

Chorus Education Trust

Anti-Bullying Policy

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Policy Statement

The Chorus Education Trust is committed to ensure that all pupils feel welcome and that they belong at schools within the trust. We will ensure that all pupils feel safe and happy in school and are able to learn in a supportive, caring environment without the fear of being bullied. Bullying is an anti-social behaviour, it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated by any school.

This policy is based on DfE guidance “Preventing and Tackling Bullying” July 2017 and supporting documents. It also considers the DfE statutory guidance “Keeping Children Safe in Education” 2024 and ‘Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges’ guidance. The setting has also read Childnet’s “Cyberbullying: Understand, Prevent and Respond: Guidance for School

1. Aims of the policy

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils, parents and carers should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when it bullying is reported.
- All pupils, parents and carers should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying occurs.
- To deal effectively with bullying.
- To ensure that all members of the school community feel responsible for combating bullying.

2. Links with other school policies and practices

This policy links with several school policies, practices and action plans including:

- Suspension and Exclusions policy.
- Complaints policy.
- Safeguarding and Child protection policy.
- Curriculum policies, such as: PSHE, citizenship and computing.

3. Links to legislation

There are several pieces of legislation which set out measures and actions for schools in response to bullying, as well as criminal and civil law. These may include (but are not limited to):

- The Education and Inspections Act 2006, 2011.
- The Equality Act 2010.
- The Children Act 1989.

- Protection from Harassment Act 1997.
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988..
- Public Order Act 1986

4. What is bullying?

- Bullying can be defined as “behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally”. (DfE “Preventing and Tackling Bullying”, July 2017).
- Bullying can include name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments; kicking; hitting; taking belongings; producing offensive graffiti; gossiping; excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.
- This includes the same unacceptable behaviours expressed online, sometimes called online or cyberbullying. This can include: sending offensive, upsetting and inappropriate messages by phone, text, instant messenger, through gaming websites, social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading photos or videos.
- Bullying is recognised by the school as being a form of child on child abuse. It can be emotionally abusive and can cause severe and adverse effects on children’s emotional development.

Emotional

Any actions that impact on the emotional wellbeing of another person

- Deliberately causing harm or offence to another person or group of people by using unkind language, teasing, name-calling, taunting and making negative personal comments.
- Excluding individuals from conversations, activities or groups,
- Ridiculing or causing humiliation – either face to face, through spreading rumours or inappropriate use of technology.
- Tormenting others by taking their possessions, hiding books, threatening gestures, using social media to provoke a reaction.

Physical

Any form of actual physical violence or threat of violence including intimidation, for example:

- Hitting including any variation of kicking, slapping, punching, pushing or using an object to have the same effect.
- Theft of property or possessions.
- Intentionally causing damage to property or possessions

Harmful sexual behaviour

This includes any unwanted physically contact or sexually abusive comments for example:

- Using sexually explicit words and phrases.
- Inappropriate touching.
- Using sexual threats or violence.
- Forced or exploitative sexual activity.
- Sexual harassment.
- Forcing another person to look at sexual body parts.

Online bullying & inappropriate use of social media

More commonly known as ‘cyber bullying’ – which is the misuse of technologies or communications to cause harm, injury or offence. For example:

- Mobile threats by text messaging and calls.
- Misuse of associated technology i.e. cameras and video facilities, games consoles.
- Pupils who engage in ‘group chats’ which are created to target an individual with the intention of being unkind or to cause offence.
- Sharing of inappropriate material online – including material that is racist, homophobic, sexist, includes extremist content or discriminatory language against people with special needs and disabilities.
- Sharing inappropriate material of a sexual content (including sexting).
- Deliberate attempts to contact staff via social media or use their online profile to harass, intimidate, make threats or cause offence to any member of staff and / or adult.
- Using social media to humiliate, harass, intimidate, make threats or cause offence or anxiety to another pupils.

