



# ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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## CHARTERHOUSE

### **This document complies with:**

- HM Government, The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- HM Government, The Equality Act 2010
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (Department for Education, September 2020)
- *Boarding Schools: National Minimum Standards* (Department for Education, April 2015)
- *Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice* (Department for Education and Department for Health 2015)

### **This document has regard to:**

- [\*Preventing and tackling bullying; Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies\*](#) (Department for Education, July 2017)

### **This document should be read alongside the following, which are openly available on the School website:**

- Cyber-Bullying Policy (February 2017)
- Pupils' Equal Opportunities Policy (August 2019)
- Principles and Practice Statement (AJT, December 2015)
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (JMR, September 2020)

Information about the Peer Support Scheme is available from the School on request.

As regards the provision of positive adult role models, staff should read this document in conjunction with the Professional Conduct Policy (JMR, September 2019).



## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

### One: how bullying is defined

1. At Charterhouse, 'bullying' is the name we give to behaviour which:

- hurts or distresses another pupil, either emotionally or physically,  
and
- is repeated, or part of a broader movement,  
and
- is based on an imbalance of power.

2. 'Hurt' or 'distress' is judged from the victim's point of view (or the way they present to others), not the perpetrator's. This is because some bullies, thinking their behaviour is 'just a bit of fun', seem genuinely unaware of the hurt they are causing. The School aims to develop all pupils' capacity for empathy using a variety of means, including a full programme of Personal, Social & Health Education.

3. Our definition of bullying includes the idea of repetition. However, if hurtful behaviour has been seen only once, this does not necessarily mean that the element of repetition is not present, and therefore that a single incident cannot be an instance of bullying. Different people may be aware of single incidents which together add up to a pattern. For this reason it is crucial that members of the community report even single or low-level concerns, as set out in section Five below.

4. An 'imbalance of power' means that the bully has control over the relationship in a way that makes it difficult for the victim to defend himself or herself. Some examples might be:

- the bully is physically larger and more intimidating
- there is a difference in age, experience or intellect between bully and victim
- the bully has found out exactly what upsets someone
- the bully is a member of a particular social group and has the power to exclude or isolate others



5. We call this 'bullying' whether it takes place in the physical world or online. Charterhouse has a separate Policy on Cyber Bullying.
6. The bully does not have to be an individual, and neither does the victim. Two, three or more people may be involved on either side. In addition, there are often bystanders who know about the bullying or even enjoy watching it, but say nothing.
7. Under the definition just given, deliberately excluding someone from a social group is a form of bullying. However, this is a very difficult area. Adults cannot force children to be friends with each other. Staff at Charterhouse will do everything in their power to encourage happy social relationships amongst pupils, but it is sometimes only possible to deal with exclusion as bullying when other factors (as outlined below) are involved, too.
8. It is the aim of Charterhouse to eradicate all forms of bullying, harassment and abuse from the School community, and from the personal and professional conduct of its pupils in their lives beyond the School. To that end, our anti-bullying strategy has three main strands:
  - i. fostering cultural change throughout the School, to the point where bullying is regarded by everyone as socially unacceptable;
  - ii. identifying and addressing any bullying behaviour quickly and effectively;
  - iii. taking preventative and pre-emptive measures to identify and address situations or forms of behaviour which might develop into bullying.

### **Two: early warning signs**

9. In our experience, certain kinds of situation or behaviour amongst young people may provide an early indication of the potential for bullying to develop. We therefore gather information from a number of sources (for example, pupils' previous schools, questionnaires, surveys) to help us identify possible issues early.
10. In addition, we ask all our staff to look out for the following kinds of behaviour, and to report any concerns to pupils' Housemasters or Housemistresses (Hms) as soon as possible. Although these do not necessarily amount to bullying in themselves, we find that they can be early warning signs:



