Anti-Bullying Strategy

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Introduction

The Anti-bullying policy applies whether students are in school, on a school trip or otherwise representing the school and during any periods of directed home learning (as during the current Covid-19 pandemic).

At CIS, we aim to promote personal dignity and self-esteem, through providing a safe environment which welcomes diversity and encourages mutual respect, and to encourage students and students to be sensitive to the beliefs, values and practices of others. Children and young people learn best in a safe and calm environment in which education is the primary focus.

We recognise that bullying, whether emotional or physical, is a serious issue, which has the potential to occur in all schools, and that bullying undermines self-esteem and sense of security, and may affect a child's attendance and attainment. It can lead to serious psychological damage for the victim and a criminal record for the perpetrators. It is possible for any member of the school community to experience bullying. Our policy is to reject and to be seen to reject all forms of bullying. No-one deserves to suffer the pain and indignity that bullying can cause.

Definitions

Definition of bullying

In addition to Federal and State guidance CIS makes use of the DfE Guidance: Preventing and Tackling Bullying (UK) w h i c h defines bullying to be "behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally."

We add to this standard that "intentionally" will include "should have reasonably understood the likely impact of their actions".

Bullying can take many forms, including repeated occurrences of **physical, psychological, social or verbal abuse and cyber-bullying** (see next sectiopn). It can involve threats, physical attacks, name-calling, mocking, harassment and sexual bullying. Bullying may be motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It may be directed against those with a special educational need or disability, or a different appearance and/or against those who are suffering from a health problem. Children within an international setting may be more vulnerable if they are frequently changing school are often a newcomer.

Bullying may be motivated by *actual* differences between children or by *perceived* differences. Bullying can occur between students, between students and staff, or between staff. Bullying can involve an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. 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 its target. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online. Low-level disruption and the use of offensive language, if left unchallenged or dismissed as "banter" can have a significant impact on its target, including a reluctance to report other behaviour subsequently. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; judgements have to be made about each specific case. It should also be recognised that there exists a prevalent opinion that being a "snitch" is to be condemned rather than lauded for taking action to prevent bullying. We must take every opportunity to challenge and counter such opinion.

Cyber-bullying

Widespread access to technology, exacerbated by the period of COVID, provides an additional medium for bullying, which **can occur inside or outside school**. Cyber-bullying includes using mobile phones or iPads, etc, to send abusive messages, often through public forums such as social networking websites (eg Instagram, snapchat), or make defamatory statements about students or teachers. It includes cyber-stalking, "sexting", "trolling", "happy-slapping" (physical attacks shared online) and

unauthorised publication of private information or images. Cyber-bullying can happen at any time of the day, and has the potential to reach a wide audience. It can undermine the self-esteem of individual students and can undermine the professional status of staff. Some cyber-bullying is deliberate and intentional, but in other cases distress to the victim can be caused by something that is seen as a joke by the perpetrator.

In many countries Cyber-bullying can be a criminal offence. In addition to meeting the legislative requirements of Nigeria we must also be mindful that our children must be aware of the consequences of their actions in countries of future residence as well as the international/domestic implications of the production and/or dissemination of sexual images by young people.

In seeking to prevent bullying, the School will:

- take a proactive approach to preventing bullying and to mitigating its effects when it occurs;
- create an ethos of good behaviour and an atmosphere of inclusivity and equality where students treat one another and the school staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave and that our actions affect others;
- communicate clear expectations to students and parents about student behaviour, including what to do if students find themselves bystanders when bullying behaviour occurs, and how to report bullying which occurs inside or outside school;
- involve parents to ensure that they are clear that the School does not tolerate bullying and are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being bullied: in the Senior School, they should report any bullying to the Head of School, at present Mrs Milorin; in EYFS and Junior School, they should report any bullying to the Head of School, at present Mrs. King.
- implement disciplinary sanctions so that bullying is recognised as being unacceptable;
- ensure that staff and older students serve as role models of appropriate behaviour.
- develop among staff an appreciation that they should gather information about issues between students which might provoke conflict and that they should be observant for signs of bullying behaviour (including changes in a victim's personality) and be open to hearing any child's concerns in any context, but particularly during form time and PSHE lessons;
- ensure that staff duties take in to account the need to ensure appropriate supervision of areas where bullying might take place at break/lunchtimes;
- ensure that staff understand the need to arrive on time for lessons, as bullying often occurs when no member of staff is present;
- ensure that opportunities provided in lessons (including PSHE) and by assemblies and other events are used to enable the students to understand differences between people and the importance of avoiding prejudice-based language, including racism, as well as to develop the ability to protect themselves from unwanted behaviour through assertiveness training;
- ensure that staff take part in training which enables them to understand the needs of all students, and to listen out for inappropriate comments or spot untoward actions

- consult with groups of students directly and via questionnaires to gain a true understanding of what is going on.

