



Anti Bullying Policy

Cheam School (the “School”), is committed to providing a safe and caring environment that is free from disruption, violence and any form of harassment so that every pupil can develop his/her full potential. We value respect for others, good manners, fairness and equality. We expect our pupils to treat members of staff with courtesy and co-operation which facilitates a relaxed, but orderly, atmosphere. All pupils are expected to care for and support each other.

The School prides itself on its respect for others and mutual tolerance. Cheam School is an inclusive community. We welcome diversity amongst our pupils including race, religion or belief, or social background. Some pupils require additional support and help. Parents and guardians have an important role to play in supporting the School in maintaining high standards of behaviour. It is essential that the School and pupils’ homes have consistent expectations of behaviour and that they co-operate closely together.

Bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination will not be tolerated. We aim to treat all our pupils and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff and the School. Any kind of bullying is unacceptable. Where necessary, we will apply the sanctions described in our Behaviour Policy for behaviour that constitutes bullying or harassment of any kind. All pupils have the right to be heard and the School Rules document (also known as the Headmaster’s Edicts) lays out ways in which they can seek help and support.

Even the School's youngest children are encouraged to behave towards each other with kindness and consideration. They are encouraged to learn to look after their own possessions and to respect others' possessions. We expect them to be honest, helpful and polite, and to work hard and to listen to others. They are expected to learn to respect everyone and value differences and diversity

This policy applies to all pupils in the School including those in the EYFS and applies to actions undertaken both inside, and outside of the School. It is available to parents of pupils and prospective pupils on our website. It is also communicated to all staff and pupils.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying may be defined as the intentional hurting, harming or humiliating of another person by an individual or group that is repeated over time and can be either physical or emotional.

It may take many forms, including physical (including any threat of or use of violence of any kind), sexual (including the sharing of nudes/semi-nudes), verbal (including cyber-bullying via email, social media, gaming, and SMS or other instant messages), and emotional (such as excluding others, being sarcastic, name-calling, tormenting or spreading malicious rumours). It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone, or actions that fall short of direct participation, where someone encourages others to bully, or joins in with laughing at a victim. Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and intimidating, and often involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim whether that be a physical, psychological or intellectual imbalance, or by the perpetrator having the capacity to socially isolate the victim.

Bullying can sometimes amount to peer-on-peer abuse, which is defined as abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil.

Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, and may involve actions or comments regarding a person's race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), or because of a child's familial circumstances, such as they are adopted, in care or that they have caring responsibilities. Bullying may be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time and can involve anyone - pupils, other young people, staff and parents.

The School's Response to Bullying

The School always treats bullying very seriously. It conflicts sharply with the School's social and moral principles, and with its policy on equal opportunities, and will not be tolerated. When incidents of bullying do occur, they are dealt with quickly and taken seriously. The School will never dismiss bullying as banter or horseplay, and all reported incidents of bullying will be dealt with by staff in accordance with this policy.

The School understands that bullying can be so serious that it may cause physical, emotional and psychological damage, such as eating disorders, self-harm and even suicide. Stopping violence and ensuring the immediate physical safety of pupils is the School's first priority. However, the School acknowledges that emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical bullying, and therefore staff will use their discretion when dealing with an incident of bullying within the parameters of this policy and the School's Behaviour Policy. Whilst bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment, sexual violence and assault, sexting, the sharing of nudes/semi-nudes (in certain circumstances), up-skirting and to violent and threatening behaviour. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying: everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are victims of bullying will be supported. Pupils who have engaged in bullying behaviour will be subject to appropriate disciplinary sanction and will also, where possible, be supported in learning different ways of behaving.

Bullying which occurs on School trips or outside of the School's premises will not be tolerated any more than bullying on School premises. Teachers will, where appropriate, discipline pupils for misbehaviour outside School premises and outside School hours.

Signs of Bullying

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 go missing, or are damaged.
- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary).
- Psychological damage and diminished levels of self-confidence.
- Frequent visits to the Medical Centre with symptoms such as stomach pains, headaches.
- Unexplained cuts and bruises.
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class.

- Choosing the company of adults.
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact.
- Difficulty in sleeping, experiences nightmares.
- Talking of suicide or running away from home or School.

