Anti-bullying Strategy (inc. online/cyber)

Date of policy review:	August 2023
Date for review:	September 2024
Lead for review:	Assistant Headteacher (AHPP)

PART OF
CATS
GLOBAL SCHOOLS

CATS College London Limited trading as Guildhouse School - Registered in England: 07442735
Registered Office: Suites 6-7 The Turvill Building Old Swiss, 149 Cherry Hinton Road, Cambridge, England, CB1 7BX

Contents

CATS College London Limited trading as Guildhouse School - Registered in England: 07442735
Registered Office: Suites 6-7 The Turvill Building Old Swiss, 149 Cherry Hinton Road, Cambridge, England, CB1 7BX

2

Preface

The anti-bullying policy is to ensure that students learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied.

Bullying is anti-social behaviour and can have profound consequences which could in the worst scenarios lead to suicide. Bullying affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will students be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available at the school.

Purpose

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly, and safe environment for all our students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our premises or outside the school premises. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

Under the Children's Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm' Where this is the case, staff should report their concerns to the DSL who will refer concerns to their local authority children's social care.

This policy is linked to the school's Student Behaviour Policy, the Disability, Discrimination and Accessibility Plan and the government guidance on tackling bullying:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying

CATS College London Limited trading as Guildhouse School - Registered in England: 07442735
Registered Office: Suites 6-7 The Turvill Building Old Swiss, 149 Cherry Hinton Road, Cambridge, England, CB1 7BX

3

Bullying and Dealing with Bullying

What Is Bullying?

The school Student Handbook defines bullying in accordance with the NSPCC as: *Bullying is behaviour that hurts someone else. It includes name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumours, threatening or undermining someone. It can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online. It's usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child both physically and emotionally.*

Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups (protected characteristics).

Prejudice-based bullying, discriminatory behaviour or any form of microaggression because of a protected characteristic of any kind must be challenged immediately. This should take place on the spot, in front of others so that all witnesses are aware that such behaviour is unacceptable. A record of the incident must be made. Such bullying is taken particularly seriously.

The severity of bullying in accordance with the above can range from a relatively minor one-off incident to an ongoing severe concern (potentially safeguarding/child protection) either physically, emotionally, or both, which may cause psychological damage.

All staff have a duty to challenge and report any incidence of bullying in line with the above definitions. Students must be encouraged to report bullying.

Students who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences, or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting from school.

Online bullying

Definition and description:

Online bullying is defined as *the use of technology, such as email and social networking sites, to deliberately hurt or upset someone or harass or threaten. Unlike physical forms of bullying, the internet allows bullying to continue past school hours and invades the victim's home life and personal space. It also allows distribution of hurtful comments and material to a wide audience.*

Online bullying is extremely prevalent as students who would not consider bullying in the physical sense may find it easier to bully through the internet, especially if it is thought the bullying may remain anonymous.

Online Bullying may take the form of:

- • rude, abusive or threatening messages via email or text

- • posting insulting, derogatory or defamatory statements on blogs or social networking sites

- • setting up websites that specifically target the victim

- • making or sharing derogatory or embarrassing images or videos of someone via mobile phone or email (for example, sexting/"happy slapping")

CATS College London Limited trading as Guildhouse School - Registered in England: 07442735
Registered Office: Suites 6-7 The Turvill Building Old Swiss, 149 Cherry Hinton Road, Cambridge, England, CB1 7BX

4

Online bullying can affect students and staff members. Often, the internet medium used to perpetrate the bullying allows the bully to remain anonymous. In extreme cases, online bullying could be a criminal offence under the Harassment Act 1997 or the Telecommunications Act 1984.

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts.

No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Students who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. Schools have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

The school's teaching and support staff must be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with school policy.

Signs and Symptoms

A student may indicate, by signs or behaviour, that they are being bullied.

Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a student:

- is frightened of travelling to or from school or doesn't want to go on a public bus
- changes their usual routine by feeling ill in the mornings or is unwilling to go to school or begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home or back to the residences with clothes torn or damaged or has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay a bully)
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive, or unreasonable
- is bullying other students or siblings
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

CATS College London Limited trading as Guildhouse School - Registered in England: 07442735
Registered Office: Suites 6-7 The Turvill Building Old Swiss, 149 Cherry Hinton Road, Cambridge, England, CB1 7BX

5

Procedures

All students are made aware of the fact that the school takes a zero-tolerance approach to bullying, whether it is face-to-face or online, onsite, or offsite. This is done as part of the student induction process. The school aims to create a listening environment where students feel confident to speak with a member of staff they trust if they are experiencing difficulties. They can speak to a trusted adult directly, in person, or electronically – by email (concern@guildhouseschool.com) or Teams. Students are also encouraged to report incidences of bullying that they are aware of but they themselves are not the victim.

Bullying of any kind must be challenged immediately by staff. This should take place on the spot, in front of others so that all witnesses are aware that such behaviour is unacceptable, unless there is a good reason to isolate the student to address the matter – if this is the case, any witnesses should be informed that the observed behaviour is unacceptable. A record of the incident must be made electronically by way of an email sent to the relevant Pastoral Director(s) and should include: the students name, date/time, location, what exactly happened, how it was addressed. In addressing the perpetrator, the student should be told that the behaviour is unacceptable and does not adhere to school values and British values (including the Equality Act 2010).

