

# CHEPSTOW HOUSE



## Policy for Anti - Bullying

Updated September  
2010

As laid out in the **Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools Document DCSF 2007**, the Government defines bullying as:

***Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.***

### **Policy Statement**

At Chepstow House School we are committed to providing a warm, caring and safe environment for all our children so that they can learn and play in a relaxed and secure environment.

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in our school. We take all incidents of bullying seriously. Bullying hurts. No-one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect and pupils who are bullying others need to learn different ways of behaving.

At Chepstow House School, we acknowledge that bullying does happen from time to time and it would be unrealistic to claim that it does not. When bullying does occur, everyone should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively in accordance with our anti-bullying policy.

### **Aims and Objectives of this Policy**

The aim of this policy is to try and prevent and deal with any behaviour that is deemed as bullying. The implementation of this policy will create an ethos where bullying is regarded as unacceptable so that a safe and secure environment is created for everyone to learn and work in. All members of the school have a responsibility to recognise bullying when it occurs and to take appropriate action in accordance with the school policy. This will happen in the following ways:

- ◆ The school will meet the legal requirement for all schools to have an anti-bullying policy in place.
- ◆ The school will work closely with other professional agencies to ensure that children stay safe as stated in The Children Act 1989, The SEN and Disability Act 2001, The Government Green Paper 'Every Child Matters' 2003 (outcome 2) and The Children Act 2004.
- ◆ All teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents will have an understanding of what bullying is.
- ◆ All teaching and non-teaching staff will know what the school policy is on bullying and will consistently and swiftly follow it when bullying is reported.
- ◆ All pupils and parents will know what the school policy is on bullying and what they can do if bullying occurs.
- ◆ Pupils and parents will be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- ◆ Whole school initiatives (staff training, celebration assemblies etc) and pro-active teaching strategies (PHSE [Personal, Health & Social Education] lessons, circle time etc) will be used throughout the school to reduce the opportunities for bullying to occur.
- ◆ A positive, caring ethos will be created within the school environment where everyone can work, play and express themselves, free from the fear of being bullied.

### **What bullying is not**

It is important to understand that bullying is not the sibling type rivalry or disagreement between evenly matched children resulting in the odd occasion of falling out with friends and arguments.

Children sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. These incidents are though taken seriously and time is taken to help children understand how to deal with these friendship breakdowns.

**What bullying is:** Bullying refers to deliberate, unprovoked actions by one or more child against another that are meant to cause harm and fear. There is no doubt that the actions are meant to hurt the targeted child and the bully makes it clear that this will happen again. This may be through physical (including sexual), verbal (including chat room and SMS messages), and emotional means (by excluding, tormenting or spreading malicious rumours). It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It can involve complicity that falls short of direct participation. Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and intimidatory.

Bullying may involve actions or comments that are racist, homophobic, which focus on disabilities or other physical attributes (such as hair colour or body shape). Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time. We always treat it very seriously. It conflicts sharply with the school's policy on equal opportunities, as well as with its social and moral principles.

#### **Bullying can be:**

- ◆ Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, making fun of culture and religion
- ◆ Special Needs Target - any unfavourable or negative comments, gestures or actions made to someone relating to their disability or special educational needs.
- ◆ Related to appearance or health conditions
- ◆ Homophobic – focusing on the issue of sexuality
- ◆ Sexual - unwanted physical contact or using sexually abusive or sexist language
- ◆ Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, ridicule, humiliation
- ◆ Verbal - calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing
- ◆ Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, throwing stones, biting, spitting, punching or any other forms of violence; taking or hiding someone's possessions
- ◆ Cyber Bullying - setting up 'hate websites', sending offensive emails or text messages

There is no 'hierarchy' of bullying – all forms of bullying should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately. As bullying can lead to suicide.

### **Who can be bullied?**

Bullying can take place between pupils, between pupils and staff, or between staff; by individuals or groups; face to face, indirectly or using a range of cyberbullying methods.

### **Where does bullying happen?**

It can happen anywhere – in the classroom, in the corridor, in the toilets, in the dining hall, in the playground. Bullying may also happen on the way to and from school. In such cases, the Head Teacher is empowered by law to deal with such incidents but must do so in accordance with the school's policy.

At Chepstow House School, we are concerned with our children's conduct and welfare outside as well as inside school and we will do what we can to address any bullying issues that occur off the school premises.

## *Chepstow House School - Anti - Bullying Policy*

The following steps may be taken:

- ◆ The Head will talk to the local Community Police Officer about a specific problem outside the school premise.
- ◆ The Head will talk to the transport companies about bullying on school buses.
- ◆ The Head will talk to the Head Teachers of other schools whose children may be involved in bullying off the school premises.
- ◆ Discuss coping strategies with parents.
- ◆ The Head of Pastoral Care will talk to the children about how to handle or avoid bullying outside the school premises.

### **Cyberbullying - Definition**

Mr Bill Belsey, the creator of the web site: <http://www.cyberbullying.org/> defined this unpleasant phenomenon in the following terms:

- ◆ "Cyberbullying 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."
  
- ◆ Cyberbullying can involve Social Networking Sites, like Bebo and Myspace, emails and mobile phones, used for SMS messages and as cameras.

### **Cyberbullying – Preventative Measures**

Chepstow House school:

- ◆ Expects all pupils and staff to adhere to its charter for the safe use of the internet. Certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and pupils' use is monitored.
- ◆ May impose sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse of the internet.
- ◆ Adheres to the BECTA guidelines regarding E-teaching and the internet.
- ◆ Offers guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and cyberbullying in PSHE 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.
- ◆ Mobile phones are not permitted in classrooms, public areas of the school, or where they may cause annoyance to others.
- ◆ The use of cameras on mobile phones is not allowed in washing and changing areas.

### **Signs and Symptoms**

A child may indicate, by different signs or behaviour, that he or she is being bullied.

Adults should be aware of these possible signs and investigate further if a child:

- ◆ is frightened of walking to or from school
- ◆ doesn't want to go on the school in the school bus
- ◆ begs to be driven to school
- ◆ changes their usual routine/route to school
- ◆ begins truanting
- ◆ becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- ◆ starts stammering
- ◆ attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- ◆ cry themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- ◆ feels ill in the morning
- ◆ begins to under perform in school work
- ◆ comes home with clothes torn or books damaged

- ◆ their possessions go missing
- ◆ asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the bully)
- ◆ money is continually "lost"
- ◆ has unexplained cuts or bruises
- ◆ comes home hungry(money/snack/sandwiches have been stolen)
- ◆ becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- ◆ starts swearing or using aggressive language for no apparent reason
- ◆ is bullying other children or siblings
- ◆ stops eating
- ◆ is frightened to say what's wrong
- ◆ 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 taken seriously and investigated as soon as possible.

### **Procedures for reporting and responding to bullying incidents**

All staff will respond calmly and consistently to all allegations and incidents of bullying at Chepstow House School. They will be taken seriously by all staff and dealt with impartially and promptly. All those involved will have the opportunity to be heard. Staff will protect and support all children involved whilst allegations and incidents are investigated and resolved. The following step-by-step procedure will be used for reporting and responding to bullying allegations or incidents:

- ◆ All incidents of bullying must be reported to the Head.
- ◆ The incidents will be recorded by staff on Concern Sheets and will be kept.
- ◆ In all cases parents, of both the victim/s and the bully/bullies, will be informed and will be invited to come into school for a meeting with the class teacher to discuss the problem. The Head will be informed of these meetings and will attend if necessary.
- ◆ Staff will make sure the victim(s) is and feels safe.
- ◆ Appropriate advice will be given to help the victim(s).
- ◆ Staff will listen and speak to all children involved about the incident separately.
- ◆ The problem will be identified and possible solutions suggested.
- ◆ Staff will attempt to adopt a problem solving approach which will move children on from them having to justify their behaviour.
- ◆ Appropriate action will be taken quickly to end the bullying behaviour or threats of bullying.
- ◆ Staff will make it clear to the bully in no uncertain terms that their behaviour is unacceptable.
- ◆ The bully (bullies) will be asked to apologise. Other consequences may take place and appropriate sanctions applied. If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.
- ◆ An attempt will be made, and support given, to help the bully (bullies) understand the seriousness of their behaviour and that it must change for the better.
- ◆ After the incident has been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.
- ◆ Bullying incidents will be discussed regularly at staff meetings.
- ◆ If necessary and appropriate, Social Services or the Police will be consulted.

**The following sanctions may be used:**

- ◆ Apologise to the victim(s) verbally or in writing
- ◆ Lose playtimes (stay with class teacher)
- ◆ Spend playtimes and lunchtimes with an adult
- ◆ Go on a self-improvement report
- ◆ Report to the Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher
- ◆ Be withdrawn from participation in school visit, clubs and events not essential to the curriculum.
- ◆ Fixed term exclusion
- ◆ Permanent exclusion

**Strategies for the prevention and reduction of bullying**

Whole school initiatives and proactive teaching strategies will be used throughout the school to develop a positive learning environment with the aim of reducing the opportunities for bullying to occur. These can include:

- ◆ Each class agreeing on their own set of class rules at the start of each academic year. These rules must be displayed in the classroom. It is also important to discuss rewards and sanctions to celebrate and reinforce positive behaviour and deter unacceptable behaviour.
- ◆ PHSE (Personal, Health & Social Education) scheme of work from Reception used to support this policy
- ◆ Circle time on bullying issues
- ◆ Setting up of a circle of friends support network where a small group of children volunteer to help and support an individual experiencing difficulties
- ◆ Children writing stories and poems and drawing pictures about bullying
- ◆ Children being read stories about bullying
- ◆ Using drama activities and role-plays to help children be more assertive and teach them strategies to help them deal with bullying situations
- ◆ Using praise and rewards to reinforce good behaviour
- ◆ Encouraging the whole school community to model appropriate behaviour towards one another
- ◆ Organising regular anti-bullying training for all staff

**Monitoring and evaluation of the policy**

To ensure this policy is effective, it will be monitored and evaluated annually by the Head and staff. Bullying incident forms will be used to gauge the effectiveness of the policy. Following an annual review, any amendments will be made to the policy and all teaching and non teaching staff will be informed.

This policy has been written with reference to the **Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools Document DCSF 2007**