


# ANTI BULLYING POLICY

## Policy Issues and Updates

<i>Pages</i>	<i>Issue Number</i>	<i>Date</i>
Whole Document – New	1	September 2023
Updates	2	August 2024

This policy has been approved by the SLT and Governors.  
The policy will be reviewed every 2 years unless circumstances arise requiring an early review.

Approved: September 2024



Signature:

Planned Review Date: August 2026

## **Introduction**

The policy is drawn with reference to DfE Guidance (2017): Preventing and tackling bullying: Advice for head teachers, staff, and governing bodies. It reflects colleagues' duties under the Equality Act 2010.

At Chances Mentoring, we recognize that bullying occurs in all schools and that bullying undermines self-esteem and sense of security and may affect a child's attendance and attainment. It can lead to serious psychological damage for the victim and a criminal record for the perpetrators. It is possible for any member of the school community to experience bullying. Our policy is to reject and be seen to reject all forms of bullying. No-one deserves to suffer the pain and indignity that bullying can cause. In developing this policy, we have considered the needs and views of our pupils, their parents, and those of the teaching staff.

### **Definition of bullying**

The DfE Guidance Preventing and Tackling Bullying defines bullying to be "behavior by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally."

*Ref; The Anti-Bullying Alliance 2017*

Bullying can take many forms, including repeated occurrences of physical, emotional, psychological, social, or verbal abuse and cyber-bullying (see below). It can involve threats, physical attacks, name-calling, mocking, harassment, and sexual bullying. Bullying may derive from racial, sexist, homophobic and religious prejudice, and may be directed against those with a disability, SEN, or a different appearance, or those with different home circumstances, for example if a child is a carer.

Bullying can occur between pupils, between pupils and staff, or between staff. It can be perpetrated face to face or indirectly. Single acts of any of the above forms of abusive behavior will not be tolerated.

### **Cyber-bullying**

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people for Chances Mentoring on content at a click.

The Education Act 2011 amended the power in the Education Act 1996 to provide

that when an electronic device, such as a mobile phone, has been seized by a member of staff who has been formally authorized by the Head of Centre, that staff member can examine data or files, and delete these, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone.

If an electronic device that is prohibited by the school rules has been seized and the member of staff has reasonable grounds to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, they must give the device to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable. Material on the device that is suspected to be evidence relevant to an offence, or that is a pornographic image of a child or an extreme pornographic image, should not be deleted prior to giving the device to the police.<sup>1</sup> If a staff member finds material that they do not suspect contains evidence in relation to an offence, they can decide whether it is appropriate to delete or retain the material as evidence of a breach of school discipline.

The Byron Review stated: "Cyber-bullying is when a child, preteen or teen is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by another child, preteen or teen using the Internet, interactive and digital technologies or mobile phones."

Cyber-bullying includes using mobile phones, iPads, or internet sites to send abusive messages or make defamatory statements about individuals. Stalking, "sexting," "trolling," "happy slapping" and unauthorized publication of confidential information or images. Cyber-bullying can happen at all times of the day and has the potential to reach a wide audience. It can undermine the self-esteem of individual pupils and can undermine the professional status of staff. Some cyber-bullying is deliberate and intentional, but in other cases distress to the victim can be caused by something that is seen as a joke by the other person.

Cyber-bullying can be a criminal offence; children are criminally responsible for their actions and their consequences from the age of 10. (See 'Criminal Law' – paragraph 8).

Chances Mentoring has the right to investigate and act upon issues of cyber-bullying that occur outside of school times where this has a detrimental effect on a person's ability to come to the academy and feel safe and happy in their education.

Cyber bullying can include:

- Texting scary or rude messages by mobile phone or other electronic devices
- Sending unpleasant photographs by mobile phone or other electronic devices
- Using online message boards, chat rooms, or social networking sites to post cruel messages;
- Deleting the victim's name from or ignoring their messages on social networking sites.
- Chances Mentoring reserves the right to discipline students for inappropriate use of social media. This includes online bullying, peer on peer abuse, provoking violence or hate, sexual harassment and bringing the Academy into disrepute. This is in line with the Malicious Communications Act 1988 ([legislation.gov.uk](http://legislation.gov.uk))
- The use of gaming devices such as PlayStation / Xbox to send rude, threatening and/or unpleasant messages

## **Bullying**

*“Bullying is deliberately hurtful behavior repeated often over a period of time or on isolated occasions, where somebody deliberately intimidates or harasses another.”*  
Ref; *The Anti-Bullying Alliance 2017*

