



Anti-Bullying Policy

including Early Years Foundation Stage

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1. What is bullying?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, often 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 or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, culture, religion, gender, sexual orientation, homophobia, special educational needs, disability or because a child is adopted or had caring responsibilities. It may occur directly or through cyber-technology (social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email). 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.

Bullying behaviour is very serious, both physical and emotional (which may cause psychological damage).

2. Objectives/Statement of Intent

Westville House School is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Harassment or bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If harassment does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a TELLING school. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

- all governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of bullying and be confident that there will be prompt action when bullying occurs and that there will be support for both the bully and the bullied; and
- bullying will not be tolerated.

Westville House School is committed to creating an anti-bullying culture and it views bullying extremely seriously. What follows is a summary of how we deal with bullying and how you might be involved in helping with the issues. Bullying is not tolerated at school, and this is made clear to all who study and work at Westville House. We take a proactive stance and use the strategies below.

What might be seen as playful teasing by one child may be seen as verbal bullying by another. All children have the capacity to be unkind to each other. Prolonged unkindness can be perceived as bullying.

We understand that a part of growing up is to learn resilience. We can obtain that goal and deal with any bullying incidences with professionalism.

3. Prevention

The school talks to pupils about issues of difference, in lessons, through dedicated anti-bullying weeks and through assemblies. The school has a positive behaviour policy which promotes an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat one another and the school staff with respect because



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they know that this is the right way to behave. The behaviour policy also promotes an understanding of the value of education, and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others and permeates the whole school environment. Staff and older pupils set a good example to the rest.

The staff will assess information about issues between pupils which might provoke conflict and then develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place. The school will record incidents, so that they can monitor any incidents and identify where bullying is recurring between the same pupils. In summary, we will:

- promote an ethos of good behaviour;
- acknowledge and identify incidents of bullying;
- develop and review our anti-bullying policies;
- promote a positive social environment;
- train our staff adequately;
- address all forms of bullying through the school curriculum;
- encourage role models;
- not make assumptions; and
- celebrate achievements.

4. Strategies to Prevent Bullying

4.1. Observation

Staff are vigilant in watching the behaviour of children towards each other, in picking up comments made by other children and in detecting changes in a child's attitude, behaviour or standard of work. Staff share information between staff through discussion and meetings.

4.2. Parents

Parents should be clear that the school does not tolerate bullying and they are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being bullied. Parents should feel confident that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issue in a way that protects the child. Parents should also reinforce the value of good behaviour at home.

We deliver every year an e-safety talk to make parents aware of cyber-bullying issues and deliver the most up to date advice and support available.

Parents are encouraged to urge their child to keep the school informed of any worries they may have. We cannot guarantee that we will always be able to remove these worries completely, but we will take them seriously and investigate and deal with them as best we can.

At the same time, we expect parents to encourage their child to treat others with kindness and respect at all times.



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If a parent has any concerns that their child is being bullied at school, they should talk to, or write to, their child's form teacher, or the Headteacher, Mrs Sarah White, as soon as they are aware of it. Sometimes parents wonder if their concerns are unimportant, or they do not wish to make a fuss, but at school we are experienced in working with children and are usually able to determine the best course of action to be taken.

We can only act on that which we know about.

4.3. Pupils

- PSHEE/RSE, Circle Time and assemblies are used to promote opportunities to discuss differences and the importance of avoiding prejudice-based language;
- pupils are given a child-friendly leaflet explaining the school's Anti-Bullying Policy;
- pupils take part in Circle Time, and have assertiveness training;
- pupils understand the school's approach and are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders;
- there is a Buddy system for new pupils;
- there is peer support through trained playground buddies;
- pupils are encouraged to speak to their form teacher or, indeed, any member of staff with whom they feel confident, about concerns they might have;
- pupils are encouraged to use the 'Suggestion/Worry' boxes in their classrooms and the corridors if they prefer to communicate in writing; and
- we ensure that all pupils know that they should speak out against bullying; this is not seen as "telling tales".

We ensure pupils know that we care about bullying.

5. Advice and procedures we give pupils

5.1. Advice

If you are the one being bullied:

- don't just put up with bullying; not telling is playing by the bully's rules;
- don't buy off the bully with presents or money;
- don't hit back, this might encourage the bully and give him an excuse to hurt you;
- don't blame yourself for what has happened;
- do look the bully in the eye and say forcefully "I don't like you doing that; I want you to stop it now";
- do get away from the situation as quickly as possible;
- do report the incident to a member of staff straight away; and
- do tell your family.

When you are talking about a bullying incident with an adult, be clear about:

- What has happened to you?
- How often it has happened?
- Who was involved?



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- Who else saw what was happening?
- Where it happened?

