Charlton Park Academy
Anti-Bullying Policy

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Contents

1. Statement of Intent 3
2. Legal Framework 3
3. Definition 4
4. Types of Bullying 5
5. Statutory Implications 5
6. Prevention 7
7. Signs of Bullying 8
8. Staff Principles 9
9. Key Roles and Responsibilities 9
10. Cyber Bullying 10
11. Procedures 11
12. Sanctions 11
13. Support 12
14. Follow up Support 12
15. Bullying Outside of School 12
16. Monitoring and Review 13

1. Statement of Intent

Charlton Park Academy believes that all students are entitled to learn in a safe and supportive environment; this means being free from all forms of bullying behaviour. This policy outlines how instances of bullying are dealt with, including the procedures to prevent occurrences of bullying.

Charlton Park Academy (CPA) further believes that all staff are entitled to work in an environment that is safe and supportive and free from bullying or harassment.

These strategies, such as learning about tolerance and difference as part of the school's curriculum, and work ethic aim to promote an inclusive, tolerant and supportive ethos at the school.

Bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, victimisation, and discrimination of students or staff will not be tolerated at our school. We treat all of our students and their parents fairly, and with consideration, and we expect them to respect the staff, the school and each other, in return. All forms of bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based bullying, and discriminatory bullying) are unacceptable at CPA and Mulberry Tree House (MTH) and any instances of bullying will be recorded and, where appropriate, will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

Students can be victims of this form of cruelty for a large of number of reasons, but often it is because they are perceived to be difference in some ways; in terms of racial origin, gender, social class, sexual orientation, learning difficulties, size etc. Young people have a right to not be afraid. CPA and MTH staff, Governors and students take the issue very seriously and will do everything in our power to deal with a problem should it ever arise. The ethos of the school is directly related to wellbeing of its pupils. Every child should feel safe in school.

This policy applies to all students at CPA and MTH, whether day or boarding.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 outlines a number of legal obligations regarding the school's response to bullying. Under section 89, schools must have measures in place to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst students. These measures are part of the school's Behavioural Policy, which is communicated to all students, school staff and parents/carers.

All staff, parents/carers and students work together to prevent and reduce any instances of bullying at the school. There is a zero tolerance policy for bullying at Charlton Park Academy.

2. Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006 – inc. Sections 88-94, which require schools to regulate pupils' behaviour and publish a behaviour policy and written statement of behaviour principles and give schools the authority to confiscate students' property.

- Equality Act 2010
- Children Act 1989
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- Communications Act 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Education Act 2011
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (ratified 1991)
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school, DfE, 2015
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) code of practice, DfE, 2015.
- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, which outlines a school's duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of its students,

This policy has been written in accordance with DfE advice, including:
- DfE 'Preventing and tackling bullying' (2017)
- DfE 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSIE) (Current statutory revision)
- DfE 'Searching, screening and confiscation advice for schools' (2022)

This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the academy's:
- Behaviour Policy
- E-Safety and Acceptable Use Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Disciplinary Policy

3. Definition

For the purpose of this policy, bullying is defined as persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another person or group.

Bullying is generally characterised by:
- Repetition: Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over a period of time.
- Intent: The perpetrator(s) means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.
- Targeting: Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.
- Power imbalance: Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.

Vulnerable students are more likely to be the target of bullying due to the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves. Vulnerable students may include, but are not limited to:
- Students with special educational needs and disabilities.

- Students who are adopted.
- Students suffering from a health problem.
- Students with caring responsibilities.

It is recognised that staff may also be the target of bullying, and this will not be tolerated; any reported incidents will be investigated and if appropriate managed under CPA's Disciplinary Procedure.

4. Types of Bullying

Many different kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying and can be related to almost anything. Teasing another student because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual-orientation, home life, culture, disability, or special educational needs are some of the types of bullying that can occur.

Bullying is acted out through the following mediums:

- Direct or indirect verbal: Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.
- Physical: Pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, or any form of physical violence.
- Emotional: Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, or alienating.
- Online (Cyberbullying): Through social networking sites, messaging apps, or gaming sites.
- Racist bullying: Bullying another person based on their ethnic background, religion or skin colour. Racist bullying is a criminal offence under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Public Order Act 1986.
- Homophobic bullying: Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.
- Transphobic bullying: Bullying based on another person's gender 'variance' or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.
- Sexist bullying: Bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.
- Sexual bullying: Bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal or non-verbal sexual dimension/dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes.

