



Anti-Bullying Policy

2025

Introduction

1. This policy, which incorporates a set of procedures, makes clear CMSS's commitment to be known amongst the pupils and the community as an Anti-Bullying School.
2. To this end, we recognise that bullying exists within our society, and that its consequences can sometimes be traumatic for the individuals and families concerned.

Aims

3. To raise awareness of bullying and create a school ethos which encourages children to disclose and discuss incidences of bullying behaviour.
4. To bring about conditions in which bullying is less likely to happen in the future.
5. To ensure bullying is prevented in so far as reasonably practical.
6. To clarify the reporting processes.
7. To prevent, de-escalate and/or stop any continuation of harmful behaviour.
8. To react to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way.
9. To safeguard the pupil who has experienced bullying and to trigger sources of support for the pupil.
10. To provide support for the perpetrator whilst developing strategies to enable perpetrators to be accountable for their behaviour.
11. To support the mission, vision and values of CMSS.

Who is responsible for this policy?

12. The Board of Trustees and the Headteacher have overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework. The Board of Trustees has delegated day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy to the Headteacher of CMSS.
13. The Headteacher at CMSS has a specific responsibility to ensure the fair application of this policy and all members of staff are responsible for supporting colleagues and ensuring its success.

Key responsibilities

14. Young people have a right to expect that they will be listened to, have their concerns taken seriously and that appropriate steps will be taken to put right any unpleasant situations or cases of bullying.

15. CMSS has a responsibility to ensure that:

- bullying incidents can be reported confidentially (including bullying that may have occurred outside school, e.g. cyberbullying);
- all involved in the incident are listened to empathetically by professionals, parent/carers and peers;
- victims of bullying are encouraged to report what has happened;
- victims are reassured that it is not their fault;
- professionals work in collaboration with parent/carers when appropriate.

16. CMSS will fulfil its legal duty of care to ensure its pupils do not come to harm. This includes the reporting of all bullying incidents which have been identified as such, using the policy definition. This reporting is made available to the Board of Trustees as and when required.

17. Under the Children Act 1989, a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, CMSS staff will report their concerns to children's social care.

18. Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986. Where school staff feel that an offence may have been committed they will seek assistance from the police.

Definition of bullying

19. The Government defines bullying as "behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally" (DfE, 2014).

20. Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, culture, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

21. Many believe bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially

isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

22. Bullying can take many forms which include:

- Emotional (being unfriendly, threatening looks/gestures, tormenting such as hiding belongings);
- Physical (pushing, hitting, shoving or any form of physical violence);
- Verbal (name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours);
- Sexual and sexist (unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments or those which are sexist);
- Homophobic, biphobic or transphobic (behaviour or language which makes a person feel unwelcome or marginalised because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, whether actual or perceived, or because of their association with people who are, or perceived to be, gay, bisexual or transgender (e.g. children of same-sex couples);
- Cyber (all forms of abuse involving the internet, social websites, chat rooms, mobile phones, email, text messages, photographs etc)
- Exclusion/ostracising (deliberately ignoring and refusing to allow someone to join in);
- Interference with possessions (hiding, stealing and destroying belongings).

23. These definitions are important as there is a need to make a distinction between things that may cause a young person distress during their time in school, and bullying. A friendship that has broken down for example, and has led to insults being exchanged, though distressing, would not be considered to be bullying as it was neither deliberate nor repeated. There are occasions in school when a young person is quite unaware of the hurt that they have caused to a fellow pupil, as the 'victim' had kept their feelings to themselves.

24. The definitions outlined above must be sensitively and thoughtfully applied; a hasty classification helps neither the 'victim' nor the 'perpetrator'.

Signs of bullying

25. Bullying can cause serious psychological damage and even suicide. Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour.