Bullying has been described by students as:

- Name calling, which includes over social networking sites;
- Using offensive names when addressing another pupil;
- Teasing or spreading rumors about another pupil or his/her family;
- Writing offensive notes or graffiti about another pupil;
- Ridiculing another pupil's appearance, speaking or personal mannerisms;
- Misusing technology (internet or mobiles) to hurt or humiliate another person;
- Physical abuse e.g., hitting, pushing, pinching, or kicking;
- Having personal possessions taken e.g., bag or mobile phone;
- Receiving abusive text messages or e-mails;
- Being forced to hand over money;
- Being forced to do things they do not want to do;
- Being ignored or left out;
- Being attacked in any way.
- Child on child abuse.

Bullying can happen to anyone. This includes:

- Bullying related to race, religion, or culture;
- Bullying related to special educational needs;
- Bullying related to appearance, health, or disability;
- Bullying related to sexual orientation;
- Bullying of young carers or looked after children, or other related to home problem;
- Sexist or sexual bullying (including Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, gender reassignment (LGB&T) children and young people).
- Bullying related to any of the protected characteristics

### **Signs of bullying**

Students who are being bullied may show changes in behavior such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, or clinging to adults. They may show changes in their work patterns, lack concentration or truant from school.

Adults should be aware of these signs and should refer their concern to the student's Head of Centre if a child:

- Changes their usual routine;
- Refuses to go to school;
- Feels ill in the morning to act as a reasonable excuse to not attend;
- Truants;
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious, lacking in confidence;
- Self-harms or threatens self-harm;
- Cries themselves to sleep;
- Begins to do poorly with academic work;
- Comes home with damaged or missing clothes or possessions;
- Loses money continually or asks for extra money (paying the bully);
- Comes home hungry (lunch money given to bully);
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive, or unreasonable;
- Is bullying others, including siblings;
- Stops eating;
- Is frightened to say what's wrong;
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above;
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone;
- Is nervous or jumpy when a cyber-message is received

These signs and behaviors could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated. The priority of the school is the continued safety of the victim.

### **At Chances Mentoring we believe that:**

- Bullying is unacceptable.
- Bullying is a problem to which solutions can be found.
- Seeking help and openness are regarded as signs of strength not weakness.

- All members of the school community will be listened to and taken seriously.
- Everyone has the right to work and learn in an atmosphere that is free from fear.
- All of us have a responsibility to not abuse or bully others.
- Young people should talk to an adult if they are worried about bullying and have a right to expect that their concerns will be listened to and treated seriously.

Chances Mentoring encourages all students to report bullying to a trusted adult in school.

Student comments will be read by a member of our pastoral team / safeguarding team. Students are also encouraged to report any bullying to a member of staff so the incident can be recorded and fully investigated by the pastoral team. Students are also encouraged to email staff members directly if they feel this is a comfortable method of communication which should be directed at a trusted member of staff such as their Head of Centre.

**Students are advised to:**

- Report the incident as quickly as possible so the school can work to resolve the issue quickly and efficiently.
- Tell an adult or somebody they trust what has happened straight away. If they are scared to tell a teacher or adult on their own, they should ask a friend to go with them.
- Get away from the situation as quickly as possible.
- Try to stay calm and look as confident as you can.
- If possible, try to be assertive in saying that you do not accept what other people are doing and that they should stop immediately. Remember, being assertive is not using verbal abuse in return or physical action (i.e., violence) as a response.

**We expect our students to:**

- Refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity.
- Intervene to protect the student who is being bullied unless it is unsafe to do so.
- Report to a member of staff any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying, to dispel any climate of secrecy and help to prevent further instances.

Chances Mentoring will record all instances of bullying:

Students are encouraged to:

- Tell me how often it has happened.
- Who is involved?
- Who saw what was happening?
- Where it happened.
- What have you done about it already?
- Keep a record of texts/social media messages.
- Never respond to an abusive text/social media message – what the cyber bully most is a reply.

And always be reminded:

- Not to blame themselves for what has happened;

- To continue reporting the bullying until someone listens and does something to stop it;
- “We take bullying very seriously.”

All members of staff will:

- Prevent, de-escalate, and stop any continuation of harmful behaviors;
- Apply disciplinary sanctions to the student causing the bullying and ensure they learn from the experience;
- Take steps to help ‘victims’ feel safe and confident again;
- Work with bullies where necessary and as appropriate, so that they are held to account for their actions and accept responsibility for the harm they have caused. These students will be provided with 1-to-1 support to re-educate and challenge their values and future responses.