Although there may be other causes for some of the above symptoms, a repetition of, or a combination of these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents and teachers and reported/ recorded, as appropriate, in accordance with this policy.

The threshold for dealing with an issue of pupil behaviour or bullying under the Safeguarding policy is when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

How do bullies often behave/act?

- Sometimes alone, sometimes in groups.
- Bullies are not always obvious; sometimes they appear to be popular.
- Bullies often get others to do their bullying for them, they have the ideas but don't want to be caught bullying.
- They come in all shapes and sizes, all ages, boys, girls, men and women.
- Bullying is often about having power over other people.

What activities count as bullying?

- Words or actions intended to hurt
- Bullying can be physical – hitting, kicking, punching, pinching or any action intended to hurt, like breaking or hiding someone's possessions.
- Bullies can use words to tease about someone's shape, colour, looks, intelligence, or skills or to make fun of someone in an unpleasant way, groaning at a mistake.
- Bullies can use words to hurt by shouting, frightening someone into doing things they do not want to do; threatening or intimidating, preventing someone doing something they want to do.
- Bullies exclude another from a game, conversation or information, knowing that it will cause that person distress and may also encourage others to do the same; they leave people out of games, refuse to share a book or a seat, or lend a pencil.
- Deliberately ignoring someone can be termed bullying.

It is not bullying, for example when:

- Two people have the odd dispute;
- Senior pupils are given responsibilities to supervise others, carrying out daily routines to ensure the smooth running of the Dining Room, Prep, Music Practice Rooms or any other part of the School;

Preventative Measures

We take the following measures to prevent bullying from occurring:-

- We use appropriate assemblies to explain the School's policy on bullying.

- Our PSHCE programme is structured to give pupils an awareness of their social and moral responsibilities as they progress through the school. The programme is structured to enforce the message about community involvement and taking care of each other. It specifically tells pupils whom they should inform if they are being bullied, or if they are worried that another pupil is being bullied.
- Other lessons, particularly Philosophy and Ethics, 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.
- E-Safety and Cyber-Bullying is addressed as part of ICT lessons.
- All our pupils are encouraged to tell a member of the teaching or pastoral staff at once if they know that bullying is taking place. We guarantee that those who report bullying in good faith will not be punished and will be supported. Every member of staff is trained on how to respond to such allegations as part of their induction training.
- All reported incidents are recorded and investigated at once. We always monitor reported incidents and record them on CPOMS.
- We have a strong and experienced pastoral team of Form Tutors, Mentors, Heads of Year, and Houseparent's who support the Deputy Head Pastoral and are trained in handling any incidents as an immediate priority, and are alert to possible signs of bullying. The staff pastoral committee reviews children's behaviour and well-being on a weekly basis.
- Our pastoral team gives support and guidance to other staff on handling and reporting incidents, and on the follow-up work with both victims and perpetrators.
- A daily briefing is sent out to all staff to raise pastoral issues. These issues are discussed in a weekly staff meeting.
- Our trained School Counsellor is an important part of our pastoral support service, providing specialist skills of assessment and counselling. She is available to give confidential advice and counselling support to pupils who can refer themselves to her when they have social, emotional or behavioural concerns. A Form tutor can refer a pupil to her via the Nest and at this stage the Counsellor will decide if the child needs CBT or a session with her
- Staff are always on duty at times when pupils are not in class and patrol the School site, particularly areas where bullying might occur. They are trained to be alert to inappropriate language or behaviour.
- We explain to our EYFS children why some forms of behaviour are unacceptable and hurtful to others. We use the Zones of Regulation to encourage children to recognise their emotions and to teach them to recognise how their behaviour impacts others. This starts in Nursery where we encourage children to be empathetic and acknowledge the impact their behaviour has on others. We rarely need to impose sanctions in the Pre Prep; but occasionally, a child may be sent to see the Head of the Pre Prep, who will explain the inappropriateness of a particular action and introduce a more appropriate action; but such instances are rare. Parents are always informed when any sanction or reproof is needed towards their child, and in cases of repeated instances of hurtful or inappropriate behaviour, parents will be invited into the School to discuss the situation with the child's teacher and Head of Pre Prep to agree a joint way of handling the difficulty.
- In the boarding community, there are strong teams of staff supporting the Houseparents who act in loco parentis. The informal house environment is important in reinforcing a pupil's 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 the Houseparents and parents/guardians, and would always make contact if we were worried about a pupil's well-being.
- The School will ensure that all School staff understand the principles of the School's policy, the School's legal responsibilities, actions to be taken to resolve and prevent incidents of bullying from arising or escalating and also details of sources of further support.