Prejudice based bullying

Prejudice-based bullying (also known as identity-based bullying) refers to any form of bullying related to the characteristics considered unique to a child’s identity. These forms of bullying are not only targeted at an individual, but reflect negative attitudes towards a wider sub-community or group to whom that individual identifies with

Prejudice-based bullying can be separated in to 9 characteristics unique to a child’s identity, these are:

- **Race or ethnicity:** bullying directed towards an individual which relates to their skin colour, ethnicity, or national identity. Includes racial taunts, graffiti or gestures.
- **Gender:** bullying based around sexist attitudes or sexually inappropriate behaviours, intended to either demean or humiliate an individual because of their sex.
- **Homophobic, bi-phobic and transphobic:** bullying because of or focusing on the issue of sexuality or gender identity.
- **Religion or belief:** bullying motivated by prejudice against an individual’s perceived or actual religious or spiritual beliefs and practices

- **Learning disability/difficulty:** Bullying of children who have an impairment which affects the way they learn, understand, socialise and communicate (i.e. speech and language difficulties).
- **Disability:** Bullying of children who have a physical or mental impairment

For example, mobility, visual or hearing impairments, epilepsy, diabetes or a progressive condition such as multiple sclerosis.

- **Asylum seekers and refugees:** because of or focusing on being from refugee and asylum seeking backgrounds.
- **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller:** because of or focusing on being a member of a travelling community.

5. What is not bullying?

One-off incidents

Bullying is persistent and repetitive, and generally fits a pattern of behaviour. However, there will be occasions when a one-off incident is so significant that it causes long term effects, and is therefore categorised as bullying. One example may be extreme public humiliation that deters someone from engaging in discussions or social events.

Mutual conflict

A disagreement, argument or fight in which both parties have equally participated and where there is no imbalance of power.

6. Responding to bullying

The following steps may be taken when dealing with all incidents of bullying reported to the school:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached or witnessed the concern.
- The school will provide appropriate support for the person being bullied – making sure they are not at risk of immediate harm
- The Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or another member of leadership staff will interview all parties involved.
- The DSL will be informed of all bullying issues where there are safeguarding concerns.
- The school will speak with and inform other staff members, where appropriate.
- The school will ensure parents/carers are kept informed about the concern and action taken, as appropriate and in line with child protection and confidentiality policies.
- Sanctions, as identified within the Chorus Suspensions and Inclusions policy, and support will be implemented in consultation with all parties concerned.

- If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved, such as the police, if a criminal offence has been committed, or other local services including early help or children’s social care, if a child is felt to be at risk of significant harm.
- Where the bullying of or by pupils takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including cyberbullying), the school will ensure that the concern is fully investigated. If required, the DSL will collaborate with other schools. Appropriate action will be taken, including providing support and implementing sanctions in school in accordance with this policy and the school’s behaviour policy.
- A clear and precise account of bullying incidents will be recorded by the school in accordance with existing procedures. This will include recording appropriate details regarding decisions and action taken.

7. Guidance for parents and Carers

We are committed to developing a culture of inclusion, tolerance and respect in order to encourage mutually supportive pupils in the Chorus Education Trust.

ALL bullying is unacceptable, regardless of who bullies, how it is delivered or what reasons are given to justify it.

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Bullying has the potential to damage the emotional wellbeing and mental health of those affected by it, including those who witness this abuse.

Signs and symptoms that someone may be experiencing bullying

Change in routines or behaviours	Changes in mood or personality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is frightened of walking to or from school. • Doesn’t want to go on the school/public bus. • Begg to be driven to school. • Changes their usual routine. • Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic). • Begins to truant. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence. • Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away. • Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares. • Feels ill in the mornings. • Begins to do poorly in school work. • Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable. • Is bullying other children or siblings. • Is frightened to say what’s wrong. • Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone. • Is nervous or jumpy when using their phone or electronic device.
Physical Signs	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged. • Has possessions which are damaged or ‘go missing’. • Has unexplained cuts or bruises • Has dinner or other monies continually ‘lost’. • Comes home starving (money/lunch has been stolen). • Stops eating. • Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully) • 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.

