



**COTTENHAM
VILLAGE COLLEGE**
Astrea Academy Trust
INSPIRING BEYOND MEASURE

Anti-Bullying Policy

Adopted by Governing Body:	October 2024
Review Due:	January 2026
Statutory Document:	
Update on Website:	October 2024

Statement of Intent

At Cottenham Village College (CVC) we are committed to not only dealing with bullying, but to do all that we can to prevent it happening in the first place. We aim to provide 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 not acceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. At CVC, anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

Aims

All members of the school community should feel safe and supported. The school wishes to provide an environment of positive working relationships which maximises staff skills and abilities and also sets a good example to students. CVC will not tolerate any behaviour by students towards other students which is deemed to be bullying.

The school will not permit or accept any behaviour by staff which amounts to intimidation, such as misuse of power or position. Nor will the school tolerate such behaviour from students, parents/carers or governors towards staff.

In order to ensure this:

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, students and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is and know the signs.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All students and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, the signs of bullying, what they should do/ who to report it to, if their child or any other child reports bullying and what the procedures/outcomes could be.
- There is a consistent system and staff training in place (Bromcom and CPOMS) for the recording, monitoring and dealing with incidents of bullying.

What is bullying?

Bullying is unacceptable behaviour which results in somebody feeling hurt, threatened or frightened. It is intentional, deliberate and repetitive and may take many forms. Bullying is physical, verbal or psychological conscious behaviour conducted by an individual or a group against a person who is not able to defend herself/himself in that situation. Bullying can have a devastating effect on its victims, who may suffer physical and mental harm, have reduced self-esteem, have a negative impact on school attendance and may themselves then go on to become bullies, perpetuating a negative cycle.

Bullying can take many forms, examples are:

Physical: hitting, kicking, spitting, tripping someone up, stealing/damaging someone's belongings etc.

Verbal: name-calling, insulting a person's family, threats of physical violence, spreading rumours, constantly putting a person down

Emotional/psychological (including gaslighting): excluding someone from a group, humiliation: some incidents of bullying may be due to a lack of sensitivity or awareness of a situation; however, this can still be defined as bullying. For example, students with disabilities often report persistent, seemingly, low level bullying from which there is no let up.

Protected Characteristics: refers to any form of bullying related to the characteristics considered unique to a child's identity, such as their race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or physical appearance.

These forms of bullying are not only targeted at an individual but reflect negative attitudes towards a wider sub-community or group to whom that individual identifies with (or is believed to identify with). Young people in such groups may be more vulnerable to or at risk of experiencing bullying and can benefit from more targeted support.

Racist: insulting language/gestures based on a person's actual or perceived ethnic origin or faith, name calling, graffiti, racially motivated violence.

Sexual: Sexually insulting language/gestures, name-calling, graffiti, unwanted physical contact.

Homophobic: insulting language/gestures based on a person's actual or perceived sexuality, name calling, graffiti, homophobic violence.

Disablist: bullying involving students and young people with disabilities, with name calling, manipulation, conditional friendship and pushing and shoving being common. There may be high levels of bullying between students with emotional and behavioural difficulties, as well as, bullying of them by other students.

Social Media/Cyber: Parents play a crucial role in addressing social media and cyberbullying, which can occur through text messages or various social media platforms. Bullying that takes place online can be just as damaging as traditional bullying, and in some cases, even more harmful due to its constant presence and the ability to reach individuals regardless of their location or activities. It is essential for parents to monitor their child's online interactions and take action when necessary.

Manipulative bullying: where the perpetrator tries to get the victim to act in a certain way do something they should not do.

Conditional friendship: where the victim is 'allowed' to be in the friendship group only on certain conditions. These are intended to get the victim into trouble or to humiliate them and may put the victim in danger.

All of the types of behaviour listed above are unacceptable and will not be tolerated at CVC.

What is NOT bullying?

One-off incidents: Bullying is persistent and repetitive, and generally fits a pattern of behaviour. (There may be occasions when a one-off incident is so significant that it causes long term effects, and it is therefore categorised as bullying e.g. extreme public humiliation that deters someone from engaging in discussions or social events)

Mutual conflict: A disagreement, argument or fight in which both parties have equally participated and where there is no clear imbalance of power.

Intention

Bullying is not when two students of approximately the same age have fallen out. Not all bullying is deliberate or intended to hurt. Some individuals may see their hurtful conduct as 'banter' or 'a game'. These forms of bullying are **equally unacceptable** but can often be corrected quickly with advice and targeted intervention by form tutors and heads of year.

Bullying is not the 'normal' difficulties that happen with students and young people's friendships, although if these are not resolved they could lead to bullying behaviour.

Appropriate Strategies could include:

- Apology from bully to victim (verbal or written).
- Discussion of victim's own behaviour leading up to the incident.
- Positive steps to be taken with the bully to encourage improved behaviour, possibly through peer mediation.
- Counselling of bully/victim through the most appropriate support system.
- Parents may be contacted by letter or telephone inviting them into school to discuss bullying issues.

The following guidelines will be used when dealing with persistent bullying:

The guidelines outlined below are intended as a guide only. The Headteacher will decide where an incident fits into the following consequences.

An initial consequence will be delivered to the bully. A copy of this consequence will be communicated via a telephone call or a letter to parents/carers and will be recorded on Bromcom and the school's Bullying/Discrimination Incident Log. Any possible additional educational needs of the bully will be assessed or reviewed and, if appropriate, provision will be made for additional support. Students will be made aware of the consequences of their behaviour for their future lives.

