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Anti-Bullying Policy

10a Anti-bullying strategy or equivalent

Policy reviewed by: Samuel Birch

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Reviewer's Signature: 

Head Teacher's Signature: 

Circulation: This policy is addressed to all members of staff and volunteers, is available to parents on request. It applies wherever staff or volunteers are working with pupils.

Please note: 'School' refers to Wetherby School; 'parents' refers to parents, guardians and carer



Wetherby School

Anti-Bullying Policy

As laid out in the DfE document 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (July 2017) the Government defines bullying as:

'Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case.'

This policy is written in conjunction with the DfE Document 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (July 2017): <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying> This policy works in conjunction with our Behaviour and Discipline Policy, our Relationships Education policy and our Safeguarding Children Policy. This policy applies to all children in the school, including those in the EYFS.

Policy Statement

At Wetherby School we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our boys so they can learn and play in a relaxed and secure environment. By providing this environment we believe that all pupils will be able to reach their individual potential. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in our school. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is a priority however we are aware that emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical. We take all incidents of bullying seriously. Bullying hurts. No-one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect and pupils who are bullying others need to learn different ways of behaving.

At Wetherby School, we acknowledge that bullying can happen from time to time, and it would be unrealistic to claim that it does not. When bullying does occur, everyone should be able to tell somebody about it and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively in accordance with our anti-bullying policy. Our Anti-Bullying Policy forms a fundamental part of our approach to providing excellent pastoral care to all pupils.

Key documents with which this policy is in accordance:

- The Children's Act 1989
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Education Act 2011
- Working Together to Safeguard Children July 2018
- DfE Preventing and Tackling Bullying July 2017
- Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2014

- Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023
- Independent Schools Inspectorate Handbook – The Regulatory Requirements

Aims and Objectives

The aim of this policy is to try and prevent and deal with any behaviour that is deemed as bullying. The implementation of this policy will create an ethos where bullying is regarded as unacceptable, whether this is in person or via the use of electronic media, so that a safe and secure environment is created where everyone can work to the best of their ability and learn. All members of the school have a responsibility to recognise bullying when it occurs and to take appropriate action in accordance with the school policy.

This will happen in the following ways:

- The school will have measures in place to prevent all forms of bullying and will have an effective anti-bullying strategy
- The school will meet the recommended requirements for all schools to have an anti-bullying policy in place
- The school will work closely with other professional agencies to ensure that children stay safe as stated in The Children Act 1989, The SEN and Disability Act 2001, The Education and Inspections Act 2006, The Children Act 2004, Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018) and Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023)
- All teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents will have an understanding of what bullying is
- All teaching and non-teaching staff will know what the school policy is on bullying and will consistently and swiftly follow it when bullying is reported
- All pupils and parents will know what the school policy is on bullying and what they can do if bullying occurs. This information can be found on the school website
- Allegations of bullying can be brought to the attention of staff either by the victim(s), their friend(s) or their parent(s)/guardian(s)
- The school will encourage good behaviour which will be part of the school's Behaviour and Discipline Policy. All children, parents and staff will be aware of this policy
- Pupils and parents will be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported
- Whole school initiatives (staff training, celebration assemblies, INSET etc) and pro-active teaching strategies (learning for life lessons and form time) will be used throughout the school to reduce the opportunities for bullying to occur
- A positive, caring ethos will be created within the school environment where everyone can work, play and express themselves, free from the fear of being bullied
- Under no circumstances will bullying be tolerated
- Our anti-bullying approach works in conjunction with other school policies, especially the Behaviour and Discipline Policy, Relationships Education Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy, Fundamental British Values Policy, Online Safety Policy, Pastoral Care Policy, Social Media Policy and ICT Usage Policy as well as our Learning for Life (PSHE) Policy

What is not bullying?

It is important to understand that bullying is not the odd occasion of falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional trick or joke is played on someone. It is bullying if it is done *several times on purpose* which may result in psychological damage. Children sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When occasional problems

of this kind arise, it is not classed as bullying. It is an important part of children's development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns, the odd name calling or childish prank. We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships. This is reinforced through learning for life lessons, form time, assemblies, stories, workshops, literature and general discussions.

