



The William Henry Smith School & Sixth Form

Anti-bullying Policy

Policy Details

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| Status: | In-house |
| Frequency of review: | Annually |
| Lead member of staff: | Damien Talbot (Reviewed by students annually) |
| Last reviewed: | Autumn 2023 |
| Next Review Date: | Autumn 2024 |
| Policy Number: | WS 6 |

1.0 Statement of Intent

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our students so they can learn and live in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is classed as Child on Child abuse and is unacceptable at our school (see CP policy WS7 section 5). If bullying does occur all students 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. The school is

committed to Safe to Learn: embedding anti-bullying work in schools (DfE). This policy is in accordance with the principles set out in the *Bullying – A Charter for Action* document. The school embraces the work, support and guidance undertaken by the Anti-Bullying Alliance and the National Healthy Schools Programme.

2.0 The school's commitment

Bullying is bad for the victim, bad for the bully and bad for the school. That is why it is important that the whole school community should work together to prevent it and, if it cannot be prevented on every occasion, to deal with it appropriately.

3.0 Aims of the Policy

We aim to:-

1. Create a school ethos which encourages children to disclose and discuss incidences of bullying behaviour.
 2. Raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour with all school staff (including temporary and supply staff), students, parents/guardians.
 3. Develop procedures for recording and reporting incidents of bullying behaviour.
 4. Develop procedures for investigating and dealing with bullying behaviour.
 5. Develop a programme of support for those affected by bullying behaviour and for those involved in bullying behaviour.
 6. Use the curriculum as an intrinsic vehicle to raise awareness to the school's views and a means of educating students to the school's expectations.
 7. Ensure that all accessible areas of the school are supervised appropriately.
 8. Seek the involvement of outside professional agencies if and where necessary.
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4.0 Definitions of bullying

There are a number of definitions. For staff, students and parents to understand what bullying is, the definitions used here are the basic ones free of jargon:

** A person is bullied when he or she is exposed, regularly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more persons.*

** Bullying is the wilful conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone. Bullying can be physical and/or verbal in nature and can happen online. Physical assault to varying degrees of severity is distressing but verbal abuse is also painful. Other forms of bullying include rude gestures, intimidation and extortion, or other behaviours which cause anxiety or distress.*

All definitions include these three parameters:

- * Repetitive - prolonged over time*
- * An imbalance of power*
- * May be verbal, physical, social or psychological*

The bully will use **threat** and **fear**.

The Frequency of Bullying

Bullying can take place several times a week or day. It can go on for months and even years. There is a recognition that bullying occurs often beyond the realm of the school, but has manifestations in school. We have expectations that all the school community and parents should be supportive in the process of eliminating any form of bullying.

The Severity of Bullying

Bullying ranges from horseplay to vicious assault. It is recognised that bullying can be extremely subtle, and therefore difficult to deal with.

The Motivation

The bully gets pleasure from other people's pain, fear and humiliation. The bully learns that aggressive behaviour allows him/her to dominate and get his/her own way. Sadly, the bully may also learn that creating fear in the victim is a rewarding experience.

The bully often focuses on younger, smaller or timid children. The bully increasingly relies on threat and force.

Direct and Indirect Bullying

It is important to distinguish the difference i.e. between those who are bullies and victims, and the larger group of students who are onlookers. Sometimes bullies operate in secret places, but often they feel quite confident that no one will stop them and they bully others in public. The onlookers are then part of the bullying.

Cyber Bullying

Bullying can take place online through social media sites such as Facebook. The school has strict ICT filters which prevent access to such sites but this form of bullying often occurs out of school hours but has ramifications in school. This form of bullying can take place with the use of handheld devices such as mobile phones and tablets by using a range of apps such as WhatsApp, Messenger, Bebo, etc. Cyber bullying can come in a wide range of forms such as posting offensive pictures of people online, targeting an individual through group messaging, threatening emails/texts/messages or victimising a group or individual with your activity posts.

Peer on Peer abuse

At The William Henry Smith School & Sixth Form, we believe that all students have the right to be taught in a safe environment to enable them to optimise their learning and achievement. We expect all students to develop self-discipline and respect for others and to feel valued and supported.

