

# Cross Keys Learning

## Anti Bullying Policy

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This policy will be reviewed at least annually and/or following any updates to national and local guidance and procedures.

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This policy will be reviewed **at least** annually. It will also be revised following any concerns and/or updates to national and local guidance or procedures.

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## 1. Introduction

Cross keys Learning Anti-Bullying policy is based on DfE guidance “Preventing and Tackling Bullying” July 2017, including supporting documents, and KCC exemplar Anti-Bullying Policy for Schools. It also considers the DfE statutory guidance ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024’.

We believe that no student deserves to suffer the pain and indignity that bullying can cause and recognise the negative impact bullying has on the educational experiences and wider development of students.

Cross keys Learning recognise that students are bullied for a variety of reasons – and for no reason. It is among the top concerns that parents / carers have about their children’s safety and well-being, it is also a top concern of children and young people themselves.

Bullying makes the lives of its victims a misery: it undermines their confidence and self-esteem and destroys their sense of security.

Staff recognise that relationships amongst our student group can be very complicated, and that many have been victims of physical, sexual, and / or emotionally bullying. Research indicates that frequently the bullied becomes the bully.

Inappropriate relationships have the potential to be damaging to the emotional, physical, and psychological health, and educational development of individuals. Bullying can be direct or indirect and can take many forms – exclusion from the group can be as devastating for a student with a sensitive temperament, as a physical assault can be against another.

Discrimination at any level is unacceptable; staff at Cross keys Learning will therefore challenge all forms of bullying including racial harassment and that related to sexual orientation.

Cross keys Learning have high staffing levels to ensure effective supervision of students; however, we recognise that it is impossible to prevent bullying by supervision alone. Emphasis is therefore also placed on creating an ethos in which bullying is unacceptable and openly discussed. Consistent support and encouragement ensure students feel confident that their concerns will be taken seriously and will be dealt with in a calm and fair manner.

We also want parents / carers to feel confident that their children are safe and cared for whilst at Cross keys Learning and incidents when they do arise are dealt with promptly and effectively.

In acknowledgement of our legal duty to prevent bullying, our policy will identify procedures designed to bring to the attention of staff, students, and parent / carers a clear system of effective response, monitoring and evaluation. Details of which will be well publicised throughout the school.

## 2. Aims and principles for the Anti - Bullying policy

The key principles that underpin this policy are:

- To ensure that all stakeholders understand the definition of bullying.
- To ensure that all members of staff are aware of the contents of the anti-bullying policy.
- To ensure that all parents / carers and prospective parents / carers are aware that the policy is available on our website – [www.crosskeyslearning.com](http://www.crosskeyslearning.com)
- To ensure that all students know what to do when bullying occurs.

This policy links with several other Cross keys Learning policies, practices and action plans including:

- Behaviour Management policy
- Complaints policy
- Safeguarding and child protection policies
- Confidentiality policy
- Equal Opportunities
- Online Safety and Acceptable Use Policies (AUPs)
- Curriculum Policies such as PSHCE and ICT
- Mobile phones and social media policies
- Searching, screening and confiscation policy

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

Under the Independent School Standards Regulations 2014 the Proprietor of an Independent School is required to ensure that an effective anti-bullying strategy is drawn up and implemented.

It is the responsibility of:

- The Headteacher to communicate this policy to the wider Cross keys Learning community, to ensure that disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently, and reasonably, and that a member of the senior leadership team has been identified to take overall responsibility – within Cross keys Learning the Headteacher maintains overall responsibility.
- The Directors to take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy.
- All Cross keys Learning staff to support, uphold and implement this policy accordingly.
- Parents/carers to support their children and work in partnership with the school.
- Students to abide by the policy.

#### **Staff have a responsibility to:**

- Maintain an ethos in which students accept / recognise that bullying is unacceptable.
- Help students acquire the knowledge, skills and values that contribute to the development of non-bullying behaviour.

#### **Students are encouraged to:**

- Tell a member of staff what is happening.
- Allow the bullied student to join in with activities, in order that no student is deliberately left out.
- Tell the perpetrator to stop what they are doing and to show that they disapprove of their actions, e.g., by not smiling or laughing when someone is being bullied.