26. A pupil who is being bullied may:

- become frightened of coming to school, attending specific lessons or entering specific areas of CMSS;
- change their usual routine;
- become more withdrawn or anxious than previously;
- threaten to run away or actually run away;
- threaten suicide;
- begin to perform poorly at school;

- frequently have missing or damaged possessions;
- repeatedly ask for extra money or never have money;
- have unexplained injuries;
- become aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable;
- begin to bully others;
- stop eating or attending meals;
- be afraid to use the internet or a mobile phone;
- become nervous when a cyber-message is received;
- choose the company of adults over fellow pupils;
- be frequently absent from school or regularly arrive late to class;
- be reluctant to discuss reasons for any of the above

Vulnerable pupils

27. Some pupils are particularly vulnerable to bullying and may be severely affected by it, such as those with special educational needs or disabilities. Others may be particularly vulnerable because they are going through a personal or family crisis, or suffering from a health problem. Children in care that are frequently on the move may be vulnerable because they are always the newcomer. Those with caring responsibilities may be vulnerable because they are socially isolated. These vulnerable young people may also be at risk of turning to social media for consolation or to get their own back by cyberbullying. Therefore, counselling and education on esafety can help.

28. There will also be a range of other local or individual factors that result in some children being more vulnerable to bullying and its impact than others.

29. The impact of bullying can be severe because of the nature and extent of the bullying or because it is combined with other factors such as those mentioned above that also affect the social, mental and emotional health of the pupil.

Preventing bullying

30. This policy is to be used as a key vehicle for communicating and celebrating the anti-bullying stance of CMSS with pupils, parents and the wider community. CMSS incorporates the Anti-Bullying Policy into CMSS curriculum, whole school assemblies, and all school staff training as well as taking on board other opportunities to raise awareness e.g. Anti-Bullying Week and targeted group work. The policy is shared with all staff, pupils and parents, at their respective points of contact with CMSS.

31. CMSS takes a zero-tolerance stance on all forms of bullying and discriminatory language.

32. CMSS is responsible for promoting a climate of openness, trust, and support and for ensuring that all the young people in school are aware both of their rights and

their responsibilities with respect to bullying. This will take place primarily through the following structures:

- the induction programme;
- Citizenship/PSHE lessons;
- displays around school;
- whole school assemblies;
- pastoral programmes;
- e-safety training to combat cyber-bullying;
- multi-agency working including drawing on the expertise of anti-bullying organisations or specialised expertise in dealing with certain types of bullying;
- ICT Acceptable Use Policy.

33. One of the most effective ways of preventing bullying is through the curriculum by creating effective learning environments in which:

- the contribution of all pupils is valued;
- all pupils can feel secure and are able to contribute appropriately;
- stereotypical views and prejudiced language are challenged, and pupils learn to appreciate and view positively differences in others whether arising from race, culture, gender, sexuality, ability, disability or different family situations (e.g. children who are looked after or those with caring responsibilities);
- pupils learn to take responsibility for their actions and behaviours both in school and in the wider community and understand how their actions affect others;
- all forms of bullying and harassment are challenged;
- pupils are supported to develop their social and emotional skills

Dealing with incidents of bullying

34. CMSS has clear systems in place to deal with bullying which are clear to parents, pupils and staff, so that when incidents do occur, they are dealt with quickly (See Appendix 1)

35. A Bullying Record enables CMSS to spot trends and patterns of behaviour. CMSS will record all incidents of racist, homophobic or sexual harassment bullying.

36. Disciplinary measures will be applied fairly, consistently, and reasonably, taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable pupils.

37. Fixed-term exclusions will be considered for more severe and persistent cases of bullying. CMSS will make a decision whether it is necessary to involve any other agencies to ensure the long-term emotional wellbeing of the young people involved.

Addressing the needs of pupils who are bullied

38. The nature and level of support will depend on the individual circumstances and the level of need. These can include a quiet word from a teacher that knows the pupil well, asking the pastoral team to provide support, providing formal counselling, engaging with parents, referring to Local Authority children's services, completing a Common Assessment Framework or referring to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

39. In some circumstances, the consequences of bullying may lead to a child or young person experiencing pronounced social, emotional or mental health difficulties. CMSS will ensure they make appropriate provision for a child's short term needs, including setting out what actions will be taken when bullying has had a serious impact on a child's ability to learn. If the bullying leads to persistent, long-lasting difficulties that cause the child or young person to have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of those of the same age, then CMSS will consider whether the child will benefit from being assessed for special educational needs (SEN). The SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years considers that developing a graduated response to the varying levels of SEN among children and young people is the best way to offer support, and this can include the needs of bullied children.

Separate on-site provision

40. CMSS will do all it can to ensure bullied children continue to attend school. Support may include using separate on-site provision that provides respite for bullied pupils, whilst maintaining their educational progression. This support will be provided hand-in-hand with measures to tackle the bullying so that bullied children feel safe at school, and on their way to and from school.