Our staff will:

- Foster in our students' self-esteem, self-respect, and respect for others;
- Demonstrate by example the exacting standards of personal and social behaviors we expect of our students;
- Discuss bullying with all classes, so that every student learns about the damage it causes to both the child who is bullied and to the bully and the importance of telling a teacher about bullying when it happens;
- Be alert to signs of distress and other indications of bullying;
- Listen to children who have been bullied, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them;
- Report suspected cases of bullying to the head of center
- Follow up any complaint by a parent about bullying, and report back promptly and fully on the action, which has been taken;
- Deal with observed instances of bullying promptly and effectively, in accordance with agreed procedures.

Parents are made aware, through the Positive Support System, and can highlight any issues or concerns via their child’s Head of Centre either in person, email, or phone call to the school:

- They are made aware that they may contact the school if they are concerned their child is being bullied or does not feel safe to learn.
- They can be confident that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously and investigate/resolve as necessary, and that the school systems will deal with the bullying in any way that protects their child.
- Parents may use the complaints procedure if they feel that their concern has not been dealt with satisfactorily.

#### The Responsibilities of Parents

We ask our parents to support their children and the school by:

- Advising their children to report any bullying to (name of a member of staff/specific post in school/their class teacher) and explain the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other

pupils;

- Advising their children not to retaliate violently to any forms of bullying.
- Being sympathetic and supportive towards their children, and reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken;
- Keep a written record of any reported instances of bullying;
- Informing the school of any suspected bullying, even if their children are not involved;
- Co-operating with the school, if their children are accused of bullying, try to ascertain the truth and point out the implications of bullying, both for the children who are bullied and for the bullies themselves.
- Actively engage with their child / children's electronic devices by monitoring their use of social media at home

## **Dealing with Bullying**

### **Prevention**

Chances Mentoring will adopt a range of strategies to prevent and reduce bullying, to raise awareness of bullying and support victims and bullies.

Preventative Measures:

- Staff training includes dealing with sensitive topics including bullying, cyberbullying, grooming and coercive relationships.
- There should be an appreciation by staff of the importance of detecting and dealing with bullying.
- Pastoral staff should make students aware of whom they can talk to in confidence (e.g., a member of staff whom they trust, and that information will be acted upon discreetly and sensitively).
- School student meetings are used to discuss issues of relationships, bullying and personal identity.
- During Form tutor time, teachers facilitate a safe and positive environment for students to take turns, if they choose, to talk about an issue of concern.
- PSHE topics include what bullying is, different forms of bullying and positive relationships.
- Students should be clear about the role they can play in preventing bullying. A student may train to become a student council representative.
- Students who take a specific role in anti-bullying work can be rewarded, e.g., by receiving praise stamps/reward points/special commendation nominations.
- Staff need to be aware of areas of the school where bullying might take place, be sensitive to the times and situations when it might occur and always keep a watchful eye. Staff at break and lunchtime should patrol these areas regularly and always arrange cover if they are unable to fulfil a duty on any given day.
- The building has been designed to minimize areas where bullying may occur.

- Staff should arrive at lessons and duty points punctually; bullying could happen before classes start or if classes have been dismissed early.
- Staff need to be alerted to hate incidents (such as issues concerning race/ethnicity, Homophobic/Sexual Orientation, Religion/Belief, Disability/SEN, Gender Identity) and/or actions which are a form of bullying.
- Support for the victim and 'keeping students in the loop' is also an essential process in providing support.

Chances Mentoring has introduced a uniform to promote equality, reduce opportunities for bullying, and foster a sense of belonging among all pupils. By ensuring that uniform items are not divided by sex, keeping costs consistent, and allowing reasonable adaptations for religious, cultural, sensory, or physical needs, the policy removes differences that could otherwise be a source of discrimination or bullying. This approach helps to create an inclusive environment where pupils are respected for who they are, rather than what they wear.

We tackle bullying using a staged approach that mirrors that of the behavior policy.

However, the severity of the incident will be considered in depth when deciding on the appropriate sanction. A referral to an external agency may occur at any point, case by case decisions will be made.

Additional Preventative Measures against Cyber bullying:

Our PSHE curriculum also includes specific training regarding the safe use of ICT, particularly mobile phones, iPads, and the internet.

- Age-appropriate and gender information about grooming, internet sites containing violent or adult content and the dangers of sharing personal information and/or photographs.
- The school's internet filtering system prevents students from accessing social media sites on the schools ICT Equipment



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- The school's internet filtering system prevents students from accessing social media sites on the school's ICT Equipment.