#### **4. Definition of bullying**

- Bullying is “behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally”. (DfE “Preventing and Tackling Bullying”, July 2017)
- Bullying can include name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments; kicking; hitting; taking belongings; producing offensive graffiti; gossiping; excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.
- This includes the same unacceptable behaviours expressed online, sometimes called online or cyberbullying. This can include sending offensive, upsetting and inappropriate messages by phone, text, instant messenger, through gaming, websites, social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading photos or videos.
- Bullying can be a form of child-on-child abuse and can be emotionally abusive; it can cause severe and adverse effects on children’s emotional development.

#### **5. Links to legislation**

There are several pieces of legislation which set out measures and actions for schools in response to bullying, as well as criminal and civil law. These may include (but are not limited to):

- The Education and Inspection Act 2006, 2011
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children Act 1989
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- The Computer Misuse Act 1990

#### **6. The Cross keys Learning Philosophy**

Cross keys Learning recognises that bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals; it can create a barrier to learning and have serious consequences for mental wellbeing. By effectively preventing and tackling bullying, we can help to create a safe, disciplined environment, where students are able to learn and fulfil their potential.

As a school we will:

- Monitor and review our anti-bullying policy and practice on a regular basis.
- Support staff to promote positive relationships, to help prevent bullying.
- Recognise that some members of our community may be more vulnerable to bullying and its impact than others; being aware of this will help us to develop effective strategies to prevent bullying from happening and provide appropriate support, if required.
- Intervene by identifying and tackling bullying behaviour appropriately and promptly.
- Ensure our students are aware that bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively; that everyone should feel safe to learn and abide by the anti-bullying policy.
- Require all members of the community to work with the school to uphold the anti-bullying policy.

- Report back to parents/carers regarding concerns on bullying, dealing promptly with complaints.
- Seek to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere.
- Utilise support from the Local Authority and other relevant organisations when appropriate.

## **7. Use of the Curriculum**

Cross keys Learning provide a broad, balanced, and flexible curriculum, which promotes spiritual, moral, cultural, emotional and physical development. Within this framework, staff raise awareness of the nature of bullying. Attention is drawn to the anti-bullying policy by challenging attitudes, to develop increased understanding of the effect of bullying behaviour, and to promote a clearer understanding of how students can constructively manage their relationships with others.

**Through the curriculum students will explore issues such as:**

- What is bullying?
- What causes people to bully each other?
- How does it feel to be bullied or to bully?
- What are the effects of bullying behaviour on bullied students, on students who bully others: on bystanders?
- What would our school / society be like if bullying behaviour was acceptable?
- Why should we try not to bully each other?
- What can we do to stop bullying?
- What moral dilemmas do we face when we are confronted with bullying behaviour?

## **8. Responding to bullying**

The following steps may be taken when dealing with incidents of bullying reported to the Cross keys Learning Headteacher:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached or witnessed the concern.
- Cross keys Learning staff will provide appropriate support for the person being bullied – making sure they are not at risk of immediate harm and will involve them in any decision making, as appropriate.
- The Headteacher/designated safeguarding lead will interview all parties involved.
- The designated safeguarding lead will be informed of all bullying issues where there are safeguarding concerns.
- Cross keys Learning will inform other staff members, and parents/ carers, where appropriate.
- Consequences and support for individuals will be implemented, in consultation with all parties concerned.
- If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved, such as: the police (if a criminal offence has been committed) or other local services including early help or children's social care (if a child is felt to be at risk of significant harm).
- Where the bullying takes place off site or outside of normal school hours (including cyberbullying), the school will ensure that the concern is fully investigated. Appropriate action will be taken, including providing support and implementing sanctions in school in accordance with Cross keys Learning Behaviour Support policy.

- A clear and precise account of the incident will be recorded by Cross keys Learning in accordance with existing procedures. This will include recording appropriate details regarding decisions and action taken.

## 9. Cyberbullying

When responding to cyberbullying concerns, Cross Keys Learning will:

- Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified.
- Provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.
- Encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation.
- Take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible. This may include:
  - looking at use of the school systems.
  - identifying and interviewing possible witnesses.
  - contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary.
- Work with the individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation. This may include:
  - Reporting to the service provider any material that needs removing if those involved are unable to be identified or if those involved refuse to or are unable to delete content.
  - confiscating and searching students' electronic devices, such as mobile phones, in accordance with the law and the school searching and confiscation policy. (**Note:** We will ensure we access the DfE 'Searching, screening and confiscation at school' and Childnet Cyberbullying guidance to ensure that the schools' powers are used proportionately and lawfully)
  - requesting the deletion of locally held content and content posted online if they contravene school behavioural policies.
- Ensure that consequences are applied to the person responsible for the cyberbullying; the school will take steps to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any additional help that they may need.
- Inform the police if a criminal offence has been committed.
- Provide information to staff and students regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online. This may include:
  - advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply.
  - providing advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists.
  - helping those involved to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain.