5. Statutory Implications

The school understands that, under the Equality Act 2010, it has a responsibility to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act.
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The school understands that, under the Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998, it could have charges brought against it if it allows the rights of children, young people, staff or visitors at the school to be breached by failing to take bullying seriously.

The National Association of Head Teachers has guidelines that recommend Principals must 'satisfy themselves' that their school's Anti-Bullying Policy complies with the HRA; the Principal understands that they cannot do this without fully involving their staff.

Although bullying itself is not a criminal offence, some types of harassment, threatening behaviour and/or communications may be considered criminal offences:
Under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to electronically communicate with another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, or in a way which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or contains information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.

Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by means of a public electronic communications network, a message, or other matter, that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information through any media, including internet sites.

CPA 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, CPA 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 Behaviour Policy.

Whilst bullying itself is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment, sexual violence and assault, up skirting and to violent and threatening behaviour. Other forms of bullying which are illegal and should be reported to the police include: violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation and hate crimes.

No one deserves to be a victim of bullying: everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Students who are victims of bullying will be supported.
Students 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.

CPA recognises that pupils with SEND, or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges and may be more prone to child-on-child group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children. We also recognise that certain children may face additional barriers to reporting an incident because of their vulnerability, disability, sex, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation. Students who are victims of bullying will always be supported and will be reassured that they will be kept safe. Students who have engaged in bullying behaviour will be subject to appropriate

disciplinary sanctions and will also, where possible, be supported in learning different ways of behaving and offered support for their own circumstances, where appropriate.

6. Prevention

The school clearly communicates a whole-school commitment to addressing bullying in the form of a written statement (Statement of Intent) which is regularly promoted across the whole school.

All reported or witnessed instances of bullying in the school are dealt with quickly and taken seriously as well as investigated by a member of staff. CPA will never dismiss or downplay bullying as banter or horseplay, and all reported incidents of bullying will be dealt with by staff in accordance with this policy. Staff will reassure any victim(s) that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.

CPA promotes an ethos of good behaviour where students treat each other with respect at all times, inside and outside of school.

All new pupils (including boarders) are briefed thoroughly on the CPA Values (Communicate, Persevere, Achieve), and expected standards of behaviour. They are told what to do if they encounter bullying. We guarantee that those who report bullying in good faith will not be punished, will be taken seriously and will be supported.

Staff encourage student co-operation and the development of interpersonal skills through the use of group work, pair work and assemblies. Our Wellbeing, pastoral and safeguarding programmes are structured to give students an awareness of their social and moral responsibilities as they progress through the school. Collectively, they focus on the importance of equality and diversity and students are encouraged to avoid prejudicial and exclusionary language.

Bullying is discussed as part of the curriculum, and diversity, difference and respect for others is promoted and celebrated through various lessons.

Seating arrangements in class will be changed and organised in a way that prevents instances of bullying where appropriate.

Potential victims of bullying are drawn into working groups with children who do not abuse or take advantage of them.

Opportunities to extend friendship groups and interactive skills are provided through participation in special events, for example, expressive arts, sporting activities and clubs.

All of our students are encouraged to tell any member of staff at once if they are being bullied, or if they know or suspect that bullying is taking place. They are reassured that they will be taken seriously and will be supported and kept safe.

All boarders know how to report anxieties to the MTH staff or to another member of the

pastoral team.

All members of the school community are made aware of the school's Anti-bullying Policy.

All staff members receive training on identifying and dealing with the different types of bullying.

Upon induction, all new members of staff are given training and guidance on the school's anti-bullying policy and on how to react to, and record allegations of bullying at the school (including cyber bullying and prejudice and discriminatory bullying). CPA and MTH will ensure that all 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.

A safe, supervised place is available for students to go to at lunch if they are involved in conflict with their peers or wish to avoid a bully.

Staff will encourage students to discuss any bullying, whether they are victims or have witnessed an incident.

CPA buildings and our boarding facility, MTH, display advice on where students can seek help, including details of confidential help lines and websites where they can connect with external specialists, such as ChildLine, Kidscape, Bullying UK, and the Samaritans;

If staff are made aware of any incidents of bullying during home school transport, they will report this to the Head of School (DSL) who will liaise with SEN transport.