- a previous history of bullying, either as victim or perpetrator
- a previous history of unkind or thoughtless behaviour
- a lack of awareness of the impact of personal comments on others
- an apparent unawareness of the inappropriacy of jokes or opinions
- repeating nicknames or personal comments for effect
- talking over peers in the classroom, at mealtimes or around House
- dominating conversation such that shyer peers talk less than normal
- entering other pupils' rooms uninvited, and perhaps remaining longer than necessary
- borrowing other pupils' possessions without asking
- asking to borrow things or share food in a way that makes it awkward to say 'no'
- monopolising particular dining room or common room seats
- cultivating friendships with overly assertive pupils in older years
- overly physical behaviour such as barging in corridors, pushing or grabbing peers
- a tendency to be the centre of noisy or excited gatherings
- socialising with groups whose appearance can destabilise otherwise settled situations
- appearing furtive, evasive or defensive in communication with adults

### Three: bullying behaviour to watch out for

11. The following are examples of behaviour often associated with bullying itself. We would like everyone in the School community to watch out for such behaviour. Members of staff, in particular, should not tolerate a pupil doing any of the following:

- teasing someone by (for example) calling them names or being sarcastic
- spreading rumours about someone
- making hurtful or abusive comments (including by message, graffiti or notice)
- mocking another pupil by imitating their accent or anything else about them
- making gestures towards someone which are designed to belittle or ridicule them
- mocking another pupil's contributions in the classroom or elsewhere
- interfering physically with someone or their possessions (for example 'peanutting', 'de-booking', 'bed flipping', 'room trashing', hiding someone's things or pushing them off a desk)
- making threatening gestures
- barring somebody else's way or otherwise preventing them from moving freely
- pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, or using other kinds of physical aggression
- throwing or kicking things at someone else
- misusing seniority or imposing hierarchy (for example 'fagging', sending juniors on errands or expecting them to surrender certain common room chairs, queue-jumping, or imposing punishments other than strictly in accordance with House rules)



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- encouraging or attempting to compel others to take part in 'hazing' or initiation processes.



12. Everyone needs to be aware that bullying is often based on 'difference'. This means that the bully notices someone is different and turns them into a victim because they are vulnerable. Pupils may be particularly vulnerable to bullying because they are new to a school, or because of a perceived difference in economic or family situation (for example, adoption) or an interest in things (such as academic work, classical music, acting, sport) which are considered uncool by a dominant peer group. In particular, people with protected characteristics may be vulnerable. These characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, race, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

#### **Four: the damage done**

13. Bullying makes the victim's life miserable and has no place in a civilised society. Below is a list of some of the noticeable effects bullying can have on the victim. Although there may be other explanations, these types of behaviour (especially in combination) are often typical of pupils who are being bullied. Therefore all members of the Charterhouse community should watch out for and raise any concerns, however low-level they might seem at the time, about boys or girls who:

- become frightened of other pupils and avoid them (or certain places)
- cut meal-times or become reluctant to sit with peers at meals
- change their usual routine, and perhaps begin to miss commitments
- seem unwilling to return to school
- become withdrawn, anxious, or lose their confidence
- run away, or threaten or attempt suicide
- have nightmares, or cry themselves to sleep at night
- feel ill in the morning
- begin to do poorly in school work
- have clothes torn or books damaged
- have possessions which are damaged or 'go missing'
- have money continually 'lost', ask for money, or start stealing money
- have unexplained cuts or bruises
- become aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable, and perhaps start to bully others
- stop eating
- give unlikely excuses for any of the above
- beg peers, staff or parents not to say anything about what they have seen or been told
- become unwilling to use the internet or mobile phone
- become nervous and jumpy when a text or other message is received

14. Sometimes this kind of behaviour has a permanent effect on the victim (or even the perpetrator), changing forever their self-esteem, relationships, career, or the way they see the world. In English law, bullying which harms a young person significantly in that way, or physically, or which has the



potential to harm someone, is a form of abuse. In government guidance it is called '**peer on peer abuse**'.