If you see or know about bullying happening- you are a 'bystander':

- don't smile or laugh or join in;
- do tell the bully to stop what s/he is doing;
- do show the bully that you disapprove of what s/he is doing;
- do tell a member of staff immediately; and
- do invite the victim to join in with your activity or group.

5.2. Procedures

We regularly evaluate and update our approach to take into account developments in technology, for example updating 'acceptable use' policies for computers.

We implement disciplinary sanctions. The consequences of bullying reflect the seriousness of the incident so that others see that bullying is unacceptable.

We openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexuality. We also discuss different family situations, such as, explaining about fostering, adoption, extended/blended families and the fact that children sometimes have to become carers. We teach children that using any prejudice-based language is unacceptable.

We use specific organisations or resources to help with particular problems. We draw on the experience and expertise of anti-bullying organisations with a proven track record and/or specialised expertise in dealing with certain forms of bullying.

We provide effective staff training. The staff understand the principles and purpose of the school's policy, its legal responsibilities regarding bullying, how to resolve problems, and where to seek support. We invest in specialised skills to help the staff understand the needs of their pupils, including those with Special Educational Needs and/or disability (SEND) and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBTQ+) pupils. The staff are trained in preventing and identifying symptoms of bullying on a yearly basis and as and when needed in staff meetings. Regular staff training takes place throughout the year.

We work 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. We also work with other agencies and the wider community to tackle bullying that is happening outside school.

We make it easy for pupils to report bullying. Pupils are assured that they will be listened to and incidents acted on. Pupils feel that they can report bullying which may have occurred outside school including cyber-bullying.

We create a safe environment where pupils can openly discuss the cause of their bullying, without fear of further bullying or discrimination.



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We celebrate success as part of our positive behaviour policy.

6. School Support for Children and Young People Who Are Bullied

6.1. Vulnerable Pupils

Bullying can happen to all children and young people and it can affect their social, mental and emotional health. The school supports all pupils who are bullied.

Some pupils are particularly vulnerable to bullying and may be severely affected by it, such as:

- those with special educational needs or disabilities;
- those who are going through a personal or family crisis, or suffering from a health problem;
- children in care who are frequently on the move and may be vulnerable because they are always the newcomer;
- children with caring responsibilities who may be vulnerable because they are socially isolated;
- children who have been adopted; and/or
- children who are from a different culture.

These vulnerable young people may also be at risk of turning to social media for consolation or to get their own back by cyberbullying, therefore counselling and education on e-safety can help. There is evidence to suggest that pupils that are badly bullied in school are more likely to be bullied out of school, for instance either on their way to or from school or through cyberbullying.

The impact of bullying can be severe because of the nature and extent of the bullying or because it is combined with other factors such as those mentioned above that also affect the social, mental and emotional health of the pupil.

6.2. Addressing the needs of pupils who are bullied

The nature and level of support will depend on the individual circumstances and the level of need. These can include a quiet word from a teacher that knows the pupil well, asking the pastoral team to provide support, providing formal counselling, engaging with parents, referring to local authority children's services, completing a Common Assessment Framework or referring to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

6.3. Where bullying has a severe impact

In some circumstances the consequences of bullying may lead to a child or young person experiencing pronounced social, mental or emotional health difficulties. The school has appropriate provision for a child's short term needs, including setting out what actions they are taking when bullying has had a serious impact on a child's ability to learn. If the bullying leads to persistent, long-lasting difficulties that cause the child or young person to have



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significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of those of the same age, then the school will consider whether the child will benefit from being assessed for SEN.

6.4. Special Educational Needs (SEND) Code of Practice

While bullied children will not be routinely considered as requiring SEND support, the school would provide support in a proportionate and tailored way to meet individual needs. The SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years” considers that developing a graduated response to the varying levels of SEND among children and young people is the best way to offer support, and this can include the needs of bullied children.

6.5. Separate On-Site Provision

The school will do all it can to ensure bullied children continue to attend school. Removing bullied children from school, even for a short time, disrupts their education and can make it difficult for them to reintegrate. It also fails to address the causes of the problem and can send the wrong message that victims of bullying are unwelcome. The school would respond sensitively where an absence arises as a result of bullying but, in most cases, it may not be necessary or helpful to remove a bullied child from school.

7. Support for the Bully

Whatever the causes are, bullying is usually a signal that the bully needs help. It is also important to consider the motivations behind bullying behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator. In the event of pupil-on-pupil abuse, all children involved are deemed as being at risk whether perpetrator or victim (Safeguarding procedures should be followed). Where this is the case, the child engaging in bullying may need support themselves.

