

# Policy for Counter Bullying

## Plain Title

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## 1. Monitoring & Review

The Policy Author will undertake a formal review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later one year from the date of approval shown above, or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

Signed:



Samantha Campbell

Principal

November 2022

## 2. Background

The school leadership team expect that every allegation of bullying will be taken seriously. Students with ASC have difficulties with perspective taking and misreading social cues, which means that they can misinterpret the intentions and actions of others. Any allegation from a student who perceives they are being bullied should be taken seriously even if this appears to be a misperception. We take time to ensure that all staff, students and parents/Carers are aware of the effects of bullying on individuals and the school community as a whole. We all have a role in creating a safe and positive learning environment

## 3. Scope

This policy applies to all students and all forms of bullying

## 4. Aims of the Policy

Cambian Spring Hill School aims to create an environment where pupils can grow and flourish without fear. Each pupil has the right to be safe in and out of school and to be protected when they are feeling vulnerable. We aim:

- To improve the Quality of Life of students.
- Ensure that children learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment, without fear of being bullied.
- To reinforce that the school takes bullying seriously and that it will not be tolerated.
- To take measures to prevent all forms of bullying in the school and during off-site activities.
- To support everyone in actions to identify and protect those who might be bullied.

- To clarify for all students and staff that bullying is wholly and always unacceptable.
- To demonstrate to all that the safety and happiness of students is essential.
- To promote an environment where children feel they can trust and tell adults if they are being bullied or know about any bullying.
- To promote positive attitudes in students that foster resolution skills.
- To ensure that all staff are aware of their duty of care over those in their charge and highlight the need to be alert to the signs of bullying.
- To ensure that all staff are aware of procedures through regular updating of practice.

The school also recognises that it must take note of any bullying perpetrated outside school as this can have an impact on an individual student inside the school, and the signs/symptoms will be the same. The school will do what is reasonably practicable to support how such incidents of bullying are addressed.

## 5. What is Bullying?

The UK's Anti-Bullying Alliance and its members have a shared definition of bullying based on research from across the world over the last 30 years.

ABA defines bullying as:

**“The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online”**

There are four key elements to this definition:

- Hurtful.
- Repetition.
- Power imbalance.

Intentional.

Bullying behaviour can be:

- Physical – pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching etc.
- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, belittling.
- Emotional – isolating others, tormenting, hiding books, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation and coercion.
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, homophobic abuse, exposure to inappropriate films etc.
- Online /cyber – posting on social media, sharing photos, sending nasty text messages, social exclusion.
- Indirect - Can include the exploitation of individuals.

Behaviours that do not constitute bullying include:

- Mutual arguments and disagreements (where there is no power imbalance).
- Not liking someone or a single act of social rejection.
- One-off acts of meanness or spite.
- Isolated incidents of aggression, intimidation or violence.

Policies relating to this one;

- Behaviour
- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Curriculum
- PHSE
- Online Safety

## 6. Signs and Symptoms include;

A student may indicate by signs or behaviour that they are being bullied. All staff should be aware of these possible signs and they should investigate if a student;

- is unwilling to go to school
- becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens self- harm
- cries himself to sleep at night or has nightmares/bedwetting
- regularly feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- arrives with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions damaged or go missing
- has unexplained cuts and bruises
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what is wrong
- changes their usual routine

All staff should be aware of these possibilities and act promptly on any suspicions of bullying using the procedures outlined by the school.

## 7. Procedures

### 1. Listen carefully and calmly, and document what the student tells you

Ensure a private place to talk. Do not dismiss their concerns or make them feel they are at fault. Listen to their account fully first and then ask them (and maybe others) questions to

get more detail. Avoid the terms 'bully' or 'victim' and instead talk about the behaviour of everyone involved, including bystanders.

**Clarify if there are immediate safety risks and let the student know how you will address these. If there are, normal safeguarding procedures should be followed.**

**2. Collect additional information**

Ask for any evidence from the student. Speak with all students involved, including bystanders and other staff. Be alert to your legal responsibilities regarding evidence if the incident may constitute a crime. Keep records on behaviour watch. Ensure you have information that answers who, what, where, when, how, why. Students views on why bullying is happening can suggest ways the school can respond.

