

## CHARTERHOUSE POLICY ON BULLYING

### A Statement of Intent

Charterhouse respects and upholds the right of every individual to enjoy all aspects of his or her time here, without interference from others. Any incident where a pupil's conduct adversely affects another's ability to enjoy this right is deplored. All boys and girls at Charterhouse are expected to base their behaviour on respect for others, regardless of age, social background, race, religion, disability, sexual orientation or gender. Bullying, whether mental or physical, is a form of abuse which has no place in the school. All members of the school are reminded that they must do all in their power to prevent bullying when it does occur by reporting the matter to a member of the teaching staff. In addition, pupils are told and reminded that allegations of bullying will always be investigated thoroughly.

### B What is Bullying?

Bullying can be:

- \* Emotional            being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (eg. hiding books, threatening gestures).
- \* Physical            pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
- \* Racist                racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- \* Sexual                sexual harassment in any form is bullying, eg. unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive comments, de-bagging....
- \* Homophobic        because of, or focussing on, the issue of sexual orientation.
- \* Verbal                name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.
- \* Cyber                all areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse.  
Mobile misuse by text messaging, picture messaging, video clip & calls  
Misuse of associated technology, ie. camera & video facilities.
- \* Prejudice            on grounds of different interests (or different/inferior economic status), ie. pupils can be bullied for being interested in things (work, classical music, acting, sport) considered 'uncool' by a group or 'in-crowd'.
- \* Ganging-up         Where a group or 'in-crowd' decides that a certain person's 'face does not fit' because of certain prejudices as exemplified above.

*	Misuse of Seniority	To exploit seniority in ways which affect the welfare of others is bullying, eg. fagging, sending boys on errands, expecting juniors to wait on seniors or surrender certain tv room chairs, queue-jumping, punishing other than as laid out in house rules.
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Bullying can occur between pupils, between members of staff and between members of staff and pupils. It can take place both within and outside of school premises and term time. In some cases, bullying may relate to suspected, alleged or actual child abuse (See Section F: Procedures).

### C Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be alerted to the possibility of bullying if a child:

- is frightened of other pupils, or of staff
- avoids other pupils or staff because of fear
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to return to school (school phobic)
- begins to miss commitments
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- has clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or 'go missing'
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has money continually 'lost'
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- cuts meal-times or is reluctant to sit with peers at meals
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- bullies others
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- begs staff members to do nothing about what they have seen or been told
- 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. Referral to the School Doctor or one of the two School Counsellors should always be considered.

## D Prevention

A number of strategies are employed at Charterhouse:

- Good supervision is one of the most efficient and economical preventative strategies.
- The unacceptability of bullying to older and senior pupils in the school is seen by pupils as the most effective strategy. Support and training for senior pupils is vital in this context.
- Every year, new pupils at thirteen years of age, help draw up in house, a Bullying Charter. This defines bullying, explains why it does harm, determines the best ways to prevent it, and sets out parameters of acceptable behaviour. Pupils sign this document which is regarded as a binding commitment for the rest of their time in the school.
- Confidential Year Group Questionnaires provide regular feedback.
- Improving the Boarding House environment.
- Keeping Records of incidents and alleged incidents.
- Childline posters are displayed in houses.
- Counselling and Assertiveness Training are available.
- Staff Training.
- Regular review of the Policy on Bullying.

## E Disclosure

If you are being bullied, or you are aware of bullying in your House, Form or Division, you should tell a responsible person. This could be your Head of House, Monitor, Matron, Tutor, Housemaster, Chaplain or any other member of staff. Bullying is easier to deal with when it first starts, so it is best to seek help as soon as possible. **Every attempt will be made to ensure that information about bullying will be handled sensitively, and that your confidentiality will be respected.**

## F Procedures

- 1 All incidents of bullying must be taken seriously. In all cases, the incident and any action taken, should be reported to the Housemasters of the pupils concerned.
- 2 Housemasters will, in more serious bullying cases, report the matter to the Assistant Headmaster Pastoral, who will notify the Designated Child Protection Officer, if the matter relates to suspected, alleged or actual child abuse.
- 3 All incidents of bullying must be fully investigated.
- 4 Where appropriate, written statements should be taken from everyone involved in or who witnessed the bullying. In more serious cases, a Serious Offence Record Form should be completed and sent to the Assistant Headmaster Pastoral, (see Section A6 of the Masters' Book).
- 5 Independent witnesses must be afforded protection. The information in their statements must be treated confidentially and steps should always be taken to prevent evidence being traced back to the independent witness.
- 6 For future reference, Housemasters should file all instances of bullying or alleged bullying.
- 7 The victim(s) of bullying should be given support and made safe from further bullying.
- 8 The victim(s) may benefit from counselling or assertiveness training. Referral to one of the two School Counsellors should always be considered.
- 9 The bully needs help to change his/her behaviour and to understand the victim's point of view. Referral to the School Counsellor, not already involved, should always be considered.
- 10 The bully must understand that the School strongly disapproves of his or her actions. It can be helpful if the parents of the bully also support this line.
- 11 In serious cases, Housemasters need to inform parents in a clear, calm and re-assuring manner. Parents should be offered the opportunity to meet the Housemaster to discuss the issues.
- 12 In all cases of bullying, the Housemaster should inform other Boarding House staff so that the situation can be monitored carefully.

## G Sanctions

Bullying is regarded as a very serious disciplinary matter and pupils found to have bullied others will be liable to disciplinary sanctions up to and including expulsion, depending on the severity of the offence.

In the case of bullying, a less serious breach of behaviour (eg. pushing in front of a younger pupil in the lunch queue) may be dealt with satisfactorily by an Armoury Run or Extra Labour.

A more serious incident of bullying (eg. De-bagging) may result in the culprit receiving School Punishment or Suspension.

The most serious cases of bullying may lead to expulsion, as the School Rule on Bullying below makes plain:

### SCHOOL RULE

*Bullying of any kind is a serious offence. If your relationships with others stop them enjoying time at School, you will put your place here in jeopardy. Severe or persistent bullying including any acts of discrimination or harassment on grounds of sex, race or disability may lead to expulsion.*

September 2007