Students at the school have a variety of complex needs and the school provides a high level of pastoral care for all students in order to encourage appropriate and cooperative behaviour. As a result of this ongoing

support, students are expected to take responsibility for their own behaviour but as a staff group we understand that we need to utilise numerous strategies to achieve this. The school will also escalate any concern that is deemed a crime and will be reported to the police.

Regular updates with all staff, taking in to account “Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023, Part 5”, are part of the statutory guidance. This shows how us as a school should respond to all signs, reports and concerns of child on child concerns. Set out in these guidelines is an important message to all staff working with our children to always maintain an attitude of “it could happen here”.

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5.0 Reasons for bullying behaviour

People can be bullied on the grounds of:-

- Race
- Gender
- Sexual orientation
- Disability
- Socioeconomic status
- Nationality
- Language
- Religion or
- Other real or perceived differences

Reasons given for bullying:

- Dislike of victim
- Justify own inadequacy
- Power assertion over peers
- Attention seeking activity
- Inadequate/less able
- Jealousy
- Assert/affirm reputation
- Entertainment
- Racial minority group
- Affluence/poverty

6.0 Examples of bullying behaviour

Physical

violent attacks

taking property without permission

flicking, poking, moving chairs
mock theft, petty theft
mimicking
exclusion tactics

manipulation of others to victimise

spitting
kicking, punching, arm twisting
vandalising property
racial intolerance
invading privacy
group warfare
stirrers - encouraging others
to fight etc.

Emotional

weakness ridiculed
name calling
cutting people out of peer group
mocking, 'taking the mickey'
referring to family/home/life/clothes
teasing, taunting, coercion
highlighting differences
victimisation (less able/most able)
racial harassment

dropping people in it
personal insult/ridicule
undermining self confidence
sarcasm
making demands/threats
blackmail
destroying work/property

7.0 Recognising victims

Bullies need victims and they will find a reason to bully anyone. Bullying is NOT the fault of the victim. Most victims are gentle people. The bully will continually try to satisfy their need to dominate and hurt.

Types of victims:

Chronic victims

These are the ones always being bullied wherever they are. They have always been bullied from an early age.

Characteristics

Low self esteem
Under confident
Find bullying reassuring because it confirms their own opinion of themselves
Do not want praise
Destroy their own work
Always say no one likes them
Over sensitive and little sense of humour
Slow to settle into new situations
Are jumpy and wary of people
Resigned to being bullied

Passive victims

Characteristics

Anxious and insecure
Sensitive and guilty

Apt to cry or be withdrawn
Negative self-image
Feel they are failures
Lack confidence
Are lonely people, but very close to family
Very unlikely to retaliate

Active or pro-active victim

Characteristics

Anxious and aggressive
Niggly to peers, almost as if asking to be picked upon
Very disturbed in their behaviour

(Often this type of person tries any way to gain attention, even negative. They have developed a 'victim mentality' and are locked into this role of victim).

Different victims

These are students who are slightly different from the norm e.g. have chronic asthma, wear glasses, talented sportsmen, clever, visual impairment, good looking or wear a hearing aid. The difference being that it makes them stand out.

Most youngsters can deflect bullying behaviour, but some who have not been taught or shown how to react, show low self esteem, timidity and loneliness, which a bully will thrive on.

Accidental victims

These are the victims who have not been singled out by the bully, but happen to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. They may be drawn into a bullying incident where another child is the victim or they may be trapped by a bully who is out to bully someone.

Bullying can take place between peers when one party believes they are engaging in harmless 'banter' and the other party feels bullied and victimised by these remarks. Whilst we actively encourage healthy banter taking place within the school it is important that the students are clear on where the line is and to ensure they are aware of other people's perception surrounding this issue.

The anti-bullying coordinator has a presentation available to deliver to targeted groups to help students distinguish the difference between bullying and banter.

Special Needs victims

Students who have an obvious mental or physical disability. They may look and act differently from other children or have learning difficulties.

Students with disabilities within the family or a divorced marriage or bereavement, may also be bullied e.g. "Your Nan's in a wheelchair" or "Your dad's dying of cancer" etc.

Children can be very cruel and the victims need to be protected from further persecution and the bullies be taught how to respect other people.