What is bullying?

Bullying refers to deliberate, unprovoked actions by one or more child against another that are meant to cause harm and fear. There is no doubt that the actions are meant to hurt the targeted child and the bully makes it clear that this will happen again. This may be through physical (including sexual), verbal (including cyber technology and SMS messages), and emotional means (by excluding, tormenting or spreading malicious rumours). It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It can involve complicity that falls short of direct participation. Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and intimidatory. These different forms of bullying can cause psychological damage to children.

Bullying may involve actions or comments that are racist, homophobic, which focus on disabilities or other physical attributes (such as hair colour or body shape). It is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups for example on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender homophobia, special educational needs and disability, or because a child is adopted or is a carer. Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time. We always treat it very seriously. It conflicts sharply with the school's policy on equal opportunities, as well as with its social and moral principles.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures), ridicule, humiliation
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, throwing stones, biting, spitting, punching or any other forms of violence; taking or hiding someone's possessions
- Racial - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, making fun of culture and religion
- Sexual - sexual violence or sexual harassment such as, forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. Sexual violence and sexual harassment are not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up. Further details can be found in our Safeguarding Policy.
- Homophobic - because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality, including lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) pupils
- Pupils identifying as transgender or experiencing gender dysphoria (feeling that they belong to another gender or do not conform with the gender role prescribed to them) can also be targeted by bullies
- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, threats
- Cyber Bullying – setting up 'hate websites', sending offensive emails or text messages
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) - any unfavourable or negative comments, gestures or actions made to someone relating to their disability or special educational needs
- Related to appearance and health conditions
- Related to young carers or looked-after children or linked to home circumstances – providing care to someone in their family with an illness, disability, mental health or substance misuse problem.

There is no 'hierarchy' of bullying – all forms of bullying should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately.

The DfE definition includes:

- Hurting, harming or humiliating of another person by physical (including sexual and sexist means)
- Verbal bullying (including electronic media)
- Emotional bullying (by excluding someone, tormenting them or spreading malicious rumours about them)
- Manipulating other people to tease or torment someone
- Complicity that falls short of direct participation of bullying

Who can be bullied?

Bullying can take place between pupils, between pupils and staff, or between staff; by individuals or groups; face to face, indirectly or using a range of cyber-bullying methods.

Where does bullying happen?

It can happen anywhere – in the classroom, in the corridor, in the toilets, in the dining hall, in the playground, etc. Bullying may also happen on the way to and from school. In such cases, the Headmaster and teachers have the power to discipline children for misbehaving outside the school premises 'to such an extent that is reasonable'. This will be carried out in accordance with the school's policy.

At Wetherby School, we are concerned with our children's conduct and welfare outside as well as inside school and we will do what we can to address any bullying issues that occur off the school premises.

The following steps may be taken to deal with bullying:

- The Headmaster/ Deputy Head (Pastoral) will talk to the local Community Police Officer about a specific problem outside the school premise
- The Headmaster/ Deputy Head (Pastoral) will talk to the transport companies about bullying on school buses
- The Headmaster/ Deputy Head (Pastoral) will talk to the Head Teachers of other schools whose children may be involved in bullying off the school premises
- Discuss coping strategies with parents
- The Headmaster/ Deputy Head (Pastoral) and/or teachers will talk to the children about how to handle or avoid bullying outside the school premises

Cyber-bullying

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying which can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience. Please refer to our E-Safety Policy and ICT Usage Policy.

Cyber-bullying – Definition

The definition of cyberbullying on the www.stopbullying.gov website is, 'bullying that takes place over digital devices like cell phones, computers, and tablets. Cyberbullying can occur

through SMS, Text, and apps, or online in social media, forums, or gaming where people can view, participate in, or share content. Cyberbullying includes sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or mean content about someone else. It can include sharing personal or private information about someone else causing embarrassment or humiliation. Some cyberbullying crosses the line into unlawful or criminal behaviour.'