## 10. Homophobic Bullying

Homophobic bullying is that which is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay or bisexual people.

Homophobic bullying can be experienced by anyone, regardless of their sexual orientation.

In addition to following Anti-bullying procedures, we will also promote the following:

- Prevention is the first step in our strategy to remove homophobic bullying, therefore the use of PSHE lessons plays a crucial role in this aspect of our strategy.
- We will ensure that students are aware that homophobic language will not be tolerated in school.
- All incidents of homophobic language will be dealt with appropriately, ensuring that students are aware of the effects such language has on people.
- If a student makes persistent remarks their parents / carers will be contacted immediately. In the event of the problem continuing, the parents / carers will be invited into school to discuss the issue in more detail and to consider possible consequences.

## **11. Racist Bullying (Bullying around Race, Religion and Culture)**

The term Racist Bullying refers to a range of hurtful behaviours, both physical and psychological, that makes a person feel unwelcome, marginalised, excluded, powerless or worthless because of their colour, ethnicity, culture, faith, community, national origin or national status.

In addition to following our Anti-Bullying Procedures we will also ensure:

- Cross keys Learning works hard to ensure that prevention is the first step in our strategy to remove racist bullying. The use of PSHE lessons plays a crucial role in this aspect of our strategy, providing information for students to fully understand the consequences of such language and behaviour.
- That students are aware that racist bullying will not be tolerated in school, and the effects such language has on people.
- All incidents of racist bullying will be recorded and dealt with appropriately.
- If a student makes persistent parents / carers will be contacted immediately and if necessary, invited into school to discuss the incident.
- The school may deem it necessary to contact the police depending on the severity of the situation.

The school is duty bound to record all racist incidents.

## **12. Supporting students**

**Students who have been bullied will be supported by:**

- Being heard
- Reassuring the student and providing continuous support.
- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their teacher, the designated safeguarding lead, or a member of staff of their choice.
- Being advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how respond to concerns and build resilience as appropriate.
- Working towards restoring self-esteem and confidence.
- Providing ongoing support; this may include working and speaking with staff, offering formal counselling, engaging with parents and carers.
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this could include support through Early Help or Specialist Children's Services, or support through Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).



**Students who have perpetrated the bullying will be helped by:**

- Discussing what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change.
- Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child.
- Providing appropriate education and support regarding their behaviour or actions.
- If online, requesting that content be removed and reporting accounts/content to service provider.
- Sanctioning, in line with Cross keys Learning Behaviour Management policy; this may include official warnings, detentions, removal of privileges (including online access when encountering cyberbullying concerns), and fixed-term or permanent exclusions.
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this may include involvement from the Police or referrals to Early Help, Specialist Children's Services, or Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) as appropriate.

**13. Supporting Adults**

Cross Keys Learning will take measures to prevent and tackle bullying among students; however, it is equally important to recognise that bullying of staff and parents / carers, whether by students, parents / carers or other staff members, is unacceptable.

**Adults (staff and parents) who have been bullied or affected will be supported by:**

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the concern with the headteacher or designated safeguarding lead.
- Advising them to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to concerns and build resilience, as appropriate.
- Where the bullying takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including online), the school will still investigate the concern and ensure that appropriate action is taken in accordance with Cross keys Learning Behaviour Management policy.
- Reporting offensive or upsetting content and/or accounts to the service provider, where the bullying has occurred online.
- Reassuring and offering appropriate support.
- Working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance.

**Adults (staff and parents / carers) who have perpetrated the bullying will be helped by:**

- Discussing what happened with the headteacher to establish the concern.
- Establishing whether a legitimate grievance or concern has been raised and signposting to the school's official complaints procedures.
- If online, requesting that content be removed.
- Instigating disciplinary, civil, or legal action as appropriate or required.

