

Cherwell College Oxford

Pre-University Tutorial College

Anti-bullying Policy

Anti-Bullying Guidelines

Statement of Intent

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our students so that they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Cherwell College Oxford. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to tell a member of staff and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person.

Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

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 & internet chat room misuse
- Mobile - threats by text messaging & calls
- Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. ***No one deserves to be a victim of bullying.***

Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Students who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

Policy Objectives

- All teaching and non-teaching staff, students, agents and parents should understand what bullying is.
- All teaching and non-teaching staff should understand the college policy on bullying and follow up when bullying is reported.
- All students and parents should understand the College policy on bullying and what they should do if bullying arises.
- The College takes bullying very seriously. Students and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- ***Bullying will not be tolerated.***

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Signs and Symptoms

A student, member of staff or tutor may indicate by signs or by behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a student or colleague:

- ❖ is frightened of walking to or from the College
- ❖ is unwilling to go to the College (College phobia)
- ❖ 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
- ❖ begins to do poorly in the College 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 a bully!*)
- ❖ has money continually "lost"
- ❖ has unexplained cuts or bruises
- ❖ comes home hungry (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 & jumpy when a cyber-message is received

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

Preventing bullying

Understanding and discussion

- ✓ Staff will receive training in identifying bullying and understanding their responsibilities in developing safety.
- ✓ The delivery of PSHE lessons is an important part of preventative strategy
- ✓ It is desirable that the students will be involved in a response to bullying.
 - They will have a voice through the Student Representative.
- ✓ Students will be educated about bullying through a variety of means: assemblies, seminars, projects (PSE, Drama, English), etc.
- ✓ Parents will be provided with information and advice on bullying.

Policies and procedures

- Ensure regular review and update of existing policies to include bullying where appropriate
- Publicise rules and sanctions effectively
- In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by staff
- In serious cases parents should be informed and asked to come to a meeting to discuss the problem
- If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted
- The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated, and the bullying stopped quickly
- An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour

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Outcomes

1. The bully (bullies) may be asked to apologise genuinely. Other consequences may take place.
2. In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered
3. If possible, the students or colleagues will be reconciled
4. After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

Prevention

As and when appropriate, preventative measures may include:

- ❖ writing a set of College rules
- ❖ signing a behaviour contract
- ❖ having discussions about bullying and why it matters

The College will:

- ✓ Use training opportunities to help staff develop their practice creatively and support students
- ✓ Use online discussion groups to help parents understand the issues of bullying and how they can help to prevent or change the approach of the bully and address the effect on the bullied student.

Making reporting easier

Students should contact any member of staff if they are concerned about a bullying issue. Ensure staff can recognise non-verbal signs and indications of bullying with regular safeguarding training. Publicise and promote the message that asking for help is the right thing to do and shows strength and good judgement.

Publicise to all members of the school community the ways in which bullying can be reported.

Provide information for all students including reassurances about 'whistleblowing' and the appropriate way of informing staff or parents about incidents they have witnessed.

Responding to bullying

Most cases of bullying will be dealt with through the college's existing Policy, and this must remain the framework whilst incidents of bullying are investigated.

- **it is possible that a member of staff may be a victim and responses apply to them too**

Support for the person being bullied

- ✓ Offer emotional support; reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling someone
- ✓ Advise the person not to retaliate or reply. Instead, keep the evidence and take it to a member of staff (in the case of staff they should take it to their line manager)
- ✓ Advise the person to consider what information they have in the public domain
- ✓ Unless the victim sees it as a punishment, they may be advised to change their mobile phone number

Investigation

The safeguarding of the child is paramount, and staff should investigate in accordance with the College Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

- ✓ Members of staff should contact the Welfare Team for the purposes of investigation
- ✓ All cases (except for Child Protection issues) will be referred to and logged by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

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- ✓ Interviews will be held in accordance with College Policy
- ✓ Staff and students should be advised to preserve evidence and a record of abuse.
- ✓ If images are involved, determine whether they might be illegal or raise child protection concerns. If so, contact the DSL, who may involve the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer), the local police in cases of actual/suspected illegal content, or CEOP <http://ceop.police.uk>
- ✓ Any allegations against staff should be handled as other allegations following guidance in **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024**

Working with the bully and applying sanctions

Sanctions will be applied by the Principal or Vice-Principal as appropriate.

The aim of the sanctions will be:

- to help the person harmed to feel safe again and be assured that the bullying will stop
- to hold the perpetrator to account, getting them to recognise the harm caused and deter them from repeating the behaviour
- to demonstrate to the college community that bullying is unacceptable and that the college has effective ways of dealing with it, so deterring others from behaving similarly
- In applying sanctions, consideration must be given to type and impact of bullying and the possibility that it was unintentional or was in retaliation
- The outcome must include helping the bully to recognise the consequence of their actions and providing support to enable the attitude and behaviour of the bully to change

Legal duties and powers

- The school has a duty to protect all its members and provide a safe, healthy environment
- If they consider that a mobile phone may contain evidence of bullying or a crime or the potential of a crime they may investigate the specific contents relating to that act; please refer to the Search Policy for further guidance.
- Some bullying activities could be criminal offences under a range of different laws including Protection from Harassment Act 1997.

HELP ORGANISATIONS:

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) 0808 800 5793

Children's Legal Centre 0845 345 4345

KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline (Mon-Fri, 10-4) 0845 1 205 204

Parentline Plus 0808 800 2222

Youth Access 020 8772 9900

Latest review: September 2025

Next Review: September 2026