Cyber-bullying is:

- The sending or posting of harmful or cruel messages, texts, videos or images
- Using the internet, including, but not limited to, social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, email and blogs, gaming, wikis, text messages, twitter posts and instant messages to send cruel messages, texts, videos or images
- Tampering or interfering with electronic files or data
- Setting up or promoting inappropriate websites
- Inappropriate sharing of images from webcams or mobile phones

Cyber-bullying – preventative measures

Wetherby School:

- Expects all pupils and staff to adhere to its charter for the safe use of the internet. Certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and pupils' use is monitored by the Smoothwall web filtering system
- May impose sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse of the internet
- Adheres to the UK Safer Internet Centre <https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/teachers-and-school-staff> regarding E-teaching and the internet
- Offers guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and cyber-bullying as part of the E-safety module in Learning for Life lessons and in computing lessons, which covers blocking and removing contacts from "buddy" lists.
- Offers guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details safe
- Children are not allowed to bring in mobile phones or other electronic devices into school without permission from the Headmaster
- Provides workshops for children about cyber-bullying
- Provides annual training for staff and parents on e-safety

Please refer to Childnet International - <http://www.childnet.com/> and beat bullying websites <http://www.bullying.co.uk/>, where necessary.

Signs and Symptoms

A boy may indicate by signs or behaviour that he is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate further if a boy:

- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic) or begins to truant
- is frightened of walking to or from school
- does not want to go to school on the school bus
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine / route to school
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens to run away

- cries himself to sleep at night, has nightmares or has difficulties sleeping
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to underperform in schoolwork
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or “go missing”
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- comes home hungry (money, snacks, sandwiches have been stolen)
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what is wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- starts swearing or using aggressive language for no apparent reason
- starts bed wetting
- talking of suicide or running away
- displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact

Some of these signs and symptoms could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be taken seriously and investigated as soon as possible.

Procedures for reporting and responding to bullying incidents

All staff will respond calmly and consistently to all allegations and incidents of bullying at Wetherby School. This will also include cyber-bullying. They will be taken seriously by all staff and dealt with impartially and promptly. All those involved will have the opportunity to be heard. Staff will protect and support all children involved whilst allegations and incidents are investigated and resolved. The following step-by-step procedure will be used for reporting and responding to bullying allegations or incidents:

- All allegations of bullying must be reported to the Headmaster/ Deputy Head (Pastoral)
- Incidents will be recorded by staff using ‘My Concern’. The Headmaster, The Deputy Head (Pastoral), Assistant Head (Wellbeing) and Deputy Head (Academic) will be alerted and made aware so that further investigations can be made.
- In all cases parents, of both the victim/s and the bully/bullies, will be informed and will be invited to come into school for a meeting with the class teacher and to discuss the problem. The Headmaster and/or the Deputy Head (Pastoral) will be informed of these meetings and will attend if necessary
- Staff will make sure the victim(s) feels safe
- Appropriate advice will be given to help the victim(s)
- Staff will listen and speak to all children involved about the incident separately
- The problem will be identified and possible solutions suggested
- Staff will attempt to adopt a problem-solving approach which will move children on from them having to justify their behaviour
- Appropriate action will be taken quickly to end the bullying behaviour or threats of bullying
- Staff will make it clear to the bully in no uncertain terms that their behaviour is unacceptable
- The bully (bullies) will be asked to apologise. Other consequences may take place and appropriate sanctions applied. Attempts will be made to reconcile the pupils
- An attempt will be made, and support given, to help the bully (bullies) understand the seriousness of their behaviour and that it must change for the better

- After the incident has been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place
- Bullying incidents will be discussed regularly at staff meetings.
- If necessary and appropriate, Social Services or the Police will be consulted.