Bullying disclosures should be dealt with in the same way as a safeguarding disclosure (see Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy). That said, bullying should not be perceived as a child protection concern unless when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

All incidences of bullying will be logged on SharePoint on the incidents log so that there is a central overview of bullying related issues, which will allow any patterns to be easily identified and evaluated. The pastoral team know and understand the local authority thresholds for reporting and will pass cases to the Safeguarding Team if required.

Support for the victim – the victim should be reassured that the matter is/has been addressed and any further issues should be shared immediately. The Pastoral Director will monitor the student for as long as deemed necessary.

Support for the perpetrator – a restorative conversation is required and the student will be subject to a sanction in line with the school discipline ladder (in line with Student Behaviour Policy: Behaviour Framework and Stage Warning Ladder).

Training

Staff are made aware of this policy and the procedures for dealing with bullying by means of ongoing training and raising awareness as part of INSET or pastoral meetings, which can also include raising awareness of how to understand the needs of students, including those with special educational needs or disabilities and LGBT students.

Boarding

Guildhouse School London recognises the risk that boarders who are being bullied might find it difficult to escape their tormentors as they are not going home as day students do. This risk is mitigated at Guildhouse School because of the school's accommodation and the policy on its use and management. The House has separate flats that a group of similar age same sex students occupy,

CATS College London Limited trading as Guildhouse School - Registered in England: 07442735
Registered Office: Suites 6-7 The Turvill Building Old Swiss, 149 Cherry Hinton Road, Cambridge, England, CB1 7BX

6

rather than being open access to all boarders. The flats have 3, 4 or 5 separate bedrooms, all of which are either single or twin ensuite rooms. The doors to the flats and the individual rooms have hotel-style locks and this gives an unusual degree of privacy and personal space in comparison to most boarding schools. There are also far fewer compulsory gatherings where a bullied student might find themselves unable to avoid someone – even mealtimes are very flexible if they wish to eat in school and the ability to eat-out or order-in also gives all students options for whom they wish to see or not see during the course of a day.

Prevention

The school induction process and Personal Development (PSHE) programme aims to prevent rather than cure the issue of bullying through a variety of taught sessions, assemblies and other events. Students also agree to an ICT Acceptable Use agreement as part of the induction. The school does what is reasonably practicable to safeguard students online through filtering and monitoring the WIFI network – however, it is recognised that students using 3/4/5G cannot be monitored in the same way, hence educating students regarding online safety is of the utmost importance.

Online Bullying of School staff

The Headteacher knows school staff may become victims of online bullying by students and/or their parents. Because of the duty of care owed to staff, the Headteacher will ensure that staff are able to report incidents in confidence and receive adequate support, including taking any appropriate action against students and parents.

Incidents of online bullying involving school staff should be recorded and monitored by the Pastoral Director and DSL in the same manner as incidents involving students.

Staff should follow the guidance on safe IT use in the ICT Acceptable Use Policy and the Staff Code of Conduct and refrain from using their own mobile phones or email addresses to contact parents or students.

Personal contact details for staff will not be posted on the school website or in any other school publication.

Staff should not reply to messages but report the incident to the Headteacher immediately.

Where the bullying is being carried out by a parent, the Headteacher should contact the parent to discuss the issue. A home/school agreement with the parent can be used to ensure responsible use.

Links with Student Behaviour Policy

Students involved in bullying in the school or outside the school may also be dealt with under the school discipline system which is outlined in the school's Student Behaviour Policy and other documentation. For very serious issues a student may be permanently excluded, suspended (Stage 5) or issued a Stage 4 (a final warning) in line with the school discipline ladder.

Complaints from Parents

If a complaint is received from a parent or agent that a student is being bullied, the member of staff should immediately report it to the Assistant Headteacher (PP).

CATS College London Limited trading as Guildhouse School - Registered in England: 07442735
Registered Office: Suites 6-7 The Turvill Building Old Swiss, 149 Cherry Hinton Road, Cambridge, England, CB1 7BX

7

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Guidance – Further sources of information, other departmental advice, and guidance

<u>**Specialist organisations**</u>

The Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) - founded in 2002 by NSPCC and National Children's Bureau, the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) brings together over 100 organisations into one network to develop and share good practice across the whole range of bullying issues.

Kidscape - charity established to prevent bullying and promote child protection providing advice for young people, professionals and parents about different types of bullying and how to tackle it. They also offer specialist training and support for school staff, and assertiveness training for young people.

The Diana Award - anti-bullying Ambassadors programme to empower young people to take responsibility for changing the attitudes and behaviour of their peers towards bullying. It will achieve this by identifying, training and supporting school anti-bullying ambassadors.

The BIG Award - the Bullying Intervention Group (BIG) offer a national scheme and award for schools to tackle bullying effectively.

Restorative Justice Council - Includes best practice guidance for practitioners 2011.

CATS College London Limited trading as Guildhouse School - Registered in England: 07442735
Registered Office: Suites 6-7 The Turvill Building Old Swiss, 149 Cherry Hinton Road, Cambridge, England, CB1 7BX

8

GUILDHOUSE SCHOOL
LONDON

Creating tomorrow's change makers.