**3. Discuss with the multi-disciplinary team and share a plan of action with the students**

Where appropriate, discuss the concern with the relevant adults to ensure an holistic response in developing a plan of action. This could include parents/carers, the Head of Education, Clinical team, Student Support and Wellbeing officer and/or the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Once you are confident you have a comprehensive picture of the situation, discuss a plan of action with the student/s. Refer to the school's policies in terms of expectations and implications. Where appropriate, the plan may include a restorative practice session. Where this forms part of the action plan, the meeting should be recorded using appendix 1.

Invite suggestions from students as appropriate.

Inform all students involved, of your intention to inform their parents/carers.

**4. Inform the students what you intend to do**

Provide as much information as you can without violating the privacy of other students or parents/carers. Also, inform them about when you are planning to follow up with them after implementing the plan. Explain that you will look at immediate and short-term responses as well as other long-term preventative measures or efforts to promote a positive school environment. Seek support from the clinical team to support students with significant communication difficulties.

**5. Provide suggestions about what to do if the bullying occurs again**

Have information on hand to share with students or set up a meeting for them to talk about strategies with an appropriate staff member. Ensure they are aware of who they can talk to, signpost to the Student Support and Wellbeing Officer for additional support when needed.

**6. Set a date for follow up review/s**

Bullying can require a sustained effort to prevent, particularly if situations are long-standing. Reviews are critical to check in with students and to ensure the school's efforts have not caused other problems or created a problem elsewhere.

**7. Record the incident in the school's student data management system, Behaviour Watch**

**8. Notify appropriate personnel**

Refer the matter to the responsible person: Head of Education, Assistant Head/Lead DSL and/or Registered Manager (for residential students), Clinical Team where appropriate.

#### **9. Contact the parent/guardian about the incident and your course of action**

If parents/guardians have not yet been involved in the process of planning the course of action (Step 3), advise them of the incident and the resulting course of action. Including reference to the school's policy and guidelines.

Refer parents to the responsible officer for further consultation if required.

#### **10. Follow up with students over the next several weeks and months**

It is essential to be alert to ongoing bullying, particularly the possibility that the bullying can 'reappear' in another form sometime later.

### **8. Restorative Practice**

If left unchecked, without intervention, bullying issues in schools or residential settings can result in interpersonal conflict, which leaves two or more people feeling angry, hurt, resentful, anxious or even afraid.

When in conflict, people need:

- A chance to tell their side of the story – their experience.
- Express their thoughts and feelings.
- Understand better how the situation happened.
- Understand how it can be avoided another time.
- To feel understood by the others involved.
- An acknowledgement of the harm caused, if not an apology.
- To find a way to move on and feel better about themselves.

Cambian Spring Hill School will seek to use restorative approaches in liaison with the in-house therapy team to establish the most appropriate methods to employ with the students involved in the process.

**The potential advantages of restorative approaches in the school setting include:**

- A safer, more caring environment A more effective teaching and learning environment.
- A greater commitment by everyone for taking the time to listen to one another.
- A reduction in bullying and other interpersonal conflicts.
- Greater awareness of the importance of connectedness to young people. The need to belong and feel valued by peers and significant adults.
- Greater emphasis on responses to inappropriate behaviour that seek to reconnect, and not further disconnect young people.
- Reductions in fixed-term and permanent exclusions.
- Greater confidence in the staff team to deal with challenging situations.

- An increased belief in the ability of young people to take responsibility for their choices, and more people giving them opportunities to do so.

## 9. Further Reading and Resources

[https://www.restorativeschoolstoolkit.org/sites/default/files/Restorative%20chat%20-%205%20themes%20explanation\\_0.pdf](https://www.restorativeschoolstoolkit.org/sites/default/files/Restorative%20chat%20-%205%20themes%20explanation_0.pdf)

[https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/sites/default/files/field/attachment/Restorative\\_Practice%20-%20FINAL\\_0.pdf](https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/sites/default/files/field/attachment/Restorative_Practice%20-%20FINAL_0.pdf)

<http://www.restorativethinking.co.uk/schools/resources/>

<https://www.socialthinking.com/>

## Restorative Practice Meeting Template