Suspension from school for a period of time: Parents/carers will be informed. A copy of this consequence will be communicated via a telephone call or a letter to parents/carers and will be recorded on Bromcom and the school's Bullying/Discrimination Incident Log. At the end of suspension the student, accompanied by a parent/carer, will attend an interview with the Assistant Headteacher and the Head of Year. Any possible additional educational needs of the bully will be assessed or reviewed and, if appropriate, provision will be made for additional support.

Longer period of suspension or permanent exclusion from school. Parents/carers will be informed. A copy of this consequence will be communicated via a telephone call and a letter to parents/carers and will be recorded on Bromcom and the school's Bullying/Discrimination Incident Log. If the student is re-admitted at the end of the suspension the student, accompanied by a parent/carer, will attend an interview with the Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher and the Head of Year. Any possible additional educational needs of the bully will be assessed or reviewed at the next intervention group meeting and, if appropriate, provision will be made for additional support.

If a student serves a suspension and then re-offends they will be at serious risk of permanent exclusion.

These are minimum consequences and each incident will be judged on its own merits alongside a review of the perpetrators prior conduct. In very serious cases it may be necessary to make a report to the Police or Social Services; however, it is the policy of the school to attempt to resolve such issues internally, using our own disciplinary procedures, unless the matter is of such gravity that a criminal offence has been committed. Any bullying offence involving a crime (e.g. demands for money) should be reported to the Police by the parent/carer of the student. Any retaliation by a bully or person appointed by the bully against any other student whom the bully suspects of having provided information which has led to their punishment, will result in an immediate exclusion from school of the bully pending consideration of permanent exclusion.

Throughout these escalating series of consequences the school will consider a range of restorative practices. The school's aim will be to provide all involved students with the necessary care and support to help them overcome their present difficulties.

At each stage of the school's procedures after the incident/incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

Prevention:

- Positive attitudes towards each other will be promoted through the school character values, assemblies and all aspects of school life.
- Staff will be expected to actively promote and implement a whole school ethos that is opposed to bullying in all its forms.
- Student leaders will be used to challenge anti-social behaviour at break and lunch time and to support students who appear to be socially isolated.
- The school website and desktops have a link on the homepage for students/parents and carers to report bullying.
- Training 'Anti Bullying Ambassadors' from year 7 onwards, to peer support bullying, both victims and perpetrators, empowering our pupils to learn to listen, report and resolve concerns.
- CVC Charter/It Stops Now or similar programmes to raise awareness in combating bullying

Roles and responsibilities

All members of staff have a role to play in preventing and combating bullying. They should:

- Make themselves fully aware of the Anti-bullying policy
- Deal firmly with any incidents of bullying that occur in the classroom
- Liaise with the relevant Head of Year
- Reassure and support the student(s) involved and take the time to listen to them
- Advise students that they are required to pass details onto the relevant member of the pastoral team
- Report all concerns on CPOMS
- Inform an appropriate member of the pastoral team as soon as possible

Heads of Year are responsible for:

- Investigating and monitoring incidents of bullying
- Report all concerns on CPOMS
- Recording all incidents of bullying on CPOMS, Bromcom and Bullying/Racist Incident Log in detail and ensuring that the Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral) is informed
- Incidents of bullying should be recorded on CPOMS, Bromcom and Bullying/Racist Incident Log by Heads of Year
- Liaising with staff and with the parents
- Keeping detailed and accurate records of meetings
- Promoting the anti-bullying policy during assemblies

We expect our students to: As part of the school community, students have a responsibility to help combat bullying by supporting other students when they are vulnerable by doing the following:

- Work hard, be kind.
- Don't gang up against another student in a vulnerable position but try to help them feel less vulnerable.
- Don't join in with making fun of them, even if you don't feel able to challenge the bullying behaviour yourself. And don't turn a blind eye to bullying and victimisation.
- Care for each other and report incidents of anti-social and bullying behaviour.
- Support other students in the school.
- Think before saying unkind words.
- Never touch another student in an aggressive manner.
- Try not to leave other students out of classroom and social activities.

Social Media: Most websites and apps have rules against bullying and harassment and can help if it's happening to you or someone you know. We recommend that families use the report function available on most websites and apps and adhere to the age restrictions that websites and apps impose.

If you've seen or experienced bullying on social media, it's important to:

- report what's happened on the site or app
- block the people bullying you
- take screenshots of nasty messages, but don't reply to them
- tell someone you trust, like your parent or carer

The Responsibilities of Parents/Carers:

When something happens that affects your child, you are naturally anxious to have the matter dealt with as quickly as possible. However, it is important that any action taken is well thought out. It is worth remembering that dealing with bullying successfully needs to be in a partnership – the school, the parents/carers and students all have a role to play.

During your discussion with your child about the bullying, you will have obtained their consent that you are going to talk to someone at school. Please be aware there might be a different version of the same incident and therefore it is important for everyone to be clear about the facts of the incident, before deciding what appropriate action to take. Those dealing with it need time to speak to those involved and take the agreed action, time should then be allowed for the situation to change and improve.

If the bullying or assault, threats or intimidating behaviour occur outside school hours, parents or carers should call the police.

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

- Watching for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children, which might be evidence of bullying
- Advising their children to report any bullying to staff and explain the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other students.
- Advising their children not to retaliate violently to any forms of bullying.
- 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.

Parents/carers should report instances of bullying if:

- Their child is a victim.
- They are aware that any other student is the victim of bullying.
- Their child is involved in bullying, this includes witnessing such incidents.

All information will be treated with the utmost discretion and handled sensitively.