7. Signs of Bullying

Some of the signs that a student may be a victim of bullying include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Being frightened to travel to or from school.
- Asking to be driven to school.
- Unwillingness to attend school.
- Truancy, frequent absence, erratic attendance or late arrival to class.
- Becoming anxious, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet or lacking confidence.
- Saying that they feel ill in the morning.
- Decreased involvement in school work - failure to produce work, or producing unusually poor work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others.
- Returning home with torn clothes or damaged possessions
- Missing possessions - Books, bags and other belongings suddenly go "missing", or are damaged.
- Missing dinner money
- Asking for extra money or stealing
- Cuts or bruises
- Lack of appetite
- Unwillingness to use the internet or mobile devices.

- Becoming agitated when receiving calls or text messages
- Displaying repressed body language and lack of eye contact
- Becoming short tempered
- Change in behaviour and attitude at home; difficulty in sleeping or experiencing nightmares.
- Talking of suicide or running away from home or the school.

Although the signs outlined above may not be due to bullying, they may be due to deeper social, emotional or mental health issues, so are still worth investigating.

Students who display a significant number of these signs are approached by a member of staff, in order to determine the underlying issues, whether they are due to bullying or other issues.

Staff are encouraged to look out for signs of concern from other staff and to report these to a line manager. Anyone raising a concern in good faith will do so under the protection of the Safeguarding Policy.

8. Staff Principles

- Prevention is at the forefront of the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.
- CPA 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 and/or certain health conditions and LGBTQ+ pupils. The school will ensure that staff receive appropriate training to be able to understand the specific needs of our students, and to enable all staff to provide an inclusive environment for all students.
- Staff treat reports of bullying very seriously.
- Staff do not ignore signs of suspected bullying. All reported incidents are recorded and investigated at once. We always monitor reported incidents. Records of any incidents are on Behaviour Watch and those resulting in the imposition of a major sanction recorded also in MyConcern in order that patterns of behaviour can be identified and monitored.
- Unpleasantness from one student towards another is always challenged and never ignored.
- Staff take action immediately when they become aware of a bullying incident; this applies to all staff, not solely teaching staff.
- Staff always respect students' privacy, and information about specific instances of bullying is not discussed with others, unless it is in a setting that the victim has given consent to if the member of staff believes the student is in serious danger, e.g., of being hurt, they will inform the designated safeguarding lead immediately.
- Follow-up support is given to both the victim and bully in the months following any incidents, to ensure all bullying has stopped.

9. Key Roles and Responsibilities

- The Governing Body: Evaluates and reviews this policy to ensure that it is non-discriminatory.

- All Staff: Hold a responsibility to be alert to possible bullying of students and to deal with incidents as the highest priority. All staff will avoid gender stereotyping when dealing with bullying.
- The Principal: Reviews, amends, and signs off this policy annually. The Principal keeps a record of all reported incidents, including which type of bullying has occurred, to allow for proper analysis of the data collected, and arranges appropriate training for staff members.
- Teachers and Tutors: Remain alert to social dynamics in their class, are available for students who wish to report bullying, and provide follow-up support and liaison with families.
- Pastoral and Safeguarding Team: Comprising Tutors, Pastoral Leaders, Safeguarding team, and Wellbeing staff who support the Head of School, handle incidents as an immediate priority, and provide specialist assessment or counselling referrals.
- Mulberry Tree House (MTH) Staff: Act in loco parentis. Staff are aware that the boarding environment might provide specific opportunities for bullying and are therefore always vigilant and alert to signs of issues. MTH will comply with its obligations as set out in the boarding National Minimum Standards (NMS) at all times.

10. Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying can be defined as "wilful and repeated harm inflicted through the use of computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices". CPA acknowledges that cyberbullying may take place inside school, outside of school, and at any time of the day.

Examples of cyberbullying include, but are not limited to:

- Texts, instant messages, or calls on mobile phones that threaten, intimidate, or harass.
- Using mobile phone camera images to cause distress, fear, or humiliation.
- Posting threatening, abusive, sexual, discriminatory, offensive, or humiliating material or comments on websites and social networking sites (such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X, or YouTube).
- Cyber-stalking, peer rejection, impersonation, upskirting, and sexting.
- Accessing another person's account details to send unpleasant messages or making private information public.

CPA has a role to play in teaching students about the underpinning knowledge and behaviours that can help them navigate the online world safely. In taking this forward, CPA has regard to the DfE's guidance on Teaching online safety in school.