- The School recognises that certain children may be more at risk of bullying than others, and may require additional support when dealing with an incident of bullying, for example children with SEND or any other Protected Characteristic (as defined in the UK Equalities Act 2010, see <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/4>). The School will ensure that staff receive appropriate training to be able to understand any specific needs amongst our pupils, and to enable all staff to provide an inclusive environment for all pupils.
- All reported incidents are recorded on CPOM's. CPOMS is the School's recording system used for recording pastoral and safeguarding issues. Incidents are recorded via the pupil profile and, along with other major incidents, on the Deputy Head Pastorals computer, and are investigated at once. We always record and monitor reported incidents to enable the School to identify patterns of behaviour.
- We display advice on where pupils can seek help, including details of confidential help lines and web sites connecting to external specialists, such as Childline, Kidscape, Get Connected, Samaritans.
- All pupils have access to a telephone help line, enabling them to call for support in private.
- We reserve 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.
- Staff will always consider the motive behind bullying behaviour and whether it raises any concerns for the welfare of the perpetrator. If staff reasonably suspect that a pupil may be suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, they should follow the procedures set out in the School's Safeguarding Policy and discuss their concerns with the School's DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) without delay.
- If parents know or suspect that their child, or another pupil, is being bullied, they should contact the School without delay. All concerns will be taken seriously. We welcome feedback from parents and guardians on the effectiveness of our preventative measures.

Procedures for Dealing with Reported Bullying

If an incident of bullying is reported, the following procedures are adopted:

- The member of staff to whom it was reported or who first discovers the situation, will control the situation, reassure and support the pupils involved. In line with safeguarding principles, confidentiality should not be promised.
- He/she will inform an appropriate member of the pastoral team as soon as possible.
- The victim will be interviewed on his/her own and an account of events will be taken.
- The perpetrator, together with all others who were involved, will be interviewed individually and an immediate account of events will be written down.
- In order that patterns may be identified, the incident should be recorded in CPOM's and the Deputy Head Pastoral will also keep a record of the major incidents.
- All relevant members of staff should be informed (relevant staff may include tutors, mentors, year head, Deputy Head Pastoral, Headmaster).
- The victim will be interviewed at a later stage by a member of the pastoral team, separately from the alleged perpetrator. It will be made clear to him/her why responding in kind is inappropriate. He/she will be offered support to develop a strategy to help him or herself.
- The alleged perpetrator will be interviewed at a later stage by a member of the pastoral team, separately from the victim, and it will be made clear why his/her behaviour was inappropriate and caused distress. He/she will be offered guidance on modifying his or her behaviour, together with any appropriate disciplinary sanctions.
- The parents/guardians of all parties should be informed and, if necessary, invited into school to discuss the matter. Their support should be sought.

- A way forward, including disciplinary sanctions and, where appropriate, counselling, should be agreed. This should recognise that suitable support is needed both for victim and perpetrator, as well as dealing with appropriate disciplinary measures.
- A meeting involving all the parties, with close staff supervision, could be helpful in developing a strategy for all concerned to close the episode.
- A monitoring and review strategy may be put in place. In very serious and persistent cases, and only after the Headmaster 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 the School to attempt to resolve such issues internally under the school's own disciplinary procedures, unless the matter is of such gravity that a criminal prosecution is likely.
- In an instance when the School becomes aware that cyber bullying is happening outside of school, the same procedures will apply as if the cyber bullying happened at school.

Cyber Bullying – Definition

“Cyber bullying involves the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others.”

The School acknowledges that cyber-bullying may take place inside School, outside of School and at any time of the day.