In addition, in seeking to prevent cyber-bullying, the School will:

- enforce the Schools Acceptable Use Policies, including provisions designed to reduce the misuse of the laptops and to prevent cyber-bullying;

    ensure staff keep up to date with the technologies which the students are using;
- deliver PSHE lessons which, in the Senior and Junior Schools, include specific training regarding the safe use of ICT, particularly mobile phones, laptops and the internet, as well as age-appropriate information about grooming, internet sites containing violent or adult content and the dangers of sharing personal information and/or photographs;
- subscribe to the NOS in order to provide additional information and training to staff, students and parents
- use the School's filter/firewall system to prevent Junior and Senior students from accessing social media sites via the school's network
- alert parents (via the Head of School email) to sites which are causing problems for students;
- ban students from taking a still or moving image on the School site or on the School coaches without the specific, prior permission of a member of staff: this rule is conveyed to students regularly, including at an assembly at the start of the year;
- convene an annual whole school meeting Including Heads of School, Head of IT services, Head of academic ICT provision and DSL's to discuss how Internet safety is dealt with in School, including discussion of how to avoid cyber-bullying and to resist pressure to take part in the production and/or dissemination of sexual images;
- regularly evaluate and update our approach to take account of developments in technology, for instance updating 'acceptable use' policies for computers.

In seeking to deal with bullying or cyber-bullying if it occurs, the School will:

- develop clear systems for reporting bullying
- prevent/de-escalate/stop any continuation of harmful behavior, and use the Restorative Justice procedure where appropriate
- discuss with parents what has been happening;
- react to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way, taking in to account any special educational needs or disabilities of both the victim and perpetrator of the bullying, and implementing disciplinary sanctions which reflect the seriousness of an incident and convey a deterrent effect;
- take steps to help 'victims' feel safe and confident again, including by offering counselling services and the use of external agencies where appropriate;
- work with perpetrators where necessary and as appropriate, so that they are held to account for their actions and accept responsibility for the harm they have caused;
- consider whether the motivations behind bullying behaviour reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator;
- maintain School bullying logs in Junior/Senior and Sixth Form which ensures that patterns of behaviour and the effectiveness of interventions can be appropriately monitored.
- deal with issues of the production and/or dissemination of sexual images by young people

Sanctions which may be applied in the event of bullying

Disciplinary measures will be applied to students who bully, in order to show clearly to them and to other students that their behaviour is wrong and must not be repeated or copied. Disciplinary measures must be applied fairly, consistently, and reasonably, taking into account the needs of vulnerable students and of those with SEND. The motivations behind bullying behaviour will also be considered in order to assess whether it reveals any concern for the well-being or safety of the perpetrator (see *Support for Students who are bullied* below). For example, if an incident occurs because a student has retaliated after persistent bullying, the school will consider this as being different from an unprovoked attack.

Disciplinary penalties may include detention, or internal or external exclusion, including permanent exclusion in the most serious and/or persistent cases. In the case of cyber-bullying, they may also include the confiscation or regular monitoring of e devices whilst in school and withdrawal of access to school ICT facilities in accordance with the school's ICT Acceptable Use Policy.

Sanctions apply regardless of whether bullying incidents occurred within or outside school. However, a teacher can only discipline a student on school premises and/or when the student is under the supervision of the staff member (e.g. on a school trip).

Support for Students who are bullied

In all cases, the School recognises its responsibility to support children who are bullied and make appropriate provision for a child's needs, whether this is a quiet word from the teacher or formal counselling (for older students).

There is a range of local or individual factors that may result in some children being more vulnerable to the impact of bullying, for example, children with SEND, adopted or looked-after children, children with health problems or children with any other protected characteristics.

