



Whitby School

Anti-bullying Policy

Governance Status

This policy was adopted by the Governing Body and will be reviewed annually.

Review dates	By Whom	Approval date
January 2023	Staff and Governors	7 February 2023
November 2024	Staff and Governors	10 December 2024
November 2025	Staff and Governors	25 November 2025

Signed by the Chair of Governors:

Why do we need an Anti-Bullying Policy?

- All pupils at Whitby School have the right to learn and realise their full potential in all areas of school life, free from bullying. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at either school and will not be tolerated. We will respond seriously and immediately to any incident which is related to bullying behaviour involving our pupils in and out of school, including on school transport. We will work sensitively with the pupils, keeping parents and carers informed and involved.
- As bullying behaviour is an issue for both the bully/bullies and the victim/s we recognise that it should be addressed in constructive and positive ways which provide opportunities for growth and development for all parties involved.
- The school is committed to providing a caring, friendly, supportive and safe environment for all our pupils. Our vision is to work together with our pupils, parents and staff to promote an ethos of mutual respect that encourages consideration for others with empathy, tolerance and cooperation. We believe that everybody should be appreciated and valued for who and what they are and recognise that everyone contributes to the ethos of the schools.
- All members of the school community have a role to play in realising this vision through the behaviour they model and demonstrate. They will understand that unacceptable and anti-social behaviour will be challenged and dealt with using the appropriate discipline procedures.
- Effective management of bullying is a shared responsibility and strategies should involve staff, parents/carers and other professionals who are involved with the victims or perpetrators of bullying behaviour.

What is Bullying?

Definition and Criteria of Bullying

Bullying occurs when an individual or group uses strength or power to hurt, either physically or emotionally, by intimidating or demeaning others. It is usually persistent and often covert, and is a conscious attempt to hurt, threaten or frighten someone.

This includes:

- Physically assaulting against a person or a group because of some perceived physical, economic, sexual, intellectual, cultural or racial difference.
- Derogatory name calling of an insulting and/or personal nature.
- Verbal abuse and threats.
- Demanding money, material goods or favours by means or threat or force.
- Ridiculing an individual because of physical, sexual, intellectual, cultural or racial difference.
- Graffiti designed to intimidate or embarrass.
- Racist, sexist and homophobic behaviour.
- It may involve the use of mobile phones or the internet.
- Deliberate exclusion or isolation of an individual or group.

Aims

The school's aims:

- To increase awareness and to encourage pupils to report concerns regarding bullying.
- To provide protection, support and reassurance for victims
- To develop the self-confidence and self-esteem of all pupils.
- To develop an effective range of emotional "self-defence" skills for all pupils
- To promote an anti-bullying ethos amongst the whole community.

Cyberbullying

- Cyberbullying differs in several significant ways from other kinds of bullying: the invasion of home and personal space; the difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages, the size of the audience, perceived anonymity, and even the profile of the person doing the bullying and their target.
- Although cyberbullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws that can apply in terms of harassment, and threatening and menacing communications. If a member of staff believes that a law has been broken, then they should inform a senior member of staff who should then contact the police.
- Cyberbullying takes different forms: threats and intimidation, harassment or 'cyber-stalking' (e.g. repeatedly sending unwanted texts or instant messages), vilification/defamation; exclusion or peer rejection, impersonation, unauthorised publication of private information or images (including what are sometimes misleading referred to as 'happy slapping' images), and manipulation.
- Members of staff should recognise that some cyberbullying is clearly deliberate and aggressive, but it is important to recognise that some incidents of cyberbullying are known to be unintentional and the result of simply not thinking of the consequences. What may be sent as a joke may not be received as one, and indeed the distance that technology allows in communication means the sender may not see the impact of the message on the receiver. There is also less opportunity for either party to resolve any misunderstanding or to feel empathy. It is important that staff make the pupils are made aware of the effects of their actions.

Preventing Cyberbullying

- It is important for staff to decide on the roles and responsibilities for cyberbullying prevention work. This will typically involve a named leader from the senior management team (usually the person with overall responsibility for anti-bullying work), as well as IT staff, pastoral-care staff and student leadership. Preventative work will take place through PHSE tutorials and assemblies; this can be done via text and/or email.
- Tutors/pastoral/teaching staff and parents should ensure that pupils know how to report cyber-bullying; this will help prevention, raising awareness of the issue, but also ensuring that any incidents can be stopped before they become too serious or upsetting.
- Staff should provide education and discussion around the responsible use of technologies with the pupils. Technology can have a positive role in learning and teaching practice, and there is need for staff to be confident about ICT in order to model the responsible and positive use of technologies, and to respond to incidents of cyberbullying appropriately.
- The school website encourages parents and/or pupils to notify staff via email.

Responding to Cyberbullying

- The person being bullied will usually have examples of texts or emails received and should be encouraged to keep these to aid in any investigation. There are also additional reporting routes available through mobile phone companies, internet service providers and social networking sites.
- All members of staff should be able to advise those experiencing cyberbullying on steps to take to avoid recurrence, e.g. advise those targeted not to retaliate or reply; provide advice on blocking or removing people from 'buddy lists'; and staff should ask them to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain.
- All staff that are aware of the problem should help to take steps to identify the person responsible for the bullying. Steps can include looking at the school systems and computer logs, identifying and interviewing possible witnesses, and, with police involvement, obtaining user-information from the internet service provider.
- Once the person responsible for the cyberbullying has been identified, it is important that, as in other cases of bullying, sanctions are applied. Steps should be taken to change the attitude and behaviour of the instigator, as well as ensuring access to any help they may need. The sanctions already in place at Whitby School for bullying behaviour should equally be applied to cyberbullying. Technology

specific sanctions for pupils engaged in cyberbullying behaviour could include limiting internet access for a period of time or removing mobile phones whilst on the school sites.

