



## Anti-Bullying Policy

At Churnet View Middle School, we are committed to creating a safe, respectful and inclusive environment where every pupil feels valued, supported and able to achieve their full potential. We believe that positive relationships are at the heart of a successful school community and that all pupils have the right to learn, develop and thrive without fear of bullying, harassment or discrimination.

Bullying can have a significant and lasting impact on a pupil's emotional wellbeing, mental health, relationships, attendance and educational outcomes. We are therefore committed to preventing bullying through education, early intervention, strong pastoral support and the promotion of a culture where kindness, empathy and mutual respect are actively encouraged.

We recognise that bullying can occur in any school community and may take place face-to-face, online or through a combination of both. We also recognise that bullying may form part of wider safeguarding concerns, including child-on-child abuse. All reports of bullying will be taken seriously, investigated thoroughly and responded to proportionately. Our approach reflects the values of Churnet View Middle School and is underpinned by restorative and relational practice. We seek not only to address incidents when they occur but also to help pupils understand the impact of their actions, repair harm where appropriate and learn positive ways of interacting with others.

The school adopts a clear zero-tolerance approach to bullying. Bullying will never be dismissed as banter, horseplay, part of growing up or simply a falling out between friends. Every pupil deserves to feel safe, respected and heard.

### Definition of Bullying

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group that is intentionally hurtful, repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power.

The imbalance of power may be physical, emotional, psychological, social, intellectual or technological. This imbalance often makes it difficult for the targeted pupil to defend themselves or stop the behaviour independently.

Bullying may occur:

- In person
- Online
- Inside school
- Outside school
- During travel to and from school
- Through social media, gaming platforms or messaging services

Bullying differs from occasional arguments, friendship difficulties or one-off incidents. While these situations may still require support and intervention, bullying typically involves repeated behaviour designed to cause harm, distress or humiliation. The school will always investigate concerns carefully, considering the context, frequency, impact and motivations behind behaviours.

## **Bullying and Safeguarding**

The school recognises that bullying can be a safeguarding issue. Bullying may significantly affect a pupil's emotional wellbeing, mental health, sense of safety, confidence, attendance and engagement with education. Serious, persistent or discriminatory bullying may require safeguarding intervention and collaboration with external agencies.

Bullying may also form part of child-on-child abuse and can include:

- Cyberbullying
- Prejudice-based bullying
- Racist incidents
- Faith-targeted abuse
- Discriminatory behaviour
- Sexual harassment
- Sexual bullying
- Misogynistic behaviour
- Misandrist behaviour
- Harmful sexual behaviour
- Homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying

Where bullying presents a safeguarding concern, staff will follow procedures outlined within the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and consult the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

## **Types of Bullying**

Bullying can take many different forms.

### **Emotional Bullying**

Emotional bullying seeks to undermine a pupil's confidence, self-esteem or sense of belonging. This may include:

- Deliberate exclusion
- Isolation
- Intimidation
- Humiliation
- Manipulation of friendships
- Threatening behaviour

### **Verbal Bullying**

Verbal bullying may include:

- Name-calling

- Insults
- Teasing
- Derogatory remarks
- Threats
- Rumour spreading

### **Physical Bullying**

Physical bullying includes:

- Hitting
- Kicking
- Pushing
- Spitting
- Physical intimidation
- Damage to personal belongings

### **Cyberbullying**

Cyberbullying is bullying through technology and electronic communication. Examples include:

- Abusive messages
- Social media harassment
- Sharing images without consent
- Online humiliation
- Deliberate exclusion from online groups
- Impersonation

The school recognises that emerging technologies and artificial intelligence (AI) create additional risks. Cyberbullying may involve:

- Deepfake images or videos
- AI-generated content designed to ridicule or humiliate
- Voice cloning
- AI-generated sexual content
- Manipulated images
- False information created to damage reputations

### **Prejudice-Based Bullying**

Prejudice-based bullying is motivated by negative attitudes towards characteristics or groups and may include:

- Racist Bullying
- Bullying relating to race, ethnicity, nationality, culture or skin colour.
- Faith-Based Bullying
- Bullying linked to religion, belief or cultural identity.
- Homophobic, Biphobic and Transphobic Bullying
- Bullying based on actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.

### **Ableist Bullying**

Bullying relating to disability, SEND or additional needs.

**Sexist Bullying**

Bullying linked to sex or gender.

**Misogynistic Bullying**

Behaviour driven by prejudice, hostility or harmful attitudes towards girls and women.

**Misandrist Bullying**

Behaviour driven by prejudice, hostility or harmful attitudes towards boys and men.

**Socio-Economic Bullying**

Bullying based on family circumstances, financial status, housing, clothing or perceived social standing.

**Pupils Potentially at Greater Risk**

Bullying can affect any pupil. However, some pupils may be more vulnerable because they are perceived as being different from their peers. Staff will remain alert to the needs of pupils who may face additional barriers or vulnerabilities, including:

- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils with medical needs
- Looked After and Previously Looked After Children
- Young carers
- Pupils with social workers
- Pupils experiencing mental health difficulties
- Pupils affected by domestic abuse
- Pupils from minority ethnic groups
- LGBTQ+ pupils
- Pupils questioning their gender
- Pupils with caring responsibilities
- Pupils who have experienced trauma or adversity

Staff will consider both the likelihood of bullying occurring and the potential impact it may have on these pupils.

