Anti-Bullying Policy

1.   Background

We believe in this statement from the 2009 Steer report:

> '*Poor behaviour in schools cannot be tolerated. To do so is to harm the interests of pupils, staff and the perpetrators of the bad behaviour. Children have a right to attend school in safety and to learn without disruption from others'.*

Lindsay, G., Dockrell, J., and Mackie, C. (2008) pointed out the vulnerability to bullying and impaired social relationships in children with specific speech and language difficulties. Bullying is unacceptable in our school and will not be tolerated and we will maintain particular vigilance for such pupils.

Young people who attend Churchill may have encountered bullying in both the community and their personal lives.   We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

At Churchill School we recognise that our students are a vulnerable group in society and therefore particularly susceptible to bullying. The nature of their disability means that pupils and young adults with language and communication difficulties or an ASD may not have sufficient understanding or awareness that some behaviours directed towards others may be undesirable or construed as bullying. Similarly, if these pupils and young adults are the recipients of such behaviours they may be unable to express or communicate their concerns about behaviours or to tell adults. This means that all staff at Churchill have a duty to not only be aware of such behaviours and of any pupil involved, but also to respond appropriately to instances of bullying behaviours.

Every allegation of bullying will be taken seriously. All staff, pupils and parents should be aware of the negative effect that bullying can have on individuals and the school in general, and should work towards ensuring that pupils can work in an environment without fear. **Bullying is unacceptable in this school and will not be tolerated.**

2.   Aims and Objectives

The aim of the anti-bullying policy is to ensure that pupils learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied; and to promote consistency of approach and create an environment in which all types of bullying are considered unacceptable. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Objectives

1. To create an environment in which bullying is considered unacceptable behaviour and where the whole community is willing to take positive action should it occur.
2. To encourage all pupils to seek help and support when needed.
3. To raise awareness of the problem and to encourage vigilance in all members of the community to detect bullying behaviour.
4. To provide opportunities for the consideration of issues relating to bullying throughout the whole curriculum, and thereby addressing the problem through education.
5. To provide help and guidance for both victims and bullies.

3.   Our approach to bullying

Our approach to bullying is set within the context of our behaviour policy and our approach to developing social skills. Our support programmes for the children with the most challenging

behaviour involve the families as well as specialist professionals. Staff are trained in managing and improving children's behaviour.

Our programmes and support are aimed at helping pupils know how to: manage and improve their own behaviour; support others to improve their behaviour; develop the emotional resilience to deal positively with their difficulties. We will aim for zero exclusion, but will not tolerate behaviour that puts others in the school at risk

We aim to develop pupils' social, emotional and behaviour skills which will be achieved through:

- *a structured Social skills programme across all years in PSHE and SULP (Social Use of Language Programme)*
- *class 'Meeting Time'*
- *our integrated curriculum approaches*
- *Community and Enterprise opportunities*

We recognise that promoting positive behaviour is the responsibility of the school community as a whole. For our policy to be implemented comprehensively, we acknowledge that there are specific roles and responsibilities for stakeholders

A Clear Code of Conduct, displayed around the school

The Code of Conduct is based on our core values. These core values are underpinned by three basic core rights:

- *The right to learn*
- *The right to be respected*
- *The right to be safe*

The Code of Conduct enables pupils to understand and remember how to conduct themselves around the school and in the classroom. It is expressed in the positive, with examples of what to do rather than what not to do:

P = Positively participate in all tasks

E = Encourage everyone with kindness and fairness

R = Respect each other and the environment at all times

F = Follow instructions immediately

O = On task always

R = Ready to learn with resilience and responsibility

M = Make the most of yourself, be trustworthy and honest

---

4. The Nature of Bullying

For the purposes of this policy; we will use the following definition:

> *"Persistent, offensive, abusive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, abuse of power or unfair sanctions which makes the recipient feel upset, threatened, humiliated or vulnerable, which undermines their self-confidence or which may cause them to suffer stress".*

> *www.kidscape.org.uk*

Bullying can be:

- Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)

- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence

- Racist: racial taunts, graffiti, gestures

- Sexual: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments

- Homophobic: because of, or focussing on, the issue of sexuality

- Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing

- Cyber: All areas of internet, such as email; mobile threats by text messaging and calls, social networking; misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video facilities,

Bullying is usually distinguished from friendly teasing or conflict situations. The school differentiates between these two by;

Typical Peer Conflict

- Equal power between students
- Students involved may be friends
- Negative actions don't follow a pattern
- Conflict not premeditated and no real intention to cause harm
- Followed by sincere remorse
- Interest in repairing relationship
- Both students play active role
- There is an intention to resolve a situation

Bullying on the other hand involves:

- Imbalance of power between students
- No real friendship between students
- Negative actions are repeated
- Actions are purposeful and possibly premeditated
- Bully shifts blame, no sincere remorse
- No interest in repairing relationship
- Incident is one-sided
- Target is alone without peer support
- Intention is to gain power, control or possessions
.