The school has in place a Social Media Policy and an E-Safety and Acceptable Use Policy, which outline the school's zero-tolerance approach to cyberbullying. Charlton Park Academy views cyberbullying in the same light as any other form of bullying.

Searching and Confiscation of Devices

In accordance with the Education Act 2011 and updated DfE advice (2022), authorised members of the Senior Leadership Team have the right to examine and delete files

from students' personal devices (e.g., mobile phones) where there is a "good reason" to do so. Parental consent is not required to search a phone if a statutory search power applies.

- If an electronic device is seized, and there is reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, the device must be given to the police as soon as is reasonably practicable.
- If material is found that does not contain evidence of a criminal offence, the Principal/DSL will decide whether it is appropriate to delete or retain the material as evidence of a breach of school discipline.

11. Procedures

All incidents and actions taken will be recorded on Behaviour Watch. Records will also be kept on files relating to safeguarding (MyConcern) where appropriate.

Standard Investigation Procedure:

Minor incidents are reported to the victim's teacher, who investigates, sets appropriate sanctions, and informs the Vice Principal in writing.

1. The victim, alleged bully, and witnesses are all interviewed separately where possible.
2. Staff ensure there is no possibility of contact (including digital contact) between the students during the interview process.
3. If a student is physically injured, staff take the student immediately to the school nurse.
4. Interviews are conducted in a room that allows for privacy. A witness member of staff is used for serious incidents.
5. Students may be asked to write down details of the incident.
6. Premature assumptions are not made; staff listen carefully, remaining non-confrontational and non-judgemental.
7. All concerned students are instructed not to discuss the interview with peers.

Critical Safeguarding Exception:

If an allegation of bullying involves severe child-on-child abuse, sexual harassment, sexual violence, hate crime, or physical assault, staff must NOT conduct peer-to-peer reconciliation or collective group interviews. Staff must immediately pause procedures and refer the matter to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to initiate formal safeguarding protections under KCSIE frameworks and avoid compromising potential external investigations.

12. Sanctions

If the Principal/Designated Leader is satisfied that bullying did take place, the student will be helped to understand the consequences of their actions and warned that there must be no further incidents.

- The student will be informed of the sanction to be used (e.g., detentions, internal suspension, service-based activities) and future consequences if the behaviour

persists.
- If appropriate, reconciliation will be attempted, and a genuine apology sought. This will either be in writing or face-to-face, but only with the victim's full and unpressured consent.
- Parents/carers of all involved parties are informed of bullying incidents and what action is being taken.
- The SLT will monitor the students involved over the next half term.

13. Support

- **Daily Monitoring**: Teachers will informally check whether the bullying has stopped on a daily basis for a month after the initial complaint.
- **Formal Monitoring**: SLT and Pastoral Leaders will formally check whether the bullying has stopped the week after the incident, and again later during the same half term.
- If necessary, classroom group dynamics are broken up by assigning new seating arrangements.
- The victim will be supported in broadening their social circles through lunchtime/after-school clubs.

14. Follow up Support

The progress of both the perpetrator and the victim is monitored by their teacher, utilizing one-on-one sessions where appropriate. Follow-up correspondence with parents/carers is arranged one month after the incident.

Students who have been bullied are supported through:

- Being actively listened to and reassured.
- Having immediate access to a trusted adult of their choice.
- Being offered targeted school counselling or Mental Health First Aid support.
- Case-by-case assessment where the DSL may refer the student to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) if required.

Students who have bullied others are supported through:

- Receiving an appropriate consequence for their actions.
- Reflective sessions to understand what they did wrong and why they must change.
- Identifying underlying motives or personal welfare concerns that may be driving the behaviour.

In extreme cases where the effects of bullying are so severe that a student cannot successfully reintegrate back into the academy, the Principal and DSL will formally review the appropriateness of the continued placement alongside the parents and the Local Authority.

15. Bullying Outside of School

Teachers have the power to discipline students for misbehaving outside of the school premises. This applies to any bullying incidents occurring off-site, such as on school or

public transport, on school trips, or online.

Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives the Principal a specific statutory power to regulate students' conduct when they are not on school premises and not under the lawful charge of a school staff member. Where bullying outside school is reported, it will be thoroughly investigated and acted upon.

If the misbehaviour could be of a criminal nature or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will always be informed.

16. Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed annually by the Principal and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to ensure it remains compliant with the latest statutory guidance, and is formally approved by the Governing Body.