

# **THE CHARTER SCHOOL** **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

## AIM OF THE SCHOOL

The aim of The Charter School is to provide an excellent education for children from the local community in a safe, supportive learning environment, where people are valued and make positive contributions to the school, and where pupils go on to become responsible, independent members of society.

## **PRINCIPLES**

The aim of The Charter School's anti-bullying policy is to ensure that pupils learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied.

Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and is not tolerated at The Charter School.

The Charter School believes that each member of our school is entitled to receive their education free from humiliation, intimidation, oppression and abuse. It is the responsibility of all staff that learning takes place in an atmosphere which is caring and protective.

## **PURPOSES**

- ❑ To enable pupils and feel safe and supported as learners and members of our community
- ❑ To ensure all know and understand the rules, to keep everyone safe
- ❑ To encourage and develop further a caring and respectful learning and working environment for all members of our school community

## **DEFINITION**

What Constitutes Bullying?

The Charter School defines bullying as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

Bullying can be:

- **Physical:** pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, any form of violence, threats, theft.
- **Verbal:** name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing, racist/sexist/homophobic/ageist abuse
- **Emotional:** spreading rumours, tormenting, threatening ridicule, humiliation, and exclusion from groups or activities.
- **Extortion:** money, gifts, doing homework.
- **Sexual:** unwanted physical contact, abusive comments.
- **Cyber-bullying :** deliberate misuse of text, mobile phones, email, internet, social networking sites

Symptoms of Bullying

Signs of bullying might include:

- unwillingness to come to school;
- withdrawn, isolated behaviour;
- complaining about missing possessions;
- refusal to talk about any problem;
- easily distressed;
- damaged or incomplete work.

**Support strategies we use with pupils include**

- having an inclusive and respectful school ethos
- increasing the friendship circle for victims
- mediation by pupils and adults
- counselling
- assertiveness training
- active listening including telephone helplines (ChildLine and Samaritans)

**Actions to combat bullying at The Charter School**

In order to achieve the entitlement to a caring and safe environment, The Charter School :

- has clear whole-school strategies to combat bullying

- accepts that bullying does occur within our school on occasions
- encourages a “Pass-It-On” culture, of trust and support to encourage pupils to disclose incidents to staff
- ensures that there is a procedure to follow when incidents of bullying occur and that it is made clear to all staff and pupils
- follows-up every incident of alleged bullying to ensure that the victim is given as much support as possible in order to prevent a recurrence of the behaviour
- involves parents/carers early on, and informs parents of victims and bullies of the action being taken, including exclusion, and what they can do to reinforce and support that action
- formally logs and monitor reported instances of bullying, along with details of actions taken to investigate and resolve the situation
- formally report all instances of bullying to the Local Authority,
- ensures that all pupils have an assigned person (ie, form tutor/year leader/TA/Learning Mentor/DoL/Behaviour Team,etc) to whom they can talk in confidence. Pupils need to know that something will be done, and that the incident will be handled in a sensitive manner
- ensures that all areas of school are patrolled at break and lunchtime and at the beginning and end of the day.
- has clear procedures for dealing effectively with specific complaints from parents
- encourages all support staff to be aware of the problem of bullying and to pass on any worries they may have about individual young people
- provides a tutorial, Citizenship and Drama programme that contains specific sections on bullying
- ensures the curriculum is used as a positive means for combating bullying
- ensures that all pupils, parents and adults in our school know that bullying is completely unacceptable and if they help to stop it they will be supported
- offers parents clear advice on how to look out for signs of distress and whom to contact if their child is being bullied.
- Offers regular year-group Drama workshops on anti-bullying, anti-homophobia, anti-racism, through providers such as The Big Fish Drama company

#### Teachers at The Charter School

- watch for early signs of distress in pupils - deterioration of work, poor attendance, sudden illnesses, isolation, need to stay close to adults. These concerns should be passed on to the relevant head of house/form tutor/class teacher,
- class teacher/Head of house/form tutor should listen carefully and record all incidents,
- respond to the victim, offer help and put school's procedures into operation,
- make it clear to both the bully and his/her parents that this kind of behaviour is not acceptable in this school,
- use all pupils as a positive resource in the stopping of bullying. Peer groups will often be willing to help and support victims once recognised by a teacher. They can also help shy pupils or newcomers feel welcome and accepted. Sexual and racial harassment also need to be discussed and dealt with,
- inform the Head of incidences of bullying.

The following steps should be followed in recording incidents of bullying and also as a means of conveying to everyone how seriously our school regards bullying behaviour.

- The bullied pupil should record the events in writing with dates.
- The bully should also record the events in writing.
- The teacher and/or head of house, senior teacher, should record their discussions with both parties.
- The Head will decide whether the bully should be excluded.
- The parents/carers of the pupils should be sent copies of the reports and these should be placed in the files of all pupils involved for a specified period of time.
- The parents/carers of the pupils should be asked to respond in writing.

Learners are encouraged:

- to report to an adult when someone is being bullied or in distress,
- inform an adult immediately if they do not wish to become involved himself or herself,
- reject bullies in their social group. (Young people will stop bullying if they are socially excluded.)

Parents and carers are encouraged to:

- raise any change in behaviour of their young people with our school,
- treat any suggestion by their young people that they may be being bullied seriously,
- encourage their son or daughter to talk to a supportive adult they know if they cannot talk to their parents or carers.

#### **Important Information About Bullying:**

- The nature of bullying changes, as pupils grow older and can become subtler.
- Most bullying is not physical, or direct. Young people identify emotional and social forms of bullying as most hurtful.
- Bullying exists in all ages, social, ethnic and gender groups and in both urban and rural settings.
- Most bullying is between young people of the same ages.
- Those who witness bullying are as deeply affected as those who are directly bullied.
- Young people do follow examples. If home life does not offer a secure and safe environment and they frequently see aggressive behaviour between adults and towards themselves they will tend to adopt aggressive behaviour patterns themselves. We work to offer alternate methods of conflict resolution, particularly for young people with known difficult family circumstances of aggressive behaviours

#### **Other Relevant Policies and Procedures include :**

Anti-bullying Research feedback from Kings College University, undertaken at TCS during 2008-2009 – see appendices  
Equalities and Diversities policy  
Pupil discipline policy  
Sex and relationship education policy  
Drugs education policy  
Collective worship policy  
Attendance policy

There are a number of charities listed below that give support to schools on bullying and managing difficult behaviour. These charities are linked to some of the successful strategies just mentioned.

Kidscape

152 Buckingham Palace Road, London SW1W 9TR

This charitable organisation provides free literature for parents, victims and schools.

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)

1B Aberdeen Studios, 22 Highbury Grove, London N5 2EA

ACE is a registered charity independent of central or local government and gives free advice and support to parents of young people in State schools.

Get Connected

Telephone 0808 808 4994

A free confidential helpline for young people that will help them get in touch with the right people to help them.

The Samaritans

Telephone 020 7734 2800 or 0345909090

The helpline is freely available to all age groups

The Young People and Violence project

Telephone 020 7843 6309

National Young people's Bureau

8 Wakely Street, London. EC1V 7QE

ChildLine

Studd Street, London N1 0QW.

Review. This policy is reviewed on a three-yearly cycle. It is monitored by our school Council and the Headship team.