The effects of Bullying

Being bullied can seriously affect a child's physical and mental health. Victims lack confidence, feel bad about themselves, have few friends and spend social time alone. They may find it hard to face going to school and difficult to concentrate on their learning. They may complain of various physical symptoms as a result of their upset. They may worry and try to avoid going to school. Others become very anxious, find it hard to sleep and may feel depressed, or even suicidal. These problems can carry on long after the bullying has stopped.

The signs and symptoms of bullying

- Victims can become aggressive, abusive, disruptive or unreasonable.
- Could possibly threaten suicide or self-harm.
- Their performance in school begins to drop below average.
- Can become afraid to use the internet and mobile phones.
- Withdrawn, anxious or lacking confidence.
- They could also be unwilling to go to school, or they can begin to truant.
- Exhibit bullying behaviour themselves.
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Responses to bullying will vary depending on the nature of the incident:

- Involve parents
- Assertiveness training (victim)
- Use of positive support room (victim)
- Counselling
- Use of report (see behaviour policy)
- Involvement of external agencies
- Monitoring by Tutor/Head of Year
- Peer support/peer mentoring/student anti-bullying group
- Formal recording (protected characteristics)
- Use of Behaviour Agreement Contract
- Liaison with parents/guardian/social worker
- Internal exclusion
- Permanent exclusion
- Referral to Police

Dealing with bullying:

There are different ways in which pupils can be bullied:

Physical - intimidation, hitting, kicking, sexual harassment, taking belongings including- money, College bag or books, damaging work.

Verbal - name calling, teasing, insulting, graffiti or writing notes, getting other people to make comments or to pass on threats.

Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding someone from a group, tormenting looks and spreading rumours.

Cyber - form of bullying conducted on the internet on sites including Facebook, MSN, twitter etc with the aim of making a person feel isolated.

Homophobic - discriminating against someone's sexual orientation, gender etc. this can come in the form of name calling, teasing, violence.

All pupils have the right to freedom from bullying, prejudice and discrimination. Every member of the school community should play a part in ensuring that bullying is stopped.

Guidelines for parents

The school is firmly committed to working in partnership with parents/carers and believes that the best outcomes emerge when professionals and parents/carers are able to work together when bullying occurs. Parents will be kept informed of issues through a number of means of communication – through the prospectus, letters, meetings and through direct contact.

If a student is involved in a single serious incident of bullying or there is evidence that the same student is involved repeatedly in less serious incidents (either as a victim or a perpetrator) the school will inform parents and invite them to become involved in the management of the problem and the prevention of further incidents. Individual and less serious incidents will be managed by staff and parents will be kept informed.

Close and constructive communication between parents and staff is a key part of the process for successfully managing bullying incidents.

What to do if you think your child is being bullied:

- Watch for signs – not wanting to go school, minor illnesses, headaches, other pointers, avoiding friends, coming home with bruises or torn clothing, possessions and/or money disappearing.
- Listen to what your child says; try to establish that the problem really is bullying and not something else.
- Reassure your child that they are doing the right thing by telling you and calmly discuss with your child what they can do and what you can do to help.
- Make a note of what your child tells you. Get names and dates where possible as this will help College to deal with bullying quickly.
- Contact your child's form tutor, Care and Achievement Coordinator or Head of Year. Do this for as long as the bullying continues.
- Do not promote a simple 'thump back' approach. This is rarely helpful and may make things worse for your child.

Guidelines for staff:

- Awareness-raising about the nature and impact of bullying will be carried out within the school community, planned across Years 7 -13 to an agreed, planned timetable.
- All members of the school community will be made aware of the systems and procedures for reporting bullying and name-calling via PHSE, assemblies, tutorials and planners.
- Pupils are encouraged to report by speaking to pastoral staff or by using 'SOS'.
- Pupils are encouraged to report bullying and name calling, and staff are made aware of the importance of fully investigating and responding to these reports.
- Every student needs to know who to contact if they are being bullied:
 - Their form tutors
 - Care and Achievement Coordinators
 - Assistant Headteacher (Lower and Upper)

- Parents
- Midday Supervisors
- Subject teachers.

Pastoral staff and others working with young children will recognise the importance of building the confidence and self-esteem of pupils who are affected by bullying and responding to such reports.

All staff should be aware that in order to create a safe environment the following steps should be taken:

- Staff on break time duties should be vigilant for possible bullying, and ensure that potential 'danger spots' are properly patrolled. For example, such places such as the tennis courts and places surrounding them are considered as a 'danger spot'.
- Staff should arrive promptly for lessons, tutorial period and duties, to ensure that bullying does not occur.
- Student reports about bullying should always be taken seriously and the Head of Year should always be made aware of such reports.
- Name-calling should always be taken seriously and stopped, even if the name does not immediately appear to mean anything serious to the teacher.
- Physical 'horseplay' eg, play fighting should never be allowed to continue even if it is described as a joke.
- Pupils should be made aware that they should be considerate and caring towards each other, and stand up to bullying by others by reporting it.
- Any suspicions about bullying should be passed on to pastoral staff.
- All possible steps should be taken to develop a cooperative and hard-working culture/ethos.
- Fostering pupils' self-esteem should be seen as a central part of the schools' role to preparing the pupils for everyday life outside of school.
- All forms of cyber bullying will be taken very seriously with the possibility of police involvement.

All new members of staff will be made aware of this anti-bullying policy.