In some circumstances, the consequences of bullying may lead to a child or young person experiencing pronounced social, emotional or mental health difficulties. While bullied children will not be routinely considered as requiring SEND support, the School will consider whether they should be assessed if this has not already taken place as some bullied children will have SEND difficulties.

School will do all it can to ensure that bullied children continue to attend.

The following organisations may also provide advice and support:
- Bullying UK
- National Bullying Helpline nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk
- Kidscape Parent's Helpline: kidscape.org.uk
- Childline Helpline: 0800 1111
- Bully Busters Helpline: 0800 169 6928

Safeguarding

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'. Keeping Children Safe in Education makes it clear that such abuse should never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'.

Child on Child Abuse

Peer-on-peer abuse occurs when a young person is exploited, bullied and/or harmed by their peers who are the same or similar age and where everyone directly involved is under the age of 18.

Child on Child Abuse may involve one or more of the following:

- Domestic Abuse;
- Child Sexual Exploitation;
- Harmful Sexual Behaviour;

CIS recognises that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer- on-peer abuse and promotes a culture, described in the Safeguarding Policy and in this Anti-bullying strategy, which is designed to minimise the risk of such abuse. Allegations are investigated thoroughly and, where appropriate, the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or another member of the school staff will report any concern about peer-on-peer abuse to the external agencies as required by law and Lagos State Education guidance.

Criminal Law

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behavior or communications could be a criminal offence.
If school staff feel that an offence may have been committed this must be reported to the Principal who will adjudge, in consultation with legal advice, whether this must be reported to external authorities.

Searching and retention of Electronic Devices

The Head of School or Principal, or those delegated to do so, may search an electronic device such as a mobile phone, iPad or laptop is permitted if they reasonably suspect that it contains evidence of inappropriate behaviour towards another person **or** if they have a reasonable belief that the device contains evidence of actions which may be harmful to the child or disrupt teaching or break school rules. Prior consent is not required from the student or parent. Password, biometric data or any other security measure including encryption must be disabled by the child when requested to do so. Failure to do so will in itself be considered a serious breach of school rules. Devices owned by school and data stored on school systems or transmitted through school systems may be searched at anytime without consent.

Devices may be confiscated to aid an investigation. In such circumstances a parent will be informed by the Head of School. Evidence of safeguarding concerns or inappropriate behaviour may be copied from the device. If criminality is suspected the device and or data may be shared with external authorities.

A device must never be returned with inappropriate material left on it. IT services should be consulted for the most appropriate way for this to be deleted. This should not happen until all investigations and appeals are completed.

Material which may be illegal to be in possession of must be declared to the Principal as soon as possible. The device will be signed over to Principal who will make arrangements for its secure storage.

Staff who has viewed imagery which is of a disturbing nature are to be supported by counselling as appropriate.

Expectations upon staff

School staff will endeavour to make it easy for students to report bullying by ensuring that they are listened to and that incidents are acted on. Students are told that they can report bullying which may have occurred outside school, including cyber- bullying.

Staff are alert to words or actions which suggest that bullying is occurring, and must be vigilant in turning up for duty or lessons on time so that there is always adequate supervision in place to lessen the opportunities for unkind behaviour. All instances of bullying should be reported to Head of School.

In dealing with the perpetrator, members of staff should make it clear that their behaviour is unacceptable and also stress the serious consequences of any subsequent repetition.

School should make clear to the parents of the victim and of the perpetrator the actions being taken, why we are taking them and what the parents can do to help us and to reinforce our actions.

Every effort should be made to follow up each case promptly to ensure that the victim is given immediate support and to prevent any recurrence.

A student being subjected to cyber-bulling will usually still have the texts or emails in question and should be encouraged to provide a copy of them.

Youth-Produced Sexual Imagery (also known as Sexting)

Staff need to be particularly vigilant with regard to cyber-bullying (above), including 'Sexting'. Sexting is generally considered to be the 'sending or posting of sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs, via mobiles or over the Internet.' Creating and sharing sexual photos and videos of under-18s is illegal. In the following, 'Youth produced sexual imagery' is used to describe this practice because it implies young people sharing images that they, or another young person, have created of themselves and covers both still photos and moving videos.

When an incident involving youth-produced sexual imagery comes to the School's attention, the following will take place:

- The incident will be referred to the Designated Senior Lead (DSL) as soon as possible;
- The DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff;
- There may be subsequent interviews with the young people involved (if appropriate);
- Parents will be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is good reason to believe that involving parents would put the young person at risk of harm. DSLs may work with the young people involved to decide on the best approach for informing parents.