If you suspect your child is being bullied please report your concern to Key Stage Team/Heads of House immediately so that we can investigate.

It is important that you advise your child not to fight back, it can make it worse. Parents/carers must help us ensure we have a culture of tolerance and respect at school by promoting this at home.

Bullying directly impacts on emotional wellbeing of pupils, and we will ensure that any reports of bullying are dealt with in accordance of the schools anti bullying policy.

8. Anti-Bullying Ethos

The Chorus Education Trust aims to tackle bullying through creating an ethos and culture of respect, kindness and acceptance of difference.

- Our code of conduct involves pupils, parents, carers and teachers in setting out what we expect of each other as a caring community.
- All pupils have PSHE lessons which cover bullying and how to deal with it during each school year.
- We shall keep pupils aware of the issue of bullying through assemblies and form tutor time and in lessons whenever it is appropriate.
- Taking part in anti-bullying week.
- Staff to follow the equality policy; welcoming every child to our school. Staff must be careful not to highlight differences of children or an individual child, even if this is done in jest.
- Staff will challenge inappropriate and unpleasant comments.
- Using our anti bullying ambassadors to help raise awareness of anti-bullying and help the school and pupils to tackle any bullying.
- Reports of bullying will be investigated by the school swiftly.

Pupils are expected to:

- Report bullying either towards you or when you see it happening to others. Not reporting a bullying incident allows the bully to continue with their bullying behaviour.
- Never stand by and watch bullying take place whether it is face to face or online.
- Walk away from situations that make you feel uncomfortable and talk to an adult as soon as you can.
- Support staff to investigate incidents by completing a pupils statement form, honestly and quickly, when asked to do so.
- Avoid situations on social media where bullying can take place and will try to persuade friends to do the same.

- Avoid using social media or text messaging when it is used with the intention of causing offence, harm or injury to another person. You must report any incidents in school immediately.
- Follow the school's code of conduct.

Parents and carers are asked to:

- Work with Chorus Trust staff and make us aware of any issues as soon as they arise.
- Monitor pupil's social media activity to ensure they are safe online and are not being bullied or using social media inappropriately
- Allow Chorus Trust staff the opportunity to investigate incidents first and not take matters into their own hands.
- Inform school if they intend to report incidents of bullying to the police.
- Follow the Trusts complaints procedure if they are unhappy with the outcome of an investigation.

9. Anti-Bullying Procedures

Reporting bullying - Pupils

Pupils can report any incidents of bullying to any member of staff in the Chorus Education Trust who will take the appropriate action.

- **Class teacher (Primary)** should be the first point of contact for all pupils. This may also be a member of the support staff that works closely in that class.
- **Form Tutor (Secondary)**- should be the first point of contact for most pupils as they see their form tutor every day. However, we understand that form time is a busy time, and it may not always be possible to speak to a form tutor privately
- **Pastoral Manager (Secondary)**- Each pupils has a named Pastoral Manager who is available all day, especially before school, during break and lunchtimes and after school.
- **Key Stage Leader (Secondary)**- Each pupils has a Key Stage Leader/Head of House who is based in the key stage office and pupils can speak to them when staff are not teaching.
- **Safeguarding & Inclusion Manager (Secondary)**- – available to speak to pupils who are experiencing any personal issues at home and at school.
- **Inclusion Team** – Many pupils are supported by the inclusion team and there is always someone available to talk to throughout the day
- **SLT** – (cross phase) The Senior Leadership Team is dedicated to ensuring all pupils feel safe and cared for at Chorus Trust and pupils can report any issues directly to a member of the senior team.

Reporting bullying – Staff

Members of staff should record follow the school's behaviour policy and record any incidents that they observe on CPOMs.

