

# Chapin School POLICY ON BULLYING, HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION

**Statement of Principle:** Chapin School seeks to be a community in which every individual is treated with sensitivity and respect. A basic responsibility of an educational institution is to provide a safe and secure environment in which students are free to learn and adults to work. To that end, the Board of Trustees of Chapin School has adopted the following policies and procedures:

1. **Bullying** — For purposes of disciplinary procedures, the term “bullying” can be interpreted in many ways. To help clarify for parents and students the types of behaviors that Chapin considers to be contrary to the school’s chosen virtues, we offer the following definition of bullying as a guideline:  
“A student is being bullied or victimized when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other students. Negative actions can be carried out by physical contact, by words, or in other ways, such as making faces and nasty gestures or by intentional exclusion from a group. In order to use the term bullying, there should also be an imbalance in strength. ... The student who is exposed to the negative actions has difficulty defending himself or herself.” (Olweus, 1996 in *Educational Research Service*, “Recognizing and Preventing Bullying.”)
2. **Harassment or Discrimination** — Chapin School will not tolerate harassment or discrimination in any form or by any member of the school community. For these purposes, harassment or discrimination is the improper or disparate treatment of an individual or group on the basis of race, religion, ethnic origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, or physical condition. Harassment or discrimination may take the form of acts of verbal, written, or physical abuse or more subtle, but equally damaging, forms, such as graffiti, epithets, gestures, displays of inappropriate material, and stereotyped remarks or “humor.”
3. **Sexual Harassment** — Sexual harassment is the use of sexuality to harass or mistreat and is best seen as an assertion of power. Sexual harassment may include:
  - physical touching, or any coerced sexual relations;
  - demeaning or repeated unwanted sexual propositions;
  - leering at or ogling a person’s body;
  - sexually explicit or suggestive remarks about a person’s physical attributes, clothing, or behavior;
  - sexually stereotyped or sexually charged insults, humor, or verbal abuse;
  - inappropriate personal questions;
  - the display of sexually suggestive objects or materials;
  - conditioning of employment opportunities or evaluations on submission to unwanted sexual advances; and
  - disparate treatment of an individual because of gender.

**Enforcement of Policy** - The Head of School will take action in all complaints of bullying, harassment or discrimination. Members of the community should be aware that depending on the circumstances and severity of the offense, the response may range from reprimand up to and including dismissal for a student or termination of employment for an adult.

**Complaint Procedures** - A member of the community who believes that he or she has experienced or witnessed any form of harassment should feel compelled to do something about it. Some suggestions may work best in one situation, others in another. Among the actions a person might take:

- Whenever possible, speak up at the time. Tell the individual that the behavior is unwelcome and must cease immediately;
- Write a letter to the individual;
- Talk to a friend of the individual, letting that person know how their friend’s behavior is affecting you;
- Write down what happened. Be as specific as possible, recording quotations, actions and the presence of witnesses;
- Report the harassment to a supervisor;
- Talk to someone you trust, such as a teacher or administrator.

All bullying, harassment and discrimination complaints will be promptly and thoroughly investigated. All investigations will be conducted in a manner designed to protect the confidentiality of all parties involved subject to the school’s obligation to conduct a full and fair investigation. Both the complainant and the accused will be informed of the results of any investigation. Any person who directs any form of retaliation toward someone making a complaint about harassment will be subject to disciplinary sanctions up to and including termination or dismissal.