**14. Preventing Bullying**

Cross keys Learning acknowledge that an efficient and effective organisation is the key factor in reducing bullying and potential conflict. Staff have a corporate responsibility for initiating and

participating in play/sporting activities, and for always ensuring the whereabouts of all students. This involves:

- Effective supervision always, with staff moving around the grounds, talking with students, and anticipating potential difficulties.
- Suspected problems being addressed quietly and promptly – details to be forwarded to the Head Teacher, or in their absence a senior member of staff.

## **Environment**

The Cross keys Learning community will:

- Create and support an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration, and care for others, which will be upheld by all.
- Recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the community, including adults and students (child on child abuse).
- Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as: religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality, or appearance related difference. Also, children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities.
- Challenge practice and language which does not uphold the values of tolerance, non-discrimination, and respect towards others.
- Be encouraged to use technology, especially mobile phones, and social media positively and responsibly.
- Work with staff, the wider community, and outside agencies to prevent and tackle concerns including all forms of prejudice-driven bullying.
- Actively create “safe spaces” for vulnerable students.
- Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos.

## **Policy and Support**

Cross keys Learning will:

- Provide a range of approaches for students, staff and parents/carers to access support and report concerns.
- Regularly update and evaluate our practice to consider the developments of technology and provide up-to-date advice and education to all members of the community regarding positive online behaviour.
- Take appropriate, proportionate, and reasonable action, in line with existing school policies, for any bullying brought to Cross Keys Learning attention, which involves or effects students, even when they are not on school premises; for example, when using school transport or online, etc.
- Implement appropriate disciplinary sanctions; the consequences of bullying will reflect the seriousness of the incident, so that others see that bullying is unacceptable.
- Use a variety of techniques to resolve the issues between those who bully, and those who have been bullied.

## **Involvement of students**

Cross keys Learning will:

- Involve students in policy writing and decision making at an appropriate level, to ensure that they understand Cross Keys Learning approach and are clear about the part they must play to prevent bullying.
- Regularly canvas student's views on the extent and nature of bullying.
- Ensure that all students know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying.
- Ensure that all students are aware of the range of consequences which may be applied against those engaging in bullying.
- Involve students in anti-bullying campaigns and in embedding messages in the wider school curriculum.
- Publicise the details of internal support, as well as external helplines and websites.
- Offer support to students who have been bullied and to those who are bullying to address the problems they have.

## **15. Involving Parents and carers**

We recognise that the success of the Cross Keys Learning Anti-Bullying Policy depends on the development of a whole school approach to positive and productive partnerships between parents/carers and students. This is based on a framework of honesty, openness, and trust.

Any reports of bullying received from parents / carers will be forwarded to the Operations Manager or in their absence, who will:

- Ask for details and record information.
- Follow-up with staff to ensure appropriate action has been taken and that the Cross Keys Learning anti-bullying policy has been implemented.
- Arrange a mutually convenient date to meet with parents / carer to explain actions and to find out if the bullying has stopped.

Cross Keys Learning recognise that it is more effective to involve parents / carers constructively at an early stage rather than as a last resort. The parents / carers of the alleged bully will be invited to a meeting to discuss behaviour using a problem-solving approach.

Cross Keys Learning will:

- Take steps to involve parents and carers in developing policies and procedures, to ensure they are aware that Cross keys Learning does not tolerate any form of bullying.
- Make sure that key information about bullying (including policies and named points of contact) is available to parents/carers in a variety of formats.
- Ensure all parents/carers know who to contact if they are worried about bullying and where to access independent advice.
- Work with all parents/carers and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying.

- Ensure that parents / carers work with the school to role model positive behaviour for students, both on and offline.
- Ensure all parents/carers know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively, to raise concerns in an appropriate manner.

#### **16. Monitoring and review - putting policy into practice**

- Cross keys Learning will ensure that we regularly monitor and evaluate mechanisms to ensure that the policy is being consistently applied.
- Any issues identified will be incorporated into Cross Keys Learning action planning.
- The Operational Manager will be informed of bullying concerns, and report to the Proprietor on a regular basis on incidents of bullying, including outcomes.

#### **17. Complaints about this policy**

If parents/guardians are dissatisfied with any aspect of the Cross keys Learning Anti-Bullying policy, they are encouraged to communicate this to the Cross Keys Learning Headteacher in the first instance.