sexism has no place in our society or in our School. Repeated use of sexist language or behaviour constitutes sexist bullying and will result in suspension.
12. **Homophobia and transphobia**
Christ's Hospital achieved the Rainbow Flag Award in 2018 and is proud to be an inclusive school. Homophobic or transphobic language or behaviour is unacceptable. Use of the word 'gay' to denote something negative is implicitly homophobic and is not tolerated at Christ's Hospital. Repeated use of such language or behaviour constitutes bullying and will result in suspension.
13. **Physical bullying**
Any deliberate act of violence resulting in injury is unacceptable and will incur a serious sanction such as suspension or, in the case of a very serious incident, expulsion. Physical bullying involves repeated acts of violence or other forms of physicality, including pushing, grabbing, tripping or deliberately blocking another person's way. Such behaviours can be experienced as intimidating, whether or not they are intended as such. Pupils should think carefully before behaving in a physical way with their peers, especially with those who are smaller or younger than themselves, or who are new to the School. Physical interactions in which one pupil is outnumbered by others are highly likely to feel intimidating. Pupils should not seek to excuse such behaviours by claiming that they were 'joking'.
14. **Sexual assault, sexual harassment or peer-on-peer abuse**
Acts of inappropriate touch, sexual assault, harassment (including cat-calling or sexualized name-calling), 'upskirting' (which is a criminal offence) and online sexual bullying or sharing of sexualized images will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis as bullying and also as safeguarding concerns and, in serious instances, as potential criminal offences. Christ's Hospital will report such instances to external agencies including Children's Services and the police. Please refer to the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

15. **‘Hazing’, ‘initiation ceremonies’, ‘rites of passage’**
Practices that involve frightening or harming others, or interfering with or damaging others’ personal property or space, under the guise of being ‘initiation ceremonies’ (‘hazing’) or ‘rites of passage’, are unacceptable. As deliberate, planned, organized acts, carried out by groups against others who are less powerful, they are comparable to bullying, even if occurring only once, and will be treated as such. Pupils who plan, organize or participate in such practices are liable to be suspended or, in very serious instances, expelled.
16. **‘Banter’**
The word ‘banter’ is sometimes used to disguise or downplay unkind, inappropriate or bullying behaviours as something light-hearted or inconsequential. Describing something as ‘banter’ does not excuse unkind behaviour. Christ’s Hospital encourages pupils to take responsibility for their words and actions.
17. **Online bullying**
Online bullying is a complex issue. It can be overt or subtle, takes many forms and constantly evolves, owing to the creation of new technology and functionality and social media platforms. It can involve the following:
- sending unkind messages to a person, including anonymously;
 - posting or sharing unkind comments or messages about a person, including anonymously;
 - taking, posting or sharing images of a person without their permission;
 - threatening to embarrass or expose someone online;
 - repeatedly trying to add a person into an online group, particularly when you know that they do not want to join;
 - shaming people on social media;
 - intentionally isolating people online;
 - using emojis, slang or code words to be unkind or humiliate a person;
 - using another person’s phone, email or social media account without their permission, or to hurt others or incriminate the owner of the phone or account.
- This list is not exhaustive. Any type of repeated, unkind behaviour online constitutes bullying.
18. Parents have responsibility for deciding which online platforms their children may use.
19. Pupils who deliberately bully others online will be sanctioned in the same way as for other forms of bullying. This may include suspension. Pupils who engage in online bullying may also have their mobile phones and other devices confiscated for a period of time decided by a Deputy Head. The Department for Education’s guidance, *Preventing and Tackling Bullying (2017)* states that ‘The Education Act 2011 amended the power in the Education Act 1996 to provide that when an electronic device, such as a mobile phone, has been seized by a member of staff who has been formally authorised by the headteacher, that staff member can examine data or files, and delete these, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person’s mobile phone.’
20. **Criminal law**
The Department for Education’s guidance, *Preventing and Tackling Bullying (2017)* explains that: “Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it

is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour, or communications, including online, could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986.”