15. All members of staff are required to be familiar with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, which explains that they must report quickly to the police, the local authority or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (as appropriate) if they have reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm — even if that harm is being caused (or likely to be caused) by another child.
16. The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy also makes it clear that some forms of potential peer-on-peer abuse must be reported promptly and directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, for example (but not limited to):
  - Youth-Produced Sexual Imagery ('sexting', 'nudes')
  - gender-based abuse, sexual bullying and sexual assaults (this includes, for example, touching or groping someone else in a sexualised manner such as bottom slapping, 'de-bagging' or 'sack attack')
  - physical assault causing harm or injury

Sometimes, however, members of staff may not be immediately clear on whether an incident or concern should be called fighting, bullying or peer-on-peer abuse. In such cases, staff should not try to investigate or make a judgement, but simply pass on their concerns quickly and clearly, as detailed below.

### **Five: intervention and escalation process**

17. Members of staff are expected to intervene if there is an immediate risk of harm to a child, and to report the matter as explained in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
18. All members of the Charterhouse community share a responsibility to promote the happiness and security of others. Therefore, if you see or become aware of bullying directly, whether you are a pupil, a parent or a member of staff, we expect you to do something about it, as set out below in Stage One. Everyone should understand that addressing potential bullying at an early stage, and before lasting damage is done, is much more effective than leaving it to smoulder.
19. Teachers and others who are employed to care directly for pupils are expected to try to stop anti-social behaviour amongst children when they see it, by intervening and reprimanding, as is natural to the job. Reasons for intervention include (but are not limited to) the kinds of behaviour outlined in sections Two and Three above.



20. In addition, however, members of staff (and, ideally, other members of the Charterhouse community) who see or become aware of any behaviour which

- a) fits our definition of bullying or
- b) is outlined in the bullet points in paragraphs 10, 11 and 14 above or
- c) might otherwise reasonably be thought significant in this context

— should proceed as set out in Stage One.

### **Stage One**

21. If the behaviour seems to contain an element of bullying, then (regardless of whether or not the staff member is aware of something relevant having happened to the same pupil(s) before), he or she should, in addition to intervening to stop anti-social behaviour:

- a) *not* apply the labels 'bully' or 'bullying' to pupils or situations;
- b) *not* try to start their own investigations; and
- c) *not* impose their own disciplinary sanctions.

22. Instead, the member of staff should, within 24 hours, send a written report of the incident and/or their concerns to the Hm(s) of the pupil who is the victim. If the Hm is off duty, and the role being covered by the Assistant Hm, the report should be sent to both. (In the following paragraphs, the term 'Hm' also refers to the Assistant in that context). Ideally, other members of the community — pupils, parents — would also pass on their concerns to the Hm(s). If the incident takes place during holiday times, the duty member of the Senior Leadership Team should be contacted.

### **Stage Two**

23. The Hm will gather information discreetly from victims, perpetrators, bystanders, other adults (including other Hms) and perhaps senior pupils. If the matter is clearly serious, the Hm may decide at this stage to consult the Deputy Head (Pastoral).

24. Yet if, in the judgement of the Hm of the pupil who is the victim, the perpetrator's behaviour does not meet the School's three-point definition of bullying, and does not otherwise breach School rules, but is nevertheless behaviour of concern, then the Hm must record the decision on the Pupils of Concern log under 'behaviour and conduct'. If three reports about the same situation or pupil(s) are recorded within the same year, then the Deputy Head (Pastoral) must be informed.





25. Having decided that a pupil's behaviour is of concern, but is not bullying, the Hm may choose to offer pupil(s) specific guidance on their behaviour, or ask suitably-placed colleagues (for example, the Hm of a different House) to do so. Such decisions and completed actions must be recorded in writing on the Pupils of Concern Log.
26. Whether the behaviour is judged to be bullying or not, it is important that the member of staff who originally raised the concern is kept informed, ideally via a brief email about the decision and proposed response. This is the responsibility of the Hm of the pupil who is the victim.