Attempts should be made to support the bully, including:

- helping the bully empathise with the victims;
- reassuring the bully that it is the bullying behaviour that is unacceptable not the individual;
- looking for ways for the bully to “make amends”;
- investigating the circumstances when and where bullying occurs and look for alternative ways of behaviour;
- being aware of “anger-management” issues; and
- trying to re-establish their self-esteem by finding opportunities for the bully to contribute to the community in a constructive way.

8. Possible Signs and Symptoms of a Child Being Bullied

There is detailed national research which shows that bullying can potentially be a problem in every school. Bullying behaviour can affect pupils in a number of ways. When pupils are bullied, their lives are made miserable. They may suffer injury. They may be unhappy about coming to school. Over time, they are likely to lose self-confidence and self-esteem and blame themselves for “inviting” the bullying behaviour. This unhappiness is likely to affect their concentration and impair their learning. Some children may experience stress related symptoms: stomach aches and headaches; nightmares or anxiety attacks. Some will avoid being bullied by not going to school.



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The seriousness of bullying must be recognised as it can cause major psychological damage and may even lead to suicide. There may even be a need to invoke the law (with reference to threatening behaviour and harassment)

A pupil may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being harassed. Adults should be aware of possible signs and they should investigate if a pupil:

- is frightened of walking to or from school;
- doesn't want to go on the school/public bus;
- asks to be driven to school;
- changes their usual routine;
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic);
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence;
- starts stammering;
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares;
- feels ill in the morning;
- begins to do poorly in school work;
- 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);
- has monies continually "lost";
- has unexplained cuts or bruises;
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable;
- is harassing other children or siblings;
- stops eating;
- is frightened to say what's wrong;
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above;
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone; and/or
- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber-message is received.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

9. How we disseminate our Anti-Bullying policy within school and keep the policy active

- within the induction process for new staff;
- distribution to all existing staff;
- circle Time and Assemblies;
- annual policy review;
- anti-Bullying Themed Week;
- anti-Bullying Policy available on website; and
- child-friendly 'Pupil Anti-Bullying Policy' Leaflet sent home with pupils.



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10. Other Forms of Bullying

10.1. Cyber-Bullying

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying (cyber-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 at a click.

- The wider search powers included 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. Separate advice on teachers' powers to search (including statutory guidance on dealing with electronic devices) is available - see DfE Guidance 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (2014) and Cyberbullying Advice for Headteachers and School Staff (2014).

Please also read the Westville House School E- Safety Policy which outlines in detail how Online Safety is managed and consult the DfE - publication 'Teaching Online Safety in Schools'

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/811796/Teaching_online_safety_in_school.pdf

For more information on how to respond to cyber-bullying and how pupils can keep themselves safe, we refer to the Childnet International and Beatbullying links under 'further resources'(DfE Guidance 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (2014)).

10.1.1. Advice concerning Cyber-bullying

"Bullying can be done verbally, in writing or images, including through communication technology (cyber-bullying) e.g. graffiti, text messaging, e-mail or postings on social networking websites. It can be done physically, financially (including damage to property) or through social isolation. Verbal bullying is the most common form."

If a bullying incident directed at a child occurs using email or mobile phone technology either inside or outside of school time:

- we advise the child not to respond to the message;
- we refer to relevant policies including e-safety/acceptable use, anti-bullying and PHSE and apply appropriate sanctions;
- we secure and preserve any evidence;
- we inform the sender's e-mail service provider;
- we notify parents of the children involved;
- we deliver a parent workshop for the school community; and/or
- we consider informing the police depending on the severity or repetitious nature of offence.



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If malicious or threatening comments are posted on an Internet site about a pupil or a member of staff:

- We inform and request the comments be removed if the site is administered externally.
- We secure and preserve any evidence.
- We send all the evidence to CEOP at www.ceop.gov.uk/contact_us.html
- We endeavour to trace the origin and inform police as appropriate.

There is a no-blame culture when it comes to reporting inappropriate incidents involving the internet or mobile technology: those concerned must be able to do this without fear.

11. Homophobic Bullying

This occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay or bisexual people. Westville House School takes all cases of such bullying very seriously and will always act quickly to respond and prevent such instances taking place. (Schools have a legal duty to ensure homophobic bullying is dealt with under the Education and Inspections Act of 2006).

Headteachers and all staff must identify and promote good behaviour, respect for others and self-discipline amongst pupils in order to keep such acts of bullying to an absolute minimum.

Homophobic bullying can often be hard to identify due to the fact pupils find it hard to tell anyone out of the fear of it being assumed they are gay. It often takes the form of verbal abuse, physical abuse or cyber-bullying.

All pupils within the school are regularly reminded that homophobic language will not be tolerated. The effect this language has on the victim will also be made very clear to all the pupils.

Sanctions will be administered if this type of bullying was to continue. Staff responses are always 'swift, proportionate, influential and effective.'