The School recognises that disclosures about youth-produced sexual imagery can happen in a variety of ways. The young person affected may inform a class teacher, the DSL or any member of the school staff. The young person may report through an existing reporting structure, or a friend or parent may inform someone in school.

All members of staff are made aware of how to recognise and refer any disclosures of safeguarding incidents. This is covered within staff induction, in on-going training and is a part of the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Any direct disclosure by a student in School will be taken very seriously. Staff will recognise that the student is likely to be embarrassed and worried about the consequences of such a disclosure.

The initial review meeting will consider the initial evidence and aim to establish:
- whether there is an immediate risk to a young person or young people;
- if it is necessary to view the imagery in order to safeguard the young person
– **in most cases, imagery will not be viewed; Imagery** will never be viewed if the act of viewing would cause significant distress or harm to the student.

- what further information is required to decide on the best response;
- whether the imagery has been shared widely and via what services and/or platforms, if this is known;
- whether or not immediate action should be taken to delete or remove images from devices or online services;
- any relevant facts about the young people involved which would influence risk assessment;

- if there is a need to contact another school, setting or individual;
- whether to contact parents or of the students involved - in most cases parents will be involved.

An immediate referral to police will be made by the Principal if at this initial stage one or more of the following features is apparent:

i.   The incident involves an adult;
ii.   There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example owing to special educational needs);
iii.   The imagery is sexual and any student in the imagery is under 13

If none of the above applies, then the School may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police although the School may choose to escalate the incident at any time if further information or concerns come to light.

If a young person has shared imagery consensually, such as when in a relationship, it may well be appropriate for the school to manage the incident directly.

When assessing the risks the DSL should consider the following:

- Why was the imagery shared? Was the young person coerced or put under pressure to produce the imagery?
- Who has shared the imagery? Where has the imagery been shared? Was it shared and received with the knowledge of the student in the imagery?
- Are there any adults involved in the sharing of imagery?
- What is the impact on the students involved?
- Do the students involved have additional vulnerabilities?
- Does the young person understand consent?
- Has the young person taken part in this kind of activity before?

A decision would only be made to view imagery if the DSL were satisfied that viewing:

- is the only way to make a decision about whether to involve other agencies (i.e. it is not possible to establish the facts from the young people involved);
- is necessary to report the image to a website, app or suitable reporting agency to have it taken down, or to support the young person or parent in making a report;
- is unavoidable because a student has presented an image directly to a staff member or the imagery has been found on a school device or network.

If it is necessary to view the imagery, then the DSL will:

- never copy, print or share the imagery
- discuss the decision with the Principal
- ensure viewing is only undertaken by the DSL or another member of the safeguarding team with delegated authority from the Principal
- ensure viewing takes place with another member of staff present in the room, ideally the Principal or a member of the Senior Leadership Team - **this staff member will not need to view the images;**
- ensure viewing takes place on school premises, ideally in the office of the Principal or Head of School
- ensure wherever possible that images are viewed by a staff member of the same sex as the young person in the imagery;
- keep a record of the viewing of the imagery in the school's safeguarding records, including who was present, why the image was viewed and any subsequent actions - this record will be signed and dated.

If youth-produced sexual imagery has been unavoidably viewed by a member of staff, either following a disclosure from a young person or as a result of a member of staff undertaking their daily role (such as IT staff monitoring school systems), then the DSL will ensure that the staff member is provided with appropriate support, as viewing youth-produced sexual imagery can be distressing for both young people and adults and appropriate emotional support may be required.

Sanctions

School will normally invoke its own disciplinary measures to discourage young people from sharing, creating or receiving images. For the avoidance of doubt, parents and students are advised that there may be differences in policies and procedures regarding this and other behavioural issues between different schools within CIS (because of the age and stage of the children)

In seeking to prevent Sexting, the School will

- educate children and young people about youth-produced sexual imagery in an age-appropriate way
- speak to parents of students (as appropriate for their year group) about the dangers of sexting and the law concerning youth-produced sexual imagery and in particular via the use/dissemination of NOS guidance
- Draw students' and parents' attention to sources of online support and advice such as childline, ceops and NSPCC.