21. If it is believed that an offence may have been committed by a pupil, including online, Christ's Hospital will seek assistance from the police. For example, under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, any person who sends an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender, is guilty of an offence if their purpose in sending it was to cause distress or anxiety to the recipient.
22. **Being a by-stander**
It is acknowledged that pupils who find themselves witnessing acts of bullying may be in a difficult position. They may feel powerless to intervene or stop the bullying, or fear of being targeted themselves if they speak out. Pupils are encouraged not to be 'by-standers' and to report bullying that they have seen or heard about to their houseparent, the DSL, or any other member of staff. Pupils who are discovered to have been present during an incident of bullying will be spoken with as witnesses as part of the investigation into the incident. Pupils who have actively assisted in, or encouraged the bullying will be deemed to have been complicit and to have a degree of culpability, for which they may be sanctioned.

Procedures for dealing with unkindness or bullying

23. It is regrettable but inevitable that some unkindness will occur between young people at school, especially in a boarding environment, where pupils live, work and socialise in close quarters. Minor instances of unkindness, when observed by staff or reported to them, will be dealt with informally and restoratively, on the spot. Where staff are concerned that an incident may be serious, or form part of a pattern of potential bullying, they will share their concern using house-based information sharing systems and the School-wide Cause for Concern (C4C) logging system, for follow-up by house parents and Heads of Year. Most minor, isolated incidents of unkindness can be resolved in this way.
24. More serious individual acts of unkindness, or suspected bullying, will be dealt with as follows:
 - members of staff who have witnessed or been told about instances of serious unkindness or bullying will log their concern using School systems, and communicate with the relevant houseparent(s), Head(s) of Year and Deputy Head;
 - the Deputy Head will co-ordinate an investigation. Depending on circumstances, this may be conducted by houseparents and Heads of Year, in the first instance, who will report their findings to the Deputy Head;
 - all pupils believed to have been involved will be interviewed individually and may be asked to write an account of events;
 - any pupils believed to have witnessed events will also be interviewed and may be asked to write an account of events;
 - where initial enquiries suggest that a serious incident or bullying has occurred, the Deputy Head will interview pupils and may require additional written statements to be given;

- where a serious incident of unkindness or bullying is deemed to have taken place, the Deputy Head will decide on the appropriate sanction, up to the level of suspension;
- in cases where a house move or expulsion may need to be considered, the Deputy Head will consult with the Head Teacher;
- the parents/guardians of all parties will be informed and where appropriate, invited to the School to discuss the matter. This is usually after the investigation and often after any disciplinary action has been taken, for example, on a pupil's return from suspension;
- in cases of bullying, the feelings of the pupil who has been bullied will be of paramount importance. Opportunities for restorative conversations will be created, in consultation with the pupil who has been bullied;
- in very serious cases and only after the Head Teacher has been involved, it may be necessary to make a report to the police or to the Social Services. However, it is the policy of Christ's Hospital to attempt to resolve such issues internally, under the School's own disciplinary procedures, unless the matter is of such gravity that there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm.
- should bullying behaviour persist after all strategies have been employed and failed, the perpetrator/s will be asked to leave the School.

Potential signs of bullying

25. Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is being bullied include:
- unwillingness to return to School;
 - displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet;
 - failure to produce work, or producing unusually bad work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others;
 - books, bags and other belongings suddenly going missing, or being damaged;
 - changes to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary);
 - diminished levels of self-confidence;
 - frequent visits to the Medical Centre with symptoms such as stomach pains and headaches;
 - unexplained cuts and bruises;
 - frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class;
 - choosing the company of adults;
 - subdued body language and poor eye contact;
 - difficulty in sleeping; nightmares.
 - talking of suicide or running away.
26. Staff will report signs of potential bullying, using School systems to notify houseparents and, where there is specific cause for a serious safeguarding concern (evidence of self-harm or expression of suicidal ideation), must also notify the DSL.

Preventative measures

27. The School's commitment to anti-bullying is supported by a wide range of activities:
- all pupils sign up to the Christ's Hospital Community Charter, which sets out a commitment to consideration and kindness towards all members of the School community. The Charter is prominently displayed in every boarding house,

building and classroom and referred to as a reminder of expectations of behaviour;

- the School uses assemblies and tutorials to promote an ethos of kindness and inclusion, explain behaviour expectations and reinforce behaviour the anti-bullying message;
- the School's PSHE programme emphasizes pupils' social and moral responsibility to take care of one another and to seek help and support from staff. It covers equity, diversity and inclusion, positive relationships, online safety and action to take if pupils believe someone is being bullied;
- other lessons, particularly Theology and Philosophy, English and Drama highlight the issue of bullying and reinforce this message by teaching moral and spiritual values that show bullying to be unacceptable and by developing social skills;
- in boarding houses, the School's houseparents, supported by their matrons and house tutor teams, act in *loco parentis*. The informal house environment is important in reinforcing pupils' standards and values, providing the opportunity for friendly, informal discussion of matters of concern to the individual pupil outside the formal classroom. We encourage close contact between houseparents and parents/guardians. Houseparents always make contact if they are worried about a pupil's well-being;
- pupils are encouraged to tell a member of staff at once if they know that bullying is taking place;
- the names, photographs and contact details of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Team are displayed in boarding houses;
- staff are regularly trained, know their legal responsibilities and know the School's policy on how to deal with bullying; whilst pupils cannot be constantly supervised in a large and busy boarding environment, settings such as Dining Hall and coach journeys are actively supervised by staff.
- pupils who are struggling to manage their behaviour towards others may need additional support in developing tolerance, understanding and respect for others in the Christ's Hospital community. Additional support is provided beyond the boarding house by Heads of Year, the Senior Chaplain, the Welfare Team or through referral to the School's therapy service;
- the School's Medical Centre and all our boarding houses display advice on where pupils can seek help, including details of confidential helplines and websites connecting to external specialists such as Childline, Kidscape, Get Connected and Samaritans;
- staff are made aware of pupils who are vulnerable via a weekly update from the Welfare Team;
- staff are also aware of pupils on the TLS register, including those with SEND;
- all pupils have access to a telephone, enabling them to call for support in private;
- Deputy Grecian pupils are trained as peer mentors, to offer support and guidance to younger pupils. They can be identified by wearing a yellow wristband and their photos are displayed around site and in the boarding houses. A School monitor (prefect) is also given responsibility for overseeing the work of the peer mentors and meets regularly with the Deputy Head to discuss issues which may have arisen. Peer mentors and School monitors receive child protection training as part of their induction programme;
- leadership training is provided to the Senior Grecian and Second Monitor and their team of monitors, covering child protection, and the importance of offering support and assistance to younger and to vulnerable pupils;
- the Pupil Wellbeing Committee puts pupils at the heart of the messaging across the School and ensures that issues raised in assemblies, chapels, tutorials and PSHE lessons are relevant and pupil driven;

- the School reserves the right to investigate incidents that take place outside School hours, on School visits and trips and that occur in the vicinity of the School, involving our pupils;
- we welcome feedback from parents and guardians on the effectiveness of our preventative measures.

Online bullying – preventative measures

28. In addition to the preventative measures described above:

- all pupils are expected to adhere to the School's ICT Code of Conduct - Acceptable Use Policy;
- certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and our IT Department monitors pupils' internet use, to flag up potential safeguarding concerns.

Related policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Rewards and Sanctions
- ICT Code of Conduct for pupils
- Code of Conduct for Staff
- Code of Conduct for Pupils
- Equality and Diversity policy

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Date of last review: August 2020

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