All staff have a responsibility to challenge any unacceptable behaviour including any behaviour that could be defined as 'bullying' as set out in the policy.

Staff who have any concerns should make the Key Stage Team/Heads of House aware

Reporting bullying – Parents and Carers

Parents and carers who have any concerns should contact the relevant Key Stage Team/Head of House.

Anti-Bullying Process

Step 1

Incident has been reported to the SLT/ Key Stage Leader by pupils, staff or parent/ carer. The incident is investigated, evidence gathered, and statements are taken and passed to the SLT/Key Stage Leader.

If bullying is suspected an investigation will take place and we will talk to the suspected victim, the suspected bully and any witnesses.

Step 2

The SLT member/Key Stage Leader examines the evidence and decides if the incident should be treated as a one off incident, a mutual conflict or evidence of bullying. (Referring to the definition provided in the policy.)

If the incident is a one off incident or mutual conflict the Key Stage Leader will follow the schools behaviour policy and take appropriate action.

Step 3

If the incident has been recorded as bullying the following actions will take place:

Parents/ Carers of all involved will be informed that the incident is being dealt with as 'Bullying'. This will be formally recorded in writing to both the 'victim' and 'perpetrator'.

*This will be recorded centrally and reported to Governors/Trustees termly.

Consequences will be issued by the SLT member/Key Stage Leader in line with the schools behaviour policy. The consequence will be based upon the seriousness of the incident and the level of harm caused to the victim.

Restorative Practice will take place within 5 days of the incident.

Some incidents of bullying may warrant intervention of the police depending upon the severity of the incident or if a crime has been committed. Parents / carers will be informed if this decision has been made.

Repeated Reports

If the same 'perpetrator' is reported to carry out other acts of bullying towards the same or different pupils, the school will take further action. Pupils who are known to be intentionally causing harm, injury or offense to pupils in the Chorus Education Trust will receive our most serious consequences, including risk of permanent exclusion from a Chorus Education Trust school.

Actions of the SLT/Key Stage Team will include:

- A formal meeting with parents to review the evidence against the pupils.
- Possible change of pupils form and/ or teaching groups or year half.
- Referral to the Inclusion Team for possible assessment of need and support.
- Seclusion during social times of the day.
- Pastoral Support Plan to monitor pupils's behaviour.

The school is responsible for completing a register of bullying incidents in line with the LA guidelines and will make a termly report of such incidents to the Governing body.

Chorus Education Trust will aim to ensure that support is in place for the victims of those who have been bullied and that they are supported with their emotional wellbeing and to promote positive wellbeing and building resilience. Whilst we will discipline those that bully others we will also offer to help them to change their behaviour.

10. Support for staff

We will ensure appropriate agencies contact details are available for staff for example in the staff handbook and/or a section of school website and on notice boards in the staff room

E.g. HR and Union representatives.

Bullying or harassment of staff should be reported to the Headteacher.

11. Complaints Procedure

Parents / carers are supported to refer to the Complaints procedure in regards to any issues with the school. Parent/ carers should make a formal complaint in writing to the Headteacher.

12. Monitoring and review: putting policy into practice

- The school will ensure that they regularly monitor and evaluate mechanisms to ensure that the policy is being consistently applied.
- Any issues identified will be incorporated into the school's action planning.
- The Headteacher will be informed of bullying concerns, as appropriate.

- The named Governor/Trustee for safeguarding will report on a regular basis to the governing body on incidents of bullying, including outcomes.
- The Headteacher will include all incidents of bullying in the Inclusion and Safeguarding Report.
- The CEO will include all incidents of bullying in the Inclusion and Safeguarding Report.

13. Helpful organisations

- Anti- Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- National Bullying Helpline 0845 22 55 787
- Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) 08700 000 33 44
- Kidscape Parents Helpline (Monday – Friday, 10am – 4pm) 0845 1205204
- Bullying Online www.bullying.co.uk
- Childline 0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk