

# CHINTHURST SCHOOL



## Anti-Bullying Policy

PMJUL09  
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***'Bullying is the wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone'.***

Bullying affects everyone, not just the bullies and the victims. It also affects those other children who watch, and less aggressive pupils can be drawn in by group pressure. Bullying is not an inevitable part of school life or a necessary part of growing up, and it rarely sorts itself out. It is clear that certain jokes, insults, intimidating, threatening behaviour, written abuse and violence are to be found in our society. No one person or group, whether staff or pupil, should have to accept this type of behaviour. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed, will a child be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available at school.

### **WHY IS AN ANTI-BULLYING POLICY NECESSARY ?**

The Government has made tackling bullying in schools a key priority and the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) has made clear that no form of bullying should be tolerated.

Chinthurst believes that **all** its pupils have the right to learn in a supportive, caring, and safe environment without the fear of being bullied.

All schools, both large and small, contain some pupils with the potential for bullying behaviour. If a school is well disciplined and organised, it can minimise the occurrence of bullying. Chinthurst also has a clear policy on the promotion of *'good citizenship'*, where it is made clear that bullying is a form of anti-social behaviour which is **unkind** and **wrong**, and will not be tolerated.

It is important therefore that we have a clear written policy to promote this belief, where both pupils and parents are fully aware that any bullying complaints will be dealt with firmly, fairly, and promptly. For this to be effective, it is necessary that all staff are familiar with this policy, and that they are alert to the problems which may occur.

## WHAT IS BULLYING ?

Bullying can occur through several types of behaviour. It can be :

### ◆ **PHYSICAL**

A child can be physically punched, kicked, hit, spat at etc., or may be forced to do something against his will.

### ◆ **VERBAL**

Verbal abuse can take the form of name calling, teasing ,or taunting. It may be directed towards gender, ethnic origin, physical or social disability, personality etc.

Adults, if they are not careful, can give this tacit support by the way they sometimes talk to children :

Eg. Nicknames : *'foureyes', 'cloth-ears', 'thickhead' etc.*

### ◆ **EXCLUSION**

A child can be bullied by simply being deliberately excluded from a game, an activity, or a discussion with those that he believes to be his friends.

### ◆ **DAMAGE TO PROPERTY OR THEFT**

A child may have his property damaged, hidden, or even taken. This may include deliberately damaging another's school work or equipment.

## TYPES OF BULLYING

A child maybe targeted and bullied for a variety of reasons. All staff must be aware of this and vigilant at all times so as to act quickly to prevent and address any situation.

1. **RACIAL** – a child's race / skin colour / nationality
2. **RELIGIOUS** – a child's religion / muslim / hindum / jew / catholic etc
3. **CULTURAL** – a child's ideas, beliefs, customs eg; 'Western' / 'Asian' etc
4. **SEXUAL** – a child's gender
5. **HOMOPHOBIC** – a child's sexuality
6. **DISABILITY** – a childs physical or intellectual disability
7. **CYBERBULLYING** – social websites / mobile phones / text messages / photographs / emails

**The following distinctions must be made :****BOSSINESS :**

Most children grow out of their bossiness as they become more self-controlled and learn to compromise.

*'The bully'* increasingly relies on threat and force.

**BOISTEROUS PLAY :**

Play becomes bullying when it spoils other children's activities, or when violence or hostility is shown.

Too often adults dismiss 'bullying' with remarks like :

*'Boys will be boys'*

*'It'll sort itself out'*

*'They must learn to look after themselves'*

Bullying ranges from horseplay, which may *'go wrong'* to vicious assault ( physical or verbal ). At the extreme end children have been maimed and even driven to suicide.

## **WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR**

Some children who are being bullied will eventually tell a friend, a teacher, their parents, or another adult, but it is more likely he will keep it a secret, for fear of being picked on even more or of being labelled '*a tell-tale*'.

There are signs which can indicate that a child maybe being bullied.

He may :

- ◆ become depressed or withdrawn, and are often found on their own and don't want to go out to play
- ◆ become aggressive
- ◆ get stomach aches or headaches
- ◆ become homesick
- ◆ develop unexplained bruises or scratches etc.,  
( this may manifest itself in a reluctance to change for P.E. or swimming)
- ◆ display a significant decline in performance or attitude in class
- ◆ uniform, kit, and books etc., may be found damaged or 'go missing'

## **WHO ARE THE BULLIES ?**

A child psychologist, specialising in bullying, identified two main groupings of bullies :

- ◆ ***‘Some are just spoilt, selfish ‘brats’ who hit out if anyone gets in their way’***

They are children who are used to getting their own way and thrive on being the centre of attraction.

- ◆ ***‘The bullies themselves are often victims of abuse or neglect. They have been made to feel inadequate and stupid’.***

When these children perceive that another child is weak, they attack. The sad fact is that the bullies themselves need help to overcome this anti-social behaviour.

Realistic, firm guidelines are important in helping bullies to control their anti-social behaviour.

## **WHO ARE THE VICTIMS ?**

Some children are *‘one-off’* victims of bullying. They just happen to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. Others, however, seem to be perpetual victims who are bullied no matter where they go. Such treatment can even continue into adult life.

One study into teenage behaviour, found that children who were chronic victims of bullying were intelligent, sensitive, and creative, but were often very intense and lacked a real sense of humour.

## ACTION

### BY THE SCHOOL

- ◆ increase staff supervision in any areas where bullying is most likely to occur.
- ◆ increase the role in teaching social skills and behaviour.
- ◆ deal quickly, firmly, and fairly with any complaints, involving parents where necessary.
- ◆ the school rules should be **few** but **firm**, and all the school staff must be aware of these and the discipline structure.
- ◆ take opportunities to discuss aspects of bullying openly ( eg. Assemblies ).
- ◆ encourage the boys to discuss how they '*get on*' with each other, and to form positive attitudes towards others.
- ◆ make it clear to all the boys that '*kindness and consideration*' for others is **very** important at Chinthurst.

### BY THE TEACHER

- ◆ watch for early signs : deterioration of work / spurious illness, headaches, stomach aches / isolation / an increasing want to remain with adults.
- ◆ **listen** to the victim. Children will usually only confide in someone they feel they can trust. It is important to be discreet and to listen carefully.
- ◆ keep a written record of all incidents : **who? what? where? when?**
- ◆ make clear to the bully that certain behaviour is unacceptable and will **not** be tolerated.
- ◆ be extra vigilant at break, lunchtime, between lessons - most bullying occurs when adults are not in the vicinity.

## **BY THE PUPILS**

The pupils need to know that the staff will take them seriously and will deal with bullies in a way which will end the bullying and will not just make things worse.

### **Advice to the Pupils :**

- ◆ tell yourself you do not deserve to be bullied. It is **wrong**.
- ◆ be proud of who you are. It is good to be an individual.
- ◆ try not to show you are upset. It is hard but bullies thrive on someone's fear.
- ◆ stay with a group of friends. There is safety in numbers.
- ◆ be assertive. Walk away. Go straight to a teacher or member of staff.
- ◆ fighting back may make things worse.
- ◆ it is best to tell an adult you trust, straight away. You will get immediate support.

### **What should pupils do ?**

- ◆ **TAKE ACTION !** watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on his own.
- ◆ if you feel you cannot get involved, tell an adult **IMMEDIATELY**. Teachers have ways of dealing with the bully without getting you into trouble.
- ◆ do not be, or pretend to be friends with a bully. **DO NOT TOLERATE BULLIES** in your group. Bullies will soon stop if they are socially excluded.

## **PARENTS**

Many young children witness acts of physical or verbal aggression in their families or on the television. Sadly, some parents fail to teach their children **not** to be aggressive.

- ◆ look out for unusual behaviour in your son :  
eg., he may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, not complete work at his usual standard.
- ◆ take an active role in your son's education. Ask how his day has gone, who did he spend his time with etc.
- ◆ if you feel your son may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the school **immediately**. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- ◆ it is important you **do not** encourage your son to **hit back**. Encourage him to recruit friends. A child who has friends is less likely to be bullied.
- ◆ explain to your son there is **nothing wrong** with him. It is not his fault that he is being bullied.

## THE PROCEDURE TO FOLLOW @ CHINTHURST

If any bullying is suspected we must talk to the suspected victim, the suspected bully and any witnesses. If any degree of bullying is identified, the following action will be taken :

(1) Both Tim Button (Deputy Head - School Discipline) and the Form Teachers of the boys concerned should be informed immediately. If the incident is considered to be sufficiently serious, Mr Button will keep a written record of the events/meetings/action/outcomes.

(2) If considered necessary, Peter Mulhern (Assistant Head) or the Headmaster should be informed and decide if any further action needs to be taken. Eg. Parents informed.

(3) Help, support, and counselling will be given as is appropriate to both the victim and bully.

### The Victim

- ♦ offer an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with an adult.  
record all the details in writing  
continue to offer support when they feel they need it.  
if considered necessary contact the parents. ( consult the Headmaster )

### The Bully

- ♦ talk about what happened, and discover why he has behaved in this way.  
continue to work with him and help him to get rid of his prejudiced attitudes which may have caused his behaviour.  
if considered necessary contact the parents. ( consult the Headmaster )

Monitor the situation and meet **1 week** later / **2 weeks** later / **end of half term**.  
Speak to both the victim and the bully.

## GOLDEN RULES

**( 1 ) DO NOT IGNORE THE WARNING SIGNS OR IMAGINE THEY WILL GO AWAY**

Many problems may have their source outside school ( broken homes, a change of financial circumstances ) and may manifest themselves in various ways.

**( 2 ) DISCREET SUPPORTIVE INTERVENTION IS ESSENTIAL** so that the victim maintains confidence in the members of staff.

**( 3 ) BE FIRM** and make it quite clear that '***bullying behaviour***' is unkind, harmful, and anti-social.

**BULLYING WILL NOT BE TOLERATED AT CHINTHURST.**