Victims because of race, religion, language, culture and sex

Students from different racial or cultural background may be bullied because they stand out from the crowd.

This kind of bullying is often a case of ignorance, parental views and fear of the unknown. It must be challenged.

Some students are bullied because they are developing physically quicker or slower than their peers.

8.0 Implementation

Our school is committed to creating a bully-free environment and will ensure that its policy is applied rigorously. All staff will take responsibility for addressing incidents which fall within the school's definition of bullying and ensure that the victim receives what support is required; the bully is informed of the unacceptability of his/her behaviour and a record is made of the incident.

The school will keep the profile of anti-bullying high by having an Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator.

All children need to be aware that staff want to be informed of any incidents or concerns and that action will be taken when bullying is reported. This will be implemented by the Anti-Bullying Coordinator meeting with new students as part of their induction process and delivering targeted educational sessions to groups and/or individuals to raise awareness of the significance of bullying and how an effective reporting system will provide us with a platform to work from to eradicate bullying from our school.

9.0 Post incident responses for the victim

When a member of staff receives information, either directly or indirectly, that a child may have been the victim of a bullying incident, this report will be taken seriously and investigated.

Our school will offer a protective, sympathetic and supportive response to children who are the victims of bullying. The exact nature of the response will be determined by the particular child's individual needs and may include:-

- Immediate action to stop the incident and secure the child's safety
- Positive reinforcement that reporting the incident was the correct thing to do
- Reassurance that the victim is not responsible for the behaviour of the bully
- Strategies to prevent further incidents
- Sympathy and empathy
- Counselling
- Befriending
- Assertiveness training
- Extra supervision/monitoring
- Creation of a support group
- Peer mediation/peer mentoring
- Informing/involving parents
- Restorative work between the perpetrator and the victim (provided this does not increase the victim's vulnerability)
- Arrangements to review progress

10.0 Post incident responses for the bully

Our school takes bullying behaviour very seriously and will adopt a supportive, pragmatic, problem-solving approach to enable bullies to behave in a more acceptable way. School does not believe that the use of punishment is helpful in managing this problem but is of the view that the positive use of responses can be useful in demonstrating to bullies that their behaviour is unacceptable and in promoting change.

School will respond to incidents of bullying behaviour in a proportionate way – the more serious the cause for concern the more serious the response. When responses to bullying are felt to be necessary they will be applied consistently and fairly. The following options will be considered:

- Immediate action to stop an incident of bullying in progress
- Engagement with the bully to reinforce the message that their behaviour is a breach of school rules and is unacceptable
- Supported away from class/group
- Parents informed
- Counselling/instruction in alternative ways of behaving
- Adult mediation between the perpetrator and the victim (provided this is safe for the victim)
- Fixed periods of exclusion
- Rewards/positive reinforcement for students in order to promote, change and bring unacceptable behaviour under control.
- Police involvement

11.0 Managing a bullying incident

It is widely recognised that there is a vast range of types of bullying, and varying degrees of severity. It is often difficult to detect more subtle types of bullying which may not be immediately obvious or overt.

However, as in all matters relating to standards and expectations, what follows rests on the professional judgement and discretion of all colleagues to exercise that judgement as and when it is felt appropriate and necessary.

What are the aims in managing incidents? i.e. the rationale

- * to provide a secure environment in which students can report incidents confidently
- * to show all students that bullying is taken seriously
- * to enable staff to respond calmly and consistently to bullying incidents
- * to reassure students that the school will protect and support all parties whilst the issues are resolved
- * to provide long term positive programmes of personal development where it is required

There are five key steps in dealing adequately with an incident of bullying.

- * ensuring that a member of staff is available to receive the disclosure and deal with the situation.
- * investigating the incident

- * responding to the incident
- * recording the incident
- * monitoring the effectiveness of the way the incident was handled

Availability - Make sure that students know you are ready to listen to them and support them. The school will provide support so that any member of staff receiving a disclosure or dealing with an incident of bullying is available to take appropriate action. **Aim** - To provide a secure environment in which students can report incidents confidently.