Parents and carers are made to feel confident that all instances of such bullying will be dealt with promptly.

12. Racial, Cultural and Spiritual Bullying

This occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against a person whom may be of an alternative culture or spiritual denomination. Westville House School takes all cases of such bullying very seriously and will always act quickly to respond and stop such instances taking place.

Westville House School acknowledges and welcomes all racial, cultural and spiritual differences.

All pupils are regularly exposed to different religions, cultures and spiritual beliefs through the delivery of the RS/RSE curriculum and assemblies.



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All pupils are regularly reminded that bullying of a racial, cultural or spiritual nature will not be tolerated.

Tolerance and acceptance of all faiths is expected.

The staff react swiftly, proportionately and effectively to any incidence of racial bullying that is brought to their attention.

13. What We Will Do if Bullying is Detected?

We take any complaints about bullying seriously and do our best to deal with them as soon as we receive the complaint. At some point, usually early on, we bring together both “bully” and “victim”. In our experience, in most cases it turns out that there has not been any bullying but behaviour or misunderstanding between the parties has resulted in one or both being upset. Both parties are helped to move on from the situation.

On the rare occasion when there is a clear case of bullying we will punish the bully and contact the parents of both bully and victim. Disciplinary measures will be applied fairly, consistently, and reasonably taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable pupils.

The school takes bullying very seriously and may use strong disciplinary sanctions such as exclusion in cases of severe and persistent bullying. This is a decision made by the Headteacher.

Where bullying is not proved but behaviour is considered unacceptable, some form of punishment will be given; we try to make this in appropriate and in proportion to the unacceptability of the behaviour. Where an incidence of bullying is determined, the school will devise an Action Plan employing a choice of strategies using reactive approaches to restore relationships wherever this is possible.

These processes are time consuming, and we make great efforts to get to the bottom of exactly what might be happening. However, we are not perfect and there are times when we feel we are not completely sure that we have the full picture. Similarly, there may be times when we are simply not informed of particular behaviour.

14. Reporting a Bullying issue to external agencies

A bullying incident should be treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. The schools Child protection procedures should be followed. (See WHS Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy) Follow procedures to Report and Act on Concerns including Online Safety.

15. Records

Detailed records are kept of bullying incidents, interviews, discussions and strategies used. This enables the school to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of intervention work and enables patterns to be identified.



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16. Sexual, Disability, Racial, Cultural, Cyber, Homophobic Harassment

Harassment is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Harassment results in pain and distress to the victim.

Harassment can be:

- emotional, e.g. being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures), exploiting known issues, humiliating, being judgmental, ignoring, using body language to upset others;
- physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, spitting, or any form of violence (including 'wedging', bundling en masse on top of individuals etc.)
- racist racial taunts, 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, targeting 'differences' such as background, disability, skills, appearance (e.g.: hair colour, clothing, size, religion etc.);
- cyber-all areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse Mobile threats by text messaging & calls; and/or
- misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities

17. Key Westville House School Policies Linked

- WHS Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- WHS E-Safety Policy; and
- WHS Behaviour Policy.



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Appendix 1

Resources and Guidance

The following organisations provide support for schools and parents dealing with specific bullying issues and the social, mental or emotional affects caused by bullying.

- Kidscape;
- The Anti-Bullying Alliance;
- The Diana Award;
- NSPCC;
- ChildLine;
- Family Lives; and
- YoungMinds.

The Anti-Bullying Alliance has also put together a fact sheet outlining the range of support that is available to schools and young people from the anti-bullying sector which can be accessed here: <http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/advice/support-from-the-sector/>

<http://counsellingminded.com/> is a free online training tool for adults made available to schools from Spring 2014. It can be used to help school staff learn more about children and adolescents' mental health problems. It provides simple, clear guidance on mental health and includes information on identifying, understanding and supporting children who are bullied.

This policy has been created and the uses resources and references from:

- “Preventing and Tackling Bullying - Advice for Headteachers and Governors” (July 2017);
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (February 2018);
- KCSIE Part One and Annex B (2022);
- WHS Behaviour Policy;
- Cyberbullying Advice for Headteachers and School Staff (2014);
- DfE Guidance ‘Preventing and Tackling Bullying’ (2014);
- DfE Factsheet- School Support for Children and Young People Who Are Bullied;
- The Use and Effectiveness of Anti-Bullying Strategies in Schools;
- (Fran Thompson and Peter K. Smith Goldsmiths, University of London, DFE-RB098 ISBN 978- 1-84775-886-6 April 201);
- In July 2012 the cross Government No Health Without Mental Health: Implementation Framework; and
- DfE - publication ‘Teaching Online Safety in Schools’
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/811796/Teaching_online_safety_in_school.pdf



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Appendix 2