### **Stage Three**

27. If, in the judgement of the Hm of the pupil who is the victim, the perpetrator's behaviour does meet the School's three-point definition of bullying, then the matter must be treated as a serious offence. The parents of the victim must be informed, and a written report sent to the Deputy Head (Pastoral) within 24 hours. The Deputy Head is responsible for recording concerns about bullying on the Pupils of Concern log.
28. The Deputy Head will promptly evaluate each report of bullying, in consultation with the senior pastoral team, and decide on the appropriate type and level of intervention. Whatever intervention is decided, the Deputy Head will nominate a senior member of staff to take responsibility for it and to conduct reviews at agreed intervals. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, such reviews will always include talking with the victim. The nominated staff member will be expected to keep written records and report to the Deputy Head regularly.
29. The Deputy Head may decide to intervene at Stage Four (below), or skip that stage and proceed directly to Stage Five. If matters are complicated because a formal risk assessment is needed, or because the bullying has reoccurred from earlier, or because it has included a separate breach of school rules (such as theft or damage to property), or because it is considered to be very severe, then the Deputy Head may decide to proceed directly to Stage Six.

### **Stage Four**

30. If there is no complicating factor, and it appears to be an initial case of 'bullying-in-itself', the School will strive in the first instance to deal with the incident or concern as a pastoral and educational matter, rather than a disciplinary matter.
31. The principal aim of a pastoral and educational response is to stop the bullying behaviour. It is not to try to force pupils to be friends, or to punish the perpetrator. It is understood that victims (and their parents) may sometimes feel that perpetrators have escaped lightly, but we would ask them to accept that a great deal of educational research shows that the longer-term well-being of victims is rarely best served by stringent punishment of perpetrators at an early stage.
32. In addition, bullies themselves are often unhappy children with needs of their own. The School



must work to identify and address situations or circumstances which may be influencing a child's behaviour.

33. A wide range of possible interventions, designed both to support victims and to educate perpetrators, is used by the School. If the Deputy Head (working with the Hm(s) and the senior pastoral team) considers that it is likely to be effective, then one or more of the following interventions will be implemented:

- The Hm(s) and/or the Head or Year will speak with pupil(s) individually, to identify unacceptable behaviour and give advice on rectifying the situation;
- House Monitors and/or a peer mentor(s) and/or a pupil(s) from the Peer Support scheme, working sometimes in collaboration with an adult, will be nominated by the Hm to provide younger pupils with guidance on behaviour and relationships;
- The Hm (or another senior member of staff) will ask pupils involved to reflect on their own experiences, behaviour and responses by writing them down and then collaborating in discussion;
- Specially-trained peer mediators will be appointed by the Deputy Head (Pastoral) to mediate between victim(s) and perpetrator(s).

#### **Stage Five**

34. If, after the period of time specified in paragraph 30 above the bullying has not stopped, or if the Deputy Head decides the matter is of sufficient gravity to warrant entering immediately at this stage, then one or more of the following interventions will be implemented:

- A senior member of staff will be nominated to address a whole division, form or year group, to explain the issue and the School's expectations;
- Parents and/or chaplains and/or counsellors and/or medical staff will be enlisted in attempting to get pupils to analyse and reflect on their own motives and behaviour, and (where relevant) to seek and commit to a solution;
- The Hm (or other senior member of staff) will oversee a restorative approach, whereby the perpetrator meets the victim (perhaps in the company of other peers and/or adults, including parents);
- The Hm (or other senior member of staff) will oversee a 'method of shared concern' approach, involving conversations with (usually) each member of a House year group both individually



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and collectively over a period of time.

### Stage Six

35. The School Rule makes it clear that:

*If your relationships with others stop them enjoying time at School, you will put your place here in jeopardy. Severe or persistent bullying may lead to expulsion.*

The School reserves the full range of disciplinary sanctions for pupils who bully others and who:

- bully on the basis of protected characteristics
- engage in very severe bullying; or
- wilfully refuse to engage in or learn from the pastoral process of education, reflection and review set out at Stages Four and Five above; or
- appear to engage in and learn from the pastoral process, but go on to become repeat offenders by bullying the same or a different victim at a later point in time; or
- involve other kinds of offence within their bullying behaviour, such as theft or vandalism.

JMR August 2016  
with minor amendments September 2017  
policy substantially reviewed by JMR, DPC, JSW, AJAH January/February 2018  
§10 based on work by JAT  
policy rewritten by JMR with substantial amendments and additions, February 2018  
minor amendments after consultation with Hms, April 2018  
additions following Governors' review January 2020  
amendments to highlight protected characteristics and references housemasters and housemistresses,  
January 2021