

Policy	Counter-Bullying Policy		
Reviewer	George Lumley and Caroline Finch		
Reviewed	March 2020	Next review	March 2021
Changes	<i>New policy</i>		
Relevant CYPES policies	Behaviour Counter-bullying policy Safeguarding		

VCP Policy – Counter-Bullying Policy

Introduction:

All members of VCP staff have a duty of care to protect their pupils and staff members from physical, social and emotional harm. All reports of bullying from pupils, parents and adults in school must be taken seriously and managed appropriately in a timely manner. Any form of bullying must be acted upon accordingly. Effective counter-bullying environments are those who engage staff, pupils and parents together in creating a bully free environment and a respectful learning environment. VCP will promote positive relationships, developing a culture in which individuals are listened to and their concerns taken seriously.

Scope:

This document describes the school's approach to dealing with both a bullying situation and developing a whole school perspective on promoting a counter-bullying culture and effective practices.

This document should read in conjunction with the relevant policies listed above.

Aims:

This policy aims to:

- Increase staff and parents understanding and awareness of the main issues around bullying
- Guide staff in dealing with bullying situations appropriately
- Understand how to deal with reporting and recording of bullying accusations
- Ensure all parties involved in the bullying event are supported appropriately.

Definition of bullying:

VCP defines bullying as:

“Bullying is a subjective experience and could take many forms. To be classed as a bullying act the perpetrator needs to have a social and pre-meditated awareness that the act is malicious and will cause physical and/or emotional harm.”

- Bullying may include behaviour that is:
- Emotionally and/or physically harmful, carried out by an individual or a group
- Deliberate and wilful with a premeditated intent to harm
- Occurs more than once
- An imbalance of power, leaving the person being bullied feeling threatened.

Children and young people or adults can instigate bullying and each can be bullied, in any combination. Research shows that two thirds of children who bully others do so because they themselves are being bullied. Bullying generally tends to take the form of emotionally or physically harmful behaviour. It can include any of the following: name calling, taunting, threats, mocking, making offensive comments, kicking, hitting, pushing, taking and/or damaging belongings, gossiping, excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and untrue rumours. These activities can take place face to face, via third parties, or by other means such as social media. The nature of bullying is changing and evolving as technology develops.

There are two forms of bullying:

Direct

Direct bullying is classed as the process of carrying out an act of bullying as described above. A person can be accused of direct bullying if they proactively engage in acts that involve harm of another person emotionally, socially and/or physically.

Indirect

Indirect bullying is by means of incitement and other forms of the encouraging and supporting of others to harm or bully another person. This includes facilitating any acts of aggression or harm, or even being bystanders to acts of bullying without taking action.

Types

Different types of bullying include:

- Physical
- Verbal
- Emotional/psychological
- Racist
- Homophobic
- Electronic/cyber
- Encouraging (Indirect only)
- Sexual

Creating a culture of Counter-Bullying

It is the responsibility of every member of the school community, regardless of role, status or age, to facilitate and actively promote a culture of positive welfare and counter-bullying.

We are committed to cultivate a counter-bullying environment at VCP where we will show equal measures of support and challenge to those who bully others, and those who are bullied.

Mechanisms for developing a Counter-Bullying culture may include:

- Focusing on VCP School Core Values to create a safe and respectful learning environment for all
- Delivery of the PSHE curriculum with a particular focus on bullying
- Regular school and class assemblies, as well as the involvement of the School Council
- Participating in national awareness campaigns such as 'Anti-bullying week' in order to promote pupil awareness
- Raising parent awareness and understanding of counter-bullying Developing staff CPD through regular training opportunities and sharing of good practice
- Educating pupils on their Rights through the Rights Respecting School Award – see Appendix 2.
- Reporting to, and being held account to, by the Governing body and CYPES.

Reporting and recording

Not all acts of aggression can be classed as bullying therefore the school needs to investigate all incidences thoroughly to determine whether it can be recorded as 'bullying' or whether it needs to be recorded under another behaviour category. All staff must record and report any accusation of bullying according to the procedures outlined in Appendix 1 and the flow chart in Appendix 3. The guidance outlined in Appendix 4 should be used when investigating an allegation of bullying.

Working together as a school community is integral to combating bullying. Communication is an important part of this. If parents have a concern regarding bullying, they are encouraged to speak directly with their son's class teacher or another relevant member of staff.

All incidents of bullying, both alleged and confirmed, will be recorded and discussed with either the Deputy Headteacher or Headteacher and the next steps to be taken will be agreed and actioned accordingly. Parents will be informed if their son has been a victim of bullying, or has been found to have bullied. Due to the variety of bullying forms and types of bullying, the consequences for a child who bullies will vary depending on the context. In line with Government of Jersey advice, consequences should be in line with the School's behaviour policy, and be used to teach – it has been proven that consequences that involve learning or building empathy can help prevent future bullying.

Other considerations

It is important to note that research shows that the majority of bullying goes unreported in school. Staff should not underestimate the effects of bullying on the individual from emotional distress to poor concentration and disruptive behaviours. Warning signs, like an unwillingness to participate, social isolation and over-sensitivity to comments and praise, can all be possible indicators of bullying.

At VCP, we have a holistic approach to working with children. It is important to use the term 'children who bully' rather than 'bullies' as it allows us to look at the whole child rather than pre-judging their behaviours and motives.

We recognise that children who bully are often doing so as a 'social problem solving tool'. It is therefore of vital importance to change a child's need to bully. At VCP we are committed to working with all our pupils to support their individual needs – for both the child who has been bullied, and the child who has bullied.