Cyber-bullying could involve communications by various electronic media, including for example:

- Texts, instant messages or calls on mobile phones;
- The use of mobile phone camera images to cause distress, fear or humiliation;
- Posting threatening, abusive, sexual, discriminatory, offensive or humiliating material or comments on websites (including blogs, personal websites and social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or YouTube);
- Using e-mail to message others in a threatening or abusive manner; or
- Hijacking/ cloning e-mail accounts.

The School acknowledges that cyber-bullying may take many different forms including: cyber-stalking, exclusion or peer rejection, impersonation, unauthorised publication of private information or images, encouraging derogative comments on online platforms, sharing nudes/semi-nudes, up-skirting and sexting.

The School has a role to play in teaching pupils about the underpinning knowledge and behaviours that can help them to navigate the online world safely and confidently regardless of the device, platform or app. In taking this forward, the School has regard to the DfE's non-statutory guidance on Teaching Online Safety in School.

Cyber Bullying – Preventative Measures

In addition to the preventative measures described above, the School:

- Expects all pupils to adhere to its charter for the safe use of the internet. Certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and our IT Department monitors pupils' use.
- May impose sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse of the internet.
- Issues all pupils with their own personal School email address. Access to sites such as 'hotmail' is not allowed.

- Adheres to the BECTA (British Educational Communications and Technology Agency) guidelines regarding E-teaching and the internet.
- Offers guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and cyber bullying in IT lessons, which covers blocking and removing contacts from 'buddy lists'.
- Offers guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details safe.
- Does not permit the use of Mobile phones. Year 8 boarders may have these in school but only if the SIM card has been removed beforehand.
- Does not permit the use of cameras in toilets, washing and changing areas or in the bedrooms of boarding houses.

Procedures for Dealing with Cyber-Bullying

The School will follow the procedures set out in this policy and its Safeguarding Policy where relevant for incidents of cyber-bullying, taking such disciplinary action that is considered reasonable in the circumstances, with a view to regulating pupil conduct and protecting the reputation of the School, and the welfare of its pupils.

Although cyber-bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws that may apply to communications of a harassing or threatening manner or the unauthorised publication of private images, up-skirting, sharing nudes/semi-nudes and sexting. Where the School considers that a reported incident of cyber-bullying may amount to a criminal offence, it will inform the Police.

Electronic Devices

In response to an allegation of cyber-bullying, certain staff may conduct a search for electronic devices, such as a pupil's mobile phone. The search will be conducted in accordance with the procedure set out in the School's Searches of Pupils and Possessions Policy.

Where a search finds an electronic device that is prohibited by the School rules, or where the member of staff undertaking the search reasonably suspects that the electronic device has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence or cause personal injury or damage to property, the School may examine any data or files on the device, where there is good reason to do so, for example, where there has been an allegation of cyber-bullying. Parental consent to search through electronic devices is not required.

The School may also erase any data or files from the device if the School considers there to be good reason to do so, unless there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the device may contain evidence in relation to a criminal offence, where the files should not be deleted and the device must be given to the Police without delay.

If, following a search, the member of staff determines that the device does not contain any evidence in relation to an offence, or are advised by the Police following a report to them that they will not take any further action to investigate an alleged offence, the School can decide whether it is appropriate to delete any files or data from the device, and may retain the device as evidence of a breach of this policy. The School may then take appropriate steps in accordance with its Behaviour Policy. In the event that the search highlights a safeguarding concern in respect of any pupil, the School will follow the procedures set out in its Safeguarding Policy.

The School will keep a record of all searches carried out, including the results of any search, and the actions taken following that search.

Monitoring and Review

The School will record all incidents of reported bullying in accordance with this policy.

The Head or a designated member of SMT will review all incidents of reported bullying to help identify patterns of behaviour, so that the School can take appropriate steps to address bullying behaviours within the School. Records of bullying incidents will also be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the School's anti-bullying procedures, and to highlight any necessary amendments.

This policy is reviewed and updated at least annually.

Policy Owners

Staff: Deputy Head Pastoral and Head of Pre Prep

Governors: Wellbeing Sub-Committee

Latest Reviews

Staff Policy Owners: September 2024

Compliance: October 2024

Board of Governors: November 2024