



**This Policy seeks to give expression to the following extracts from the Chesterhouse Mission Statement:**

*“... Create and maintain a challenging, progressive, holistic and dynamic environment, which equips young South Africans to be good at life.*

*Nurture and empower young people to become purposeful, compassionate and inspiring individuals who challenge mediocrity with a desire to serve their fellow man.*

**Statement of Intent**

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a TELLING school. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to let someone know so that the bullying will stop.

**What Is Bullying?**

Bullying is the use of aggressive behaviour, name-calling or intimidation with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be short term or continuous over long periods of time.

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 focusing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal      name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber      All areas of internet ,such as email & internet chat room misuse  
Mobile threats by text messaging & calls  
Misuse of associated technology , i.e. camera &video facilities

To a child bullying is:

- Deliberately hurtful
- Repeated
- Difficult to counteract by the victim
- Different from random acts
- Characterised by an ‘imbalance of power’ eg. A more powerful person or persons intentionally hurting a less powerful person or persons.

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Bullying can take place in the classroom, playground, toilets, on the journey to and from school, on residential trips and cyberspace. It can take place during out of school group activities and between families.

### **Bullies and Victims**

A child who 'bullies' may not be a 'bad' person, but the behaviours that they exhibit are not acceptable. This understanding is fundamental to this policy. Bullies are often lacking in interpersonal skills, where it involves a group, the ring leaders will need good social skills and intelligence. They are often charismatic but manipulative young people.

A bully is usually a person who:

- Is uncaring and lacking in empathy
- Often aggressive, easily resorting to violence
- Is poor in communication and co-operative skills
- Is insecure, possibly due to problems at home or at school
- Feel a need to gain control or power
- Will lie and be deceitful
- Need to impress and gain attention
- Has a poor sense of responsibility

A victim is usually a person who:

- Is timid and non-assertive
- Is introverted and shy
- Has low self-esteem
- Physically weak
- Is different in some obvious respect (Colour, wears glasses, is overweight etc)
- Has difficulty dealing with conflict at any level

This may be an indication that most children are capable of bullying behaviour at sometime in their lives.

A child may display 'bullying' behaviour if:

- They feel that they don't fit in
- They need to be seen as tough
- They think that it is okay to hurt others
- Repeat behaviour shown to them out of school, (TV/DVD, computer games are also influential in some children's behaviours as well as older siblings, children and other people who live in our homes.)
- Not liking themselves or jealous of another person
- Low self-esteem
- Are being bullied themselves

### **Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?**

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Bullying has the potential to damage the mental health of a victim. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

### **Objectives of this Policy**

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors and teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

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- Bullying will not be tolerated.

### Signs and Symptoms

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:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go on the school / public bus
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- 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
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or 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 and jumpy when a cyber message is received
- lack of eye contact
- becoming short tempered
- change in attitude to people at home.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated

### Procedures

As the parent of a child whom you suspect is being bullied-

1. Report bullying incidents to the class teacher
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by staff and the Headmaster notified.
3. In serious cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem
4. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted
5. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
6. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour.

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### Do Not:

1. Attempt to sort the problem out yourself by speaking to the child whom you think may be the bully or by speaking to their parents.
2. Encourage your child to be 'a bully' back.

Both of these will only make the problem much harder to solve.

### **Outcomes**

1. All known/reported incidences of bullying will be investigated by the class teacher or by a senior member of staff.
2. Parents of the victim may also be questioned about the incident or about their general concerns.
3. The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place. Eg a parent being informed about their child's behaviour.
4. In some cases, outside agencies may be requested to support the school or family in dealing with bullying eg police, counsellor etc.
5. In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered pending a disciplinary hearing.
6. If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.
7. After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

### **Prevention**

At Chesterhouse we use a variety of methods for helping children to prevent bullying through class assemblies, Circle Time, or during life skills lessons.

The ethos and working philosophy of Chesterhouse means that all staff actively encourage children to have respect for each other and for other people's property.

Good and kind/polite behaviour is regularly acknowledged and rewarded.

Children are involved in the prevention of bullying as and when appropriate, these may include:

- writing a set of school or class rules
- signing a behaviour contract
- writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying
- reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly
- making up role-plays about what to do through scenarios of bullying
- having discussions about bullying and why it matters that bullies are dealt with quickly

If a child feels that they are being bullied then there are several procedures that they are encouraged to follow: (not hierarchical)

- Tell a friend
- Tell a teacher or adult whom you feel you can trust
- Write your concern and post it in a 'bully-line' box
- Tell a parent or adult at home whom you feel you can trust
- Discuss it as part of your Circle Time
- Ring Childline and follow the advice given

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**Conclusion**

**It is hereby resolved that this Bullying Policy No. 005 be adopted by the Board of Governors at Chesterhouse School, and that it be binding upon the school until reviewed and, if necessary, changed by Board resolution.**

BOARD CHAIR

DATE

HEAD

DATE

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