Investigate - Investigate the incident as soon as possible, interview all parties separately to avoid intimidation. Establishing all the facts can be time consuming. When investigating you may need to take notes to ensure that you have an accurate record of what people have said. You may need somewhere private to do the interviewing. To ensure fairness, you must attempt to maintain an objective stance. **Aim** - To show all students that bullying is taken seriously.

Respond - Deal with the incident in the way that has been agreed and written down in the school policy. Make sure that students understand what the school policy on bullying is. It is important to ensure that you provide a positive model for behaviour (i.e. you do not respond in a threatening or intimidating manner). The bullying behaviour should be dealt with by use of appropriate consequences. Students may be identified as having long-term needs for counselling and other support. **Aim** - To enable staff to respond calmly and consistently to bullying incidents, and to reassure students that the school will protect and support all parties whilst the issues are resolved and in the future.

Record - Make sure the bullying behaviour is written up on a bullying report form. Communicate the incident to colleagues, the senior management team and at the next hand over meeting so that everyone is aware of the incident and any additional follow up can be put into action. Incidents are recorded electronically on SID (Student Information Database) and can only be completed by the school's Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator.

Information on the bullying report form should include:

- * subtitle - bullying behaviour or victim of bullying behaviour
- * name - of bullies & victims
- * class and house of students
- * nature of incident - e.g. verbal/physical/theft etc.
- * location of incident
- * frequency - is this the first time or have there been previous incidents with any of the same parties
- * action taken following the incident
- * follow up
- * person who initially reported it.

Aim - To keep a detail record of incidents so any patterns can be identified and acted upon.

Monitor - Show your commitment to dealing with bullying by following up the incident with the student. Evaluate the efficiency of the strategy, this is time consuming, but students need to know that you are following up what has happened.

Aim - To show students that the school supports them and wants to encourage positive behaviour and to provide long term and positive programmes of personal development where it is required.

12.0 Guidelines for Bullying Questionnaire

- To allow students to share their views in a way that is not blaming anyone individually.
- Explain to the boys the difference between never, sometimes, a lot, etc
- Inform the boys that the information given is confidential (what is confidential?)
- Explain to the boys that the questionnaire is necessary for the staff to build an accurate picture of how to make things safer for students in school.
- Inform the boys that as soon as is possible the information gathered will be acted upon.
- All questionnaires to be completed annually around the time of Anti-bullying week (usually in January)

13.0 Questionnaire results

When collated the questionnaire results will be put into a format where it is easier to identify areas of progress or ones to work on.

- All staff will be advised of the outcomes.
- SLT and Anti-bullying co-ordinator will monitor the results of these questionnaires over time to check on progress and identify trends.
- Any obvious concern from the results will be addressed.

14.0 Bullying Forms

Reporting bullying is a whole school responsibility and using the Student Information Database, it is now simple for any member of staff to create a bullying report which is directly sent to the school's Anti Bullying Co-ordinator to further investigate.

The screenshot shows a web application interface for reporting bullying. At the top, there is a navigation bar with icons for Messages (0), Students (59), and Links (7). Below this is a 'Dashboard' breadcrumb. The main heading is 'BULLYING Bullying Form'. The 'Add Event' form contains the following fields:

- Complainant: A dropdown menu with the text '--- Select Student ---'.
- Complaint made against: A dropdown menu with the text '--- Select Student ---'.
- Reported By: A dropdown menu with the text 'Tom Forsyth'.
- Date of Incident: A text input field containing '08/03/2016 12:20' with calendar and clock icons.
- Details: A large empty text area.
- Resolution: A large empty text area.
- Is everyone happy?: A checkbox labeled 'Yes'.
- Approved?: A checkbox labeled 'Yes'.

A 'Create Bullying Report' button is located at the bottom left of the form.

15.0 Live reporting

Approaching a member of staff to tell them they are being bullied can be a difficult process for a victim especially if they are fearful of any consequences from the bully. The school now has a live method of reporting bullying using the school's Webmail system. All students have access to their own email account and can contact the Anti Bullying Co-ordinator by simply typing 'bullying' into the address column. This will contact the [Anti Bullying](mailto:Bullying@whsschool.org.uk) Co-ordinator directly and it is then his responsibility to contact the student at the earliest and most convenient time.