5. Cyber bullying

Young people are particularly adept at using new technology, which can seem a closed world to adults. Due to the nature of the students that attend Churchill we consider them vulnerable to the potential harm of cyber bullying.

New media (such as mobile phones, internet sites and chat rooms)

Technology can be exploited by pupils in order to bully or embarrass fellow pupils or members of staff. The use of defamatory or intimidating messages / images inside or outside of school will not be tolerated and confiscation, disciplinary sanctions / restorative justice procedures will be applied to perpetrators as appropriate

The Kidscape website provides useful guidance for young people and carers about how to use technology safely and what to do if they are on the receiving end of cyber bullying. www.kidscape.org.uk

6. Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child displays:

- Increased anxiety (displayed through increasingly obsessive behaviours, hand movements, repetitive questioning and statements, or short temper)
- Withdrawal
- Aggression
- Seeming over-sensitive or over-reacting to minor occurrences (being 'on edge')
- Seeking revenge
- Repeatedly exposing him- or herself to the same kind of bullying situation. Although the pupil may know it is a negative interaction, they may still consider this better than no interaction at all. It becomes a scenario they are familiar with and which follows a predictable sequence.

7.   Reasons for Bullying

There are many reasons why students with language and communication difficulties and ASD may display behaviour that appears similar to bullying, such as poor understanding of interactions and a reaction to previous social experiences.

- It might be learned behaviour that they have witnessed or used previously to gain a desired response.
- They may lack the skills to maintain an interaction appropriately, and have difficulty 'reading' another person's responses, so they don't realise when the other pupil is no longer enjoying the interaction.
- They may seek out interactions in a way that does not respect boundaries.
- They may be seeking approval by joining in with someone else's bullying.
- They may be mimicking incidents or behaviour that they have witnessed or been a part of.
- Their behaviour might be an attempt to retaliate, without any understanding of the consequences of their own behaviour.
- Displaying aggressive behaviour might be a strategy to avoid being bullied themselves.
- They might be feeling frustrated at being left out and want to force other students to be their friends.

Attention

Some students with ASDs may seek attention. For them, to use a behaviour directed against another child is a way of achieving this attention. Adult intervention could potentially reinforce the bullying behaviour. In these circumstances, the strategy should be to break this cycle to eliminate the reinforcement of the behaviour. This could involve reinforcement of other behaviours, or providing the child with a reinforcement schedule over break time to prevent attention-seeking behaviour from occurring in the first place. Adults deliberately divert the child's attention away from one behaviour to a new activity;

Time out can be given from positive reinforcement: e.g. giving the child time away from the classroom or playground. It is important that the child is helped to develop understanding that the reason for being given time out is his or her behaviour.

Escape

Some pupils with ASDs emit behaviours in order to escape from certain situations. For example a child might kick another child in the hope that they will be taken away from the playground. It is important that time out from positive reinforcement is not the tactic used for pupils emitting escape-motivated behaviours.

In these circumstances, the strategy should be to break this cycle to eliminate the reinforcement of the behaviour. This could involve:

- Pairing positive reinforcement with playground activity so that the child learns to enjoy playtimes;

- allowing pupils time away from the playground contingent upon an interval of time of appropriate behaviour;

- Token economies: allowing pupils to earn tokens for appropriate behaviour in the playground which they can exchange for a reinforcer either during break time or at the end of break time

Examples of Misunderstandings Versus Bullying;

Some of the examples of the misconceptions that teachers should explore when explaining bullying:

Bullying	Misunderstanding
Someone thinks it's fun to upset someone else	Someone says something that they didn't know would be upsetting and say sorry.
They say things again and again and laugh when the person is sad or upset.	They are upset when the other person is distressed
They carry on when asked to stop.	They stop if you ask them to.
They take other people's things in order to upset.	They take or borrow something without asking but give it back when you ask.
They kick, push, punch, or hurt on purpose.	They accidentally bump into people or push past and then say sorry.
They mock things people say or laugh at mistakes.	They disagree but respect others' opinion

8. Responsibilities for preventing bullying

The Headteacher

The Headteacher of the School:

- ensures that all staff have an opportunity of discussing strategies and reviewing them
- determines the strategies and procedures
- discusses development of the strategies with the Senior Leadership Group
- ensures appropriate training is available
- ensures that the procedures are brought to the attention of all staff, parents and pupils
- reports to the governing body

Teachers are:

- responsible for ensuring that the school's positive strategies are put into practice
- expected to know the school's procedure and deal with any incidents that are reported
- expected to put into practice methods for encouraging pupils to tell someone that they are being bullied
- responsible for liaising with the Headteacher over all incidents involving pupils
- involved in an agreed strategy to achieve a solution
- part of the anti-bullying programme in the PSHE and SULP programmes

All Staff:

- know where to locate the policy and procedures
- deal with incidents according to the policy
- never let any incidence of bullying pass by unreported, whether on-site or during an off-site activity

Anti-Bullying Education in the Curriculum

The school will raise the awareness of the anti-social nature of bullying through PSHE programmes, use of Meeting Time and in the programmes of study as appropriate.