The following sanctions may be used:

- Apologise to the victim(s) verbally or in writing
- Lose privileges
- Lose playtimes (stay with class teacher)
- Spend playtimes and lunchtimes with an adult
- Go on a self-improvement report
- Report to the Headmaster or Deputy Head(Pastoral)
- Be withdrawn from participation in school visit, clubs and events not essential to the curriculum.
- Fixed term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion

Strategies for the prevention and reduction of bullying

Whole school initiatives and proactive teaching strategies will be used throughout the school to develop a positive learning environment with the aim of reducing the opportunities for bullying to occur. These can include:

- Each class agreeing on their own set of class rules at the start of each academic year. These rules must be displayed in the classroom. It is also important to discuss rewards and sanctions to celebrate and reinforce positive behaviour and deter unacceptable behaviour
- Learning for life lessons incorporating bullying/being a good friend from Reception to Year 3 will be used to support this policy
- Form time and assemblies on bullying issues
- Implementation of the rules of being a Wetherby Ambassador
- Participation in Anti-Bullying week e.g. Odd Sock Day
- Constant and regular focus on being Wetherby Ambassadors
- Constant and regular promotion of kindness to others
- Appropriate staffing levels will be maintained during play time, indoor play and golden time
- Setting up of a circle of friends support network where a small group of children volunteer to help and support an individual experiencing difficulties
- Children writing stories and poems and drawing pictures about bullying
- Children being read stories about bullying
- Using drama activities and role-plays to help children be more assertive and teach them strategies to help them deal with bullying situations
- Prominently displaying anti-bullying posters produced by the children around the school
- Using praise and rewards to reinforce good behaviour (house points and certificates)
- Encouraging the whole school community to model appropriate behaviour towards one another
- Organising anti-bullying training for all staff
- The contact details for ChildLine will be clearly available to the boys
- Working with the wider community such as the police and children's services where bullying is particularly serious or persistent and where a criminal offence may have been

committed. Where necessary we will also work with other agencies and the wider community to tackle bullying that is happening outside school

- Creating an inclusive environment where pupils can openly discuss the cause of their bullying, without fear of further bullying or discrimination
- Celebrating successes to build on the positive ethos of the school
- Regularly evaluating approaches to bullying

Behaviour and Discipline Policy

Through linking our Behaviour and Discipline Policy and our Anti-bullying Policy, we have created a positive environment where pupils treat one another and the school staff with respect. Values of respect for staff and other pupils, an understanding of the value of education and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others permeate the whole school environment. These values are constantly reinforced.

Safeguarding children and young people

Under the Children Act 1989 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'. Where this is the case, staff should report their concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately who will refer the matter to Children and Family Services. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, schools may need to draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child doing the bullying.

The Prevent Duty

As part of Wetherby School's ongoing safeguarding and child protection duties, we are fully behind the Government's Prevent Duty. Please refer to our Safeguarding Policy for further information.

Fundamental British Values

The DfE have recently reinforced the need 'to create and enforce a clear and rigorous expectation on all schools to promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.'

The Government set out its definition of British values in the 2015 Prevent Strategy (revised 2021)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance> and these values are revised when necessary. At Wetherby School these values are reinforced regularly across all areas of the curriculum and the day to day life of the school. Please refer to the Fundamental British Values Policy.

Monitoring and evaluation of the policy

To ensure this policy is effective, it will be monitored and evaluated annually by the Headmaster and the Deputy Head (Pastoral). 'My Concern' safeguarding software will be used to gauge the effectiveness of the policy. Following an annual review, any amendments will be made to the policy and all teaching and non-teaching staff will be informed.

Advice to boys:

What to do if you are being bullied:

1. Do not retaliate in any physical or verbal way.
2. Walk calmly away from the situation.
3. Tell an adult member of staff what has been happening. This will often be your class teacher or class assistant teacher, but you can talk to any member of staff. If you cannot tell an adult, tell one of your friends.

What to do if you see someone being bullied:

1. Find a member of staff and explain what you have seen and heard.
2. Do not ignore bullying. Think how you would feel in the victim's position.

Some advice on how to avoid being bullied:

1. Think positively about yourself. Be confident.
2. Be friendly. If you are with friends you are less likely to be bullied.
3. Try to ignore the person who is attempting to bully you.
4. Remember, bullies are often people with their own problems who need help to change their behaviour.

Advice to parents:

Tell their son's class teacher if their son is telling them about hurtful behaviour in school.

This policy will be reviewed annually