41. Removing bullied children from school, even for a short time, disrupts their education and can make it difficult for them to reintegrate. It also fails to address the causes of the problem and can send the wrong message that victims of bullying are unwelcome. CMSS will respond sensitively where an absence arises as a result of bullying but, in most cases, it may not be necessary or helpful to remove a bullied child from school

Alternative provision

42. In extreme cases, where the effects of bullying are so severe that it is not possible to reintegrate a child back into school, then other arrangements will be

made for the pupil to continue their education. In the first instance this may involve the transferring the child to another school.

Bullying outside school premises

43. Staff have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside CMSS premises “to such an extent as is reasonable” (Behaviour and discipline in schools, DfE, 2016). This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off CMSS premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.

44. Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed.

45. In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying, the member of staff can only discipline the pupil on school premises or elsewhere when the pupil is under the lawful control of the staff member.

Parental involvement

46. CMSS endeavours to have open and supportive communication with parents in relation to all bullying incidents. CMSS ensures that parents know what measures are being taken to prevent bullying, as well as how incidents are responded to.

47. Parents who are concerned that their child may be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact CMSS immediately.

48. Parents have a responsibility to support CMSS’s Anti-Bullying Policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of CMSS.

49. Department for Education advice for parent and carers on cyberbullying is attached to this policy.

Staff training

50. CMSS will ensure that the staff, especially those in positions of responsibility, have received sufficient high-quality training to ensure that they are able to both identify cases of bullying, and then provide appropriate support for all parties.

51. Staff will be trained to understand the needs of their pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND).

Monitoring, evaluation and review

52. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout CMSS.

53. The Headteacher will monitor the operation and effectiveness of arrangements referred to in this policy in CMSS.

Appendix 1: Dealing with bullying incidents procedure

Any member of school staff who witnesses a young person being emotionally distressed by the behaviour of another pupil, should address the incident immediately.

This is because the response by the member of staff will have been both immediate and personal. The primary responsibility, however, for the emotional welfare of the pupils in school is the young person's Form Tutor.

It is to this person that any potential incidents of bullying should be referred, as they have the all-round knowledge of the young person.

The Form Tutor is then responsible for investigating the incident and taking appropriate steps to resolve the problem.

Where it is established that the incident can be resolved by the intervention of the Form Tutor, and that, following the definitions within, the incident **is not a case of bullying**, the matter can be dealt with by the Form Tutor alone.

If the Form Tutor suspects that this **may in fact be a case of bullying**, then they should refer the matter to the pupil's Headteacher, who will then assume responsibility for the case.

The investigation will ensure that all parties have the opportunity to speak openly. If the Headteacher believes that bullying has in fact taken place, the following will happen:

- the Headteacher will record the incident in the Bullying Record;
- the Headteacher will inform the pastoral support team, who will oversee procedure;
- the parents/carers of the victim will be informed;
- the parents/carers of the perpetrator will be informed.

The use of the Bullying Record is a key part of the process as it enables CMSS to spot trends and patterns of behaviour. CMSS will record all incidents of racist, homophobic or sexual harassment bullying.

Those dealing with young people should be mindful of best practice when comes to cases of bullying which are, in brief:

- avoiding the labelling of both parties in terms of 'bully' and 'victim' - it is the behaviour we criticise, not the person (the use of the term 'victim' throughout the rest of this document is unavoidable);
- allow the victim to put to the perpetrator how they have been made to feel, if appropriate;
- allow the perpetrator the opportunity to put right any hurt they have caused;
- not to immediately resort to punishments or sanctions, depending on the degree to which the bullying has been premeditated, how long it has been going on and how many people are involved - these decisions are at the discretion of the team responsible for pastoral and pupil wellbeing;
- the focus is on:

- the removal of the feeling of helplessness and fear that the victim is experiencing;
- the restoration of pride, dignity, and belonging.

Disciplinary measures will be applied fairly, consistently, and reasonably taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable pupils.

Fixed-term exclusions will be considered for more severe and persistent cases of bullying. CMSS will make a decision whether it is necessary to involve any other agencies to ensure the long-term emotional well-being of the young people involved.

Resources:

Anti Bullying Alliance Website and Reporting Guidance

<https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information>