9. Methods

Staff have a duty to be vigilant and alert to these behaviours. For example, the child who is the target may show fear or anxiety when he/she sees the child who targets him/her. This information must be shared amongst all members of the team, and also shared with other members of staff as soon as possible, particularly with those on duty during playtimes and lunchtime. Incidents of bullying with or without intent are recorded in incident books which are checked regularly by senior management. As the DFE anti-bullying guidance notes, pupils with special educational needs and disabilities may not be able to articulate their experiences.

We require all staff, volunteers and students to provide a positive model of behaviour by treating pupils, parents and one another with respect, friendliness, care and courtesy. We familiarise new staff and volunteers with our behaviour policy and its guidelines for behaviour. We expect all members of our school community to keep to the guidelines, requiring these to be applied consistently.

We work in partnership with parents. Parents are regularly informed about their child's behaviour, progress and attitudes. We work with parents to address recurring inappropriate behaviour, using our observation records to help us understand causes and to jointly decide how to respond.

10. Strategies for preventing and reducing Bullying

At Churchill we work actively on preventing bullying and ensuring that we are a safe and positive place for all of our students. A named person in the school has responsibility for supporting personal, social and emotional development including issues concerning behaviour and bullying.

Our strategies include:

- Planned transition times between different activities, lessons, etc.
- School rules about bullying are very specific so there can be no misconceptions and students are aware of the consequences
- Students are taught specifically what behaviours and actions constitute being a good friend
- Identifying risk times and places e.g.: break times.
- Choosing groups and teams in lessons to prevent students being left out or bullied
- Examining group dynamics
- Providing positive role models and celebrating positive behaviour
- Tackling cyber bullying – following DFE guidelines

- Creating structure at break times (designated areas for activities, use of equipment and structured games)
- Allowing students to use dedicated quiet areas during break time
- Promoting tolerance, understanding, respecting and accommodating people's differences.
- Extended PSHE/social skills curriculum   e.g. students learn about their own strengths and areas where they need support, writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying, reading stories about bullying, making up role-plays, having discussions about bullying and why it matters, discussing scenarios 'What if…',
- Explicit teaching of acceptable and unacceptable ways of expressing feeling, how their behaviour can affect others, calming down as an alternative to expressing their anger and frustration inappropriately.
- Recognising students' achievements in the area of social interaction and reinforcing them through the use of praise and rewards
- If appropriate signing a behaviour contract
- Because of their difficulties with 'reading' social situations, students with an ASD need to be taught how to distinguish between bullying and accidents or misunderstandings e.g. using Social Stories.
- The SULP curriculum provides the framework for an anti-bullying week and for sessions where themes are addressed each and every week.
- There is a mobile phone ban in school and students are required to sign a safe use of computers agreement when they start school.

11. Procedures

It is also important to help the child or young adult with ASD who is the target of bullying behaviour, particularly as he or she may have difficulty communicating about their experiences. The child or young adult should be able to communicate in his or her preferred mode. Social skills training may help him or her to become more assertive, to show less anxiety, and say "No".

1. All students are encouraged to adopt the school policy of 'telling'. They are encouraged to report all bullying incidents to staff.
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by staff.
3. If it is a misunderstanding, an explanation and solution will be given to the student/s.
4. In serious cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.
5. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted
6. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly.
7. All strategies will be put in place to support the bully (bullies) change their behaviour.
8. Parents have the right to make a formal complaint if they feel that the school has not dealt with any incidents sufficiently.

12. Outcomes

1. After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

2. Consequences are to be fair, consistent and appropriate to students' understanding. In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered.

3. Accept a period of reflection where the incident is considered and a means of reparation is decided upon. If possible, the students will be reconciled and a positive relationship encouraged.

4. The person/s displaying bullying behaviour will be asked to apologise. They should accept the undesirability of their behaviour and undertake that there should be no repetition of such behaviour. They should acknowledge that they are personally responsible for their choice of future behaviour

5. They will be helped to understand that, should such repetition occur, it will result in far more serious punishment leading ultimately to permanent exclusion.

6. Staff will work with the parents/carers and the child to find solutions to the problem, with associated target setting, agreements with parents and counselling.

13. Summary:

We believe that pupils flourish best when their personal, social and emotional needs are met. We aim to teach pupils to behave in socially acceptable ways and to understand the needs and rights of others so that all have opportunities to develop as successful, confident and caring individuals.

14. Review

This policy will be reviewed in line with the school's policy review programme.

Author	Date	Frequency of Review
Georgina Ellis	Spring Term 2019	Three Yearly
Adopted by the Governing Body Date: Signed	**Reviewed** Date: Signed	**Reviewed** Date: Signed