**Prevention and the Promotion of Positive Relationships**

At Churnet View Middle School, we believe that creating a positive culture is the most effective way to prevent bullying. Our work does not begin when bullying occurs. We actively promote respect, inclusion and positive relationships through every aspect of school life. Pupils are encouraged to celebrate difference, recognise the value of diversity and understand the impact their actions can have on others.

The curriculum plays a key role in helping pupils develop the knowledge, understanding and interpersonal skills needed to build healthy relationships. Pupils are taught how to identify bullying behaviours, challenge prejudice safely and seek support when needed.

Opportunities to explore these themes are provided through:

- PSHE and RSHE lessons
- Assemblies
- Tutor activities
- SMSC development
- British Values education
- Online safety education
- Anti-bullying campaigns and awareness events
- Pupil leadership opportunities

Pupils are also taught about:

- Healthy relationships
- Equality and diversity
- Respectful communication
- Boundaries and consent
- Challenging stereotypes
- Online conduct
- Responsible technology use
- Risks associated with AI-generated content
- The importance of speaking out when concerns arise

Through these preventative measures, we aim to build a culture where bullying is far less likely to occur.

### **Reporting Concerns**

The school actively promotes a culture where pupils feel confident to report concerns. Pupils are encouraged to:

- Tell a member of staff
- Speak with a trusted adult
- Report concerns on behalf of a friend
- Use the school's reporting systems, including the Tell Me button

Parents and carers are encouraged to contact the school if they have any concerns regarding bullying. All staff have a responsibility to:

- Listen carefully
- Take concerns seriously
- Act promptly
- Record information appropriately
- Inform safeguarding staff where necessary

### **Responding to Bullying Concerns**

All reports of bullying will be treated seriously and investigated appropriately. Staff will respond calmly, fairly and sensitively, ensuring that all pupils involved are treated with

dignity and respect. Our priority is always to restore a sense of safety for those affected whilst helping pupils understand the impact of their behaviour.

When concerns are raised, staff will seek to establish:

- What has happened
- Who has been involved
- The frequency of behaviour
- The impact on those affected
- Any safeguarding concerns
- The support required

The following process will normally be followed:

### **Investigation**

- Speak separately with those involved.
- Gather statements where necessary.
- Consider witness accounts.
- Review any available evidence.
- Consult safeguarding staff where appropriate.

### **Recording**

All alleged, suspected and confirmed incidents of bullying will be recorded on MyConcern.

Records will include:

- Details of concerns raised
- Investigation undertaken
- Outcomes reached
- Actions taken
- Support provided
- Follow-up arrangements

Relevant behaviour incidents will also be recorded on Arbor.

### **Communication**

Parents and carers will be informed and involved as appropriate.

### **Follow-Up**

Staff will monitor the situation carefully to ensure bullying has ceased and that support remains effective.

### **Supporting Pupils Affected by Bullying**

The wellbeing of pupils remains central to our response. Pupils who experience bullying will be listened to, reassured and supported. They will never be made to feel responsible for the behaviour of others and will be encouraged to share their views regarding the support they need.

Support may include:

- Access to a trusted adult

- Pastoral support
- Mentoring
- Restorative meetings
- Counselling
- Emotional wellbeing support
- Safeguarding interventions
- Referral to external services

Support will be personalised according to individual need and reviewed regularly. The school will continue to check in with pupils following incidents to ensure they remain safe and supported.

### **Supporting Pupils Who Display Bullying Behaviour**

Whilst bullying behaviour is unacceptable, we recognise that pupils who engage in bullying may themselves require support.

Alongside appropriate sanctions, staff will work with pupils to help them understand the consequences of their actions and develop more positive ways of interacting with others. Support may include:

- Restorative approaches
- Reflection activities
- Behaviour support plans
- Mentoring
- Emotional wellbeing support
- Safeguarding interventions where appropriate

The aim is to reduce the likelihood of future incidents whilst promoting positive behavioural change.

### **Sanctions**

Sanctions will be proportionate, fair and appropriate to the circumstances.

Possible sanctions include:

- Verbal warnings
- Restorative conversations
- Loss of privileges
- Reflection time
- Internal inclusion
- Behaviour support interventions
- Parental meetings
- Suspension
- Permanent exclusion in exceptional circumstances

Sanctions will be applied alongside support and restorative practices where appropriate.

### **Cyberbullying**

The school takes all forms of cyberbullying seriously, whether they occur within or beyond the school day.

When responding to cyberbullying incidents, staff may:

- Support pupils to save evidence
- Provide online safety advice
- Support pupils in blocking users
- Liaise with parents and carers
- Contact platform providers
- Involve safeguarding staff
- Seek police advice where appropriate

Pupils will be taught that responsible online behaviour is an important aspect of citizenship and personal safety.

### **Attendance and Bullying**

The school recognises that bullying can negatively affect attendance and engagement with education. Where attendance concerns are linked to bullying, staff will consider both the educational and safeguarding implications. Appropriate support plans will be implemented to help pupils feel safe, supported and able to access education successfully.

### **Staff Training**

All staff receive safeguarding and child protection training that includes bullying awareness. Training may include:

- Child-on-child abuse
- Prejudice-based bullying
- Cyberbullying
- Online safety
- Misogyny and discriminatory behaviour
- AI-related safeguarding concerns
- Recording and reporting procedures
- Restorative and relational approaches

Staff updates will be provided regularly to ensure practices remain aligned with current guidance.

### **Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Board, or sooner if changes in legislation, statutory guidance or local circumstances necessitate revision.