



WESTSIDE  
SCHOOL

## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

**Policy Written By:**  
**Ratified By:**  
**Review Date:**

Ginna Andrew  
Board of Trustees  
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## POLICY AIM

This policy forms a part of the school's overall Culture for Learning (Behaviour) Policy. The Anti-Bullying Policy aims to ensure that students learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied.

- All members of the Westside School community have the right to work in a safe and secure environment.
- We want everyone to feel safe and happy in school and have the right to support when feeling insecure. We want Westside School to be a school where bullying is viewed as unacceptable, treated seriously and dealt with effectively.
- Bullying is an anti-social behaviour and affects everyone. Westside School will not accept bullying of any kind.

Bullying is any behaviour which is deliberately intended to hurt, threaten or frighten another person or group of people. It is repeated and usually unprovoked and can continue for a prolonged period. It always reflects an imbalance and abuse of power. It is important that it must not be confused with the usual childhood/teenage squabbles and arguments where individuals "fall out" with one another.

Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously the school's first priority, but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; we have to make our own judgment about each specific case.

Bullying can be:

- **Emotional** – being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting
- **Physical** – pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- **Racist** – racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- **Sexual** – unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- **Homophobic** – because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- **Verbal** – name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- **Cyber** – all areas of the internet, such as email and internet chat rooms, misuse. Mobile threats by text messaging and calls. Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video facilities.

- **Disability/SEN** – because of, or focusing on a disability or special educational need.
- **Home circumstance** – targeting individuals who are looked after children, or because of a particular home circumstance.

It may also be bullying when:

- The same person or group always leaves someone out, shunning them.
- Someone makes a threat or commits violence against someone else.
- Someone damages someone else's kit or clothing deliberately.
- Someone tries to force someone else to do something they do not want to do.
- Someone tries to force another to do something sexual that they do not want to do.

Although all of these actions are serious and adults should always intervene, they may not always be regarded as bullying unless they are part of an ongoing pattern of behaviour against the victim.

Bullying can therefore constitute any of the above activities within the context of the definition provided. Bullying may occur to anyone, and this policy is inclusive of the bullying of school staff, whether by pupils, parents or other staff. Members of the school workforce suffering from or concerned about bullying may also contact their trade union or professional association for support and advice.

Bullying can seriously damage a person's confidence and sense of self-worth, and they will often feel that they are at fault in some way. Students who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness or taking unusual absences. There may be evidence in work patterns, lack of concentration or truancy from school. These signs and symptoms may indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

## PREVENTION

As a school, we take bullying seriously. We use a range of proactive strategies to prevent bullying. These include:

- Effective school leadership that promotes an open and honest anti-bullying ethos.

- Use of curriculum opportunities, in particular SMSC classes, where issues of diversity are discussed, and anti-bullying messages are drawn out.
- Use of opportunities throughout the school calendar and at certain times of the school day to raise awareness of the negative consequences of bullying.
- e.g. Anti-Bullying Week in November of each year
- Whole school assemblies
- Pupil voice
- Improved supervision in potential problem areas
- Assertiveness training
- Review of general and specific staff induction and continuing professional development to ensure staff training reflects the anti-bullying policy and practice of the school.

## REPORTING PROCEDURES

Each case will be treated individually, and depending on circumstances, one or more of the following strategies will be employed.

### STAFF

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the member of staff who has first been involved will deal with the incident at the earliest opportunity.
- A clear account of the incident will be recorded and given to a teacher or a member of the senior leadership team, who will agree on an appropriate response.
- The appropriate person will interview/counsel all concerned and will record the incident on CPOMS.
- The Senior Team will analyse, monitor and action all referrals.
- Parents/carers of students involved are to be kept informed
- Measures to stop the behaviour will be used as appropriate and in consultation with all parties concerned.
- Involvement of appropriate outside agencies may be taken.
- Regular monitoring and tracking by all Westside Staff will occur after the incident to ensure that it is not continuing.

### STUDENTS

Students who have been bullied will be supported by some of the following:

- A member of staff who is receptive to the student's position and does not seek to take responsibility for action away from the student, when questioned independently, students cited staff taking control as one of the main reasons for not reporting incidents.
- An offer of an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a teacher or member of the school community of their choice.
- Counselling within the school with our counsellor.
- An offer of continuous support and reassurance to the student.
- Opportunities to restore self-esteem and confidence.
- Use of the "consensual" model to change behaviour ("no blame approach") and/or a mediated meeting.
- Safe areas to go to if the students feel vulnerable at particular times in the school day

## SUPPORT STUDENTS WHO HAVE BEEN BULLIED

Some of the following will support students who have been bullied:

- Discussing what happened/why the student became involved.
- Opportunities to discuss their concerns with the school counsellor.
- Establishing their wrongdoing and the need to change.
- Use of the "consensual" model to change behaviour ("no blame approach") and/or a mediated meeting.
- Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude of the student.

## DISCIPLINARY STEPS

The following disciplinary steps may be taken:

- Official warning to cease offending
- Exclusion from certain areas of the school premises or certain activities
- Detentions
- Isolation
- Referral to senior staff and/or external agencies, e.g. Education Welfare Officer, Police Liaison Officer.
- Internal fixed-term exclusion
- External fixed-term or permanent exclusion

## LEGAL FRAMEWORK

### **The Education and Inspections Act 2006**

There are a number of statutory obligations on schools with regard to behaviour, which establish clear responsibilities to respond to bullying. In particular, section 89 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006:

- Provides that every school must have measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst students. These measures should be part of the school's behaviour policy, which must be communicated to all students, school staff and parents.
- Gives headteachers the ability to ensure that students behave when they are not on school premises or under the lawful control of school staff.

### **The Equality Act 2010**

The Equality Act 2010 replaces previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. A key provision is a new public sector Equality Duty, which came into force on 5 April 2011. It replaces the three previous public sector equality duties for race, disability and gender, and covers age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Duty has three aims. It requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it. Schools are now required to comply with the 2010 Equality Duty. The Act also makes it unlawful for the responsible body of a school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a student or potential student in relation to admissions, the way it provides education for students, provision of student access to any benefit, facility or service, or by excluding a student or subjecting them to any other detriment. In England and Wales, the Act applies to all maintained and independent schools, including Academies and Free Schools, and maintained and non-maintained special schools.

### **Criminal Law**

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003 and the Public Order Act 1986. If school staff feel that an offence may have been committed, they should seek assistance from the police. For example, under the Malicious Communication Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety or to send an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the “sender”.

### **Bullying Outside of School Premises**

Headteachers have a specific statutory power to discipline students for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives head teachers the power to regulate students’ conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere outside of school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside local shops, or in a town or village centre. Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and acted on. The headteacher should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator in their local authority of the action taken against a student. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed.

### **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 and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content with a click. The wider search powers in the Education Act 2011 give teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones.

## TRAINING

- There will be regular training for all members of the school community as appropriate.
- Regular training for new staff will include information on this policy.

## MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

We plan to:

- Monitor, evaluate and review our anti-bullying policy every two years and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.
- Support staff to identify and tackle bullying appropriately.
- Ensure that students are aware that all bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively, and seek feedback from students via student questionnaires.
- To learn from anti-bullying good practice elsewhere, utilise the support of voluntary organisations when appropriate and keep up-to-date with relevant statutory changes.

This policy is linked directly to the following policies

- Culture for Learning (Behaviour) Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Equal Opportunities
- Exclusion Policy