- ICT sessions also include specific training regarding the safe use of ICT, particularly mobile phones, iPads, and the internet.
- Use of mobile phones by students is restricted during the school day. Abuse of this rule leads to the 'phone being confiscated for the remainder of the day.
- No student may take a still or moving image on the school site or on the school buses without the specific, prior permission of a member of staff. This rule is conveyed to students regularly, including at the start of year assembly.
- Students are encouraged to raise issues of concern; this may include bullying and appropriate action and sanctions.
- Parents and carers are encouraged to contact the academy with concerns.
- ICT Lessons: Students will only access websites directed by the teacher and are required to complete classwork. Students do not have access to other's accounts, and the use of ICT equipment is closely monitored by school through software. Social networking, inappropriate or potentially dangerous sites are restricted by the academy filtering system.

## Intervention

Disciplinary measures will be applied to students who bully to punish the behavior appropriately and show clearly that their behavior is wrong. Disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently, and reasonably, taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils may have and considering the needs of vulnerable pupils. The motivations behind bullying behavior and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator would also need to be considered, as the child engaging in bullying may need support themselves.

If an incident of bullying outside the school premises is reported to the school, it will be investigated by the Head of Centre and appropriate action will be taken. Sanctions apply regardless of whether the incident occurred within or outside the school.

Cases of bullying or suspected bullying that are observed in class or around the school must always be taken seriously. Any occurrence which cannot be simply sorted out and dealt with should be discussed with the relevant Head of Centre as soon as possible.

A member of staff who becomes involved in dealing with a bullying incident should:

- Remain calm;
- Take the incident seriously and act;

- investigate the incident meticulously, ensuring that each student's role is clear;
- Reassure the victim;
- Offer help, advice, and support to the victim;
- Encourage witnesses to come forward and obtain accounts of the incident from them;
- Make it plain to the bully that their behavior is unacceptable;
- Encourage the bully to see the victim's point of view;
- Clearly explain any punishment and why it is being given;
- Inform the Head of the Centre who is responsible for keeping a record of bullying incidents; keeping detailed records enables patterns to be identified and can inform proper discussion with parents, if appropriate. This also includes student and staff statements which will help to form a clear picture of the incident details from all perspectives.

The Head of the Centre will be notified of any serious case of bullying or of any on-going situation. In serious cases, the Head of the Centre will, in consultation with others, take the final decision about how the matter is to be dealt with and resolved.

#### Reporting, Recording and Reaction

It is the responsibility of every member of the school community to report any incident of bullying. All instances of bullying should be reported/recorded to CPOMS using the 'Incident' tab.

## Criminal Law

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behavior – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986. Where a criminal offence had been committed, school would be obliged to inform the police.

## Appendix 1

### Hate Incidents / Hate Crimes

At CHANCES MENTORING, we aim to eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimization. We also aim to foster good relations within and between our communities.

A 'hate incident' is:

*“Any incident, which may or may not constitute a criminal offence, which is perceived by the victim or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate.”*

*Ref; The Anti-Bullying Alliance 2017*

Hate incidents may be based upon:

- Homophobic/Sexual Orientation
- Race/Ethnicity
- Religion/Belief
- Disability/SEN
- Gender Identity

Hate incidents can take the form of:

- Verbal abuse or insults
- Detrimental comments
- Abusive language
- 'Jokes' relating to any aspects of hate incidents
- Insulting gestures
- Abusive telephone calls
- Offensive messages

A 'hate crime' is defined as:

*“Any hate incident, which constitutes a criminal offence, perceived by the victim or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate.”*

The key aspect of these types of incidents is the perception of the victim or any other person who has witnessed the incident. For example, where a perpetrator and a 'victim' regard the use of homophobic terminology as harmless and 'banter;' if another person believes it Chances Mentoring motivated by prejudice, this would be treated as a hate incident and dealt with accordingly.

At CHANCES MENTORING, we will investigate and act upon all incidents of hate whether one-off or repeated. Hate Incidents will be investigated using the same procedures as for investigating bullying. We will record all hate incidents on CPOMS on the 'Incident' tab. The DSL will determine whether a hate incident needs to be considered as a hate crime and whether further action should be taken.

All hate incidents will be referred to the DSL for further work as part of a

restorative process. If required a referral will be submitted to external services.

All proven hate incidents will be dealt with according to the Positive Support System and are likely to require a period of Fixed Term Suspension (FTS).