



# ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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## OBJECTIVE

This policy outlines what Worthgate School will do to prevent and tackle bullying. The policy has been drawn up through the involvement of the whole school community and we are committed to developing an anti-bullying culture whereby no bullying, including between adults or adults and children and young people will be tolerated.

## POLICY LINKS

This policy is based on DfE guidance “Preventing and Tackling Bullying” 2017, “Cyber Bullying: advice for Headteachers and school staff” 2014 and supporting documents “and “Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying” October 2014. “Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and Schools” 2021.

This guidance can be found on the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>

## OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY

- Discusses monitors and reviews our anti-bullying policy and practice on a regular basis.
- Supports all members of staff to promote positive relationships to prevent bullying.
- Will intervene by identifying and tackling bullying behaviour appropriately and promptly.
- Ensures that students are aware that all bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively; those students feel safe to learn; and that students abide by the anti-bullying policy.
- Requires all members of the community to work with the School to uphold the anti-bullying policy.
- Reports back to parents/carers regarding concerns on bullying and deal promptly with complaints.
- Seeks to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere.
- Utilises support from the Local Authority and other relevant organisations when appropriate.

## DEFINITION OF BULLYING

- Bullying is “Behaviour by an individual or a group, usually repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally”. (DfE “Preventing and Tackling Bullying”, November 2017).
- Bullying can include name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments; kicking; hitting; taking belongings; producing offensive graffiti; gossiping; excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.
- This includes the same inappropriate and harmful behaviours expressed via digital devices (cyberbullying) such as the sending of inappropriate messages by phone, text, Instant Messenger, through websites, social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading imagery by mobile phone or via the internet.

- It can also often be 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, or by actual differences between children/young people, or perceived differences.
- Bullying can also be of a sexual nature and linked to sexual violence and sexual harassment between peers. When referring to sexual harassment we mean 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline and both inside and outside of school/School. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child-on-child sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

## **EFFECTS OF BULLYING**

Bullying can have a devastating effect on a young person which can last into adulthood. At its worst bullying has driven young people to self-harm, be at risk of developing mental health problems including depression and anxiety. These young people may have fewer friendships, become wary and suspicious of others, have problems in school and do not reach their full academic potential and find it difficult to develop emotional resilience. Children at the highest risk are those who are both bullied, and who bully others.

The effects on children who bully other children are shown to be at increased risk of substance misuse/academic problems and violent behaviour in later life. The effects on children who are witnessing bullying may show similar signs to children who are being bullied

[\(https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/bullying-and-cyberbullying/\)](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/bullying-and-cyberbullying/)

## **FORMS OF BULLYING COVERED BY THIS POLICY**

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types of bullying including:

- Bullying related to race, religion or culture.
- Bullying related to SEND (Special Educational Needs or Disability).
- Bullying related to appearance or physical/mental health conditions.
- Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic bullying).
- Bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances.
- Sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying.
- Bullying via technology – online or cyberbullying

## **PREVENTING, IDENTIFYING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING**

**The School Community will:**

- Create and support an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration and care for others which will be upheld by all.
- Work with staff and outside agencies to identify all forms of prejudice-driven bullying.

- Actively provide systematic opportunities to develop students' social and emotional skills, including their resilience.
- Recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the community, including adults and children (peer on peer abuse).
- Provide a range of approaches for students, staff and parents/carers to access support and report concerns.
- Challenge practice which does not uphold the values of tolerance, non-discrimination and respect towards others.

Consider all opportunities for addressing bullying in all forms throughout the curriculum and supported with a range of approaches such as through displays, assemblies, peer support and the student council.

- Regularly update and evaluate our approaches to take into account the developments of technology and provide up-to-date advice and education to all members of the community regarding positive online behaviour.
- Train all staff including teaching staff, support staff (including administration staff, lunchtime support staff and site support staff) and pastoral staff to identify all forms of bullying, follow the School policy and procedures (including recording and reporting incidents).
- Proactively gather and record concerns and intelligence about bullying incidents and issues so as to effectively develop strategies to prevent bullying from occurring.
- Take appropriate, proportionate and reasonable action, in line with existing School policies, for any bullying brought to the Schools attention which involves or effects students even when they are not on School premises, for example when using School transport or online etc.
- Use a variety of techniques to resolve the issues between those who bully and those who have been bullied.
- Work with other agencies and the wider School community to prevent and tackle concerns.
- Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive School ethos.
- Be encouraged to use technology, especially mobile phones and social media positively and responsibly.

## INVOLVEMENT OF STUDENTS

- Ensure that all students know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying.
- Ensure that all students are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying.
- Involve students in anti-bullying campaigns in the School through such methods as the Head of House Scheme, Student Council, PT groups and Student Wellbeing committee.
- Publicise the details of help lines and websites in Boarding Houses.
- Offer support to students who have been bullied and to those who are bullying in order to address the problems they have.

## **LIAISON WITH PARENTS AND CARERS**

- Make sure that key information (including policies and named points of contact) about bullying is available to parents/carers in a variety of formats.
- Ensure that all parents/carers know who to contact if they are worried about bullying.
- Ensure all parents/carers know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively to raise concerns in an appropriate manner.
- Ensure all parents/carers know where to access independent advice about bullying.

## **LINKS WITH OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES AND PRACTICES**

This Policy links with a number of other School policies, practices and action plans including:

- Student behaviour policy.
- Complaint's policy.
- Safeguarding.
- Online Safety
- Pastoral Principles, Welfare and Practice.

## **LINKS TO LEGISLATION**

There are a number of pieces of legislation which set out measures and actions for schools in response to bullying as well as criminal and civil law. These may include (but are not limited to):

- The Education and Inspection Act 2006
- The Education Act 2011
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children Act 1989
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- The Computer Misuse Act 1990

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

- The Principal and Vice Principal, along with the Senior Leadership Team, take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy.
- Governors, the Principal, Senior Managers, Teaching and Non-Teaching staff to be aware of this policy and implement it accordingly.
- The Principal to communicate the policy to the School community and to ensure that disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably.
- Staff to support and uphold the policy.
- Parents/carers to support their children and work in partnership with the School.
- Students to abide by the policy.

## SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF BULLYING

Staff must be alert to students who may be vulnerable and at risk from bullying. A student may indicate by signs or Behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a student:

- Is frightened of walking to or from School.
- Changes their usual routine by feeling ill in the mornings or is unwilling to go to School or begins to truant.
- Becomes withdrawn anxious or lacking in confidence.
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away.
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares.
- Begins to do poorly in School work.
- Comes home or back to the Boarding House with clothes torn or damaged or has possessions which are damaged or "go missing".
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully).
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises.
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable.
- Is bullying other students.
- Is frightened to say what's wrong.
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone.
- 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.

## DEALING WITH INCIDENTS

The following steps may be taken when dealing with all incidents of bullying reported to the School:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident must be reported immediately to a senior member of staff who will report to a member of the Safeguarding Team. The bullying allegation will be dealt with immediately by an allocated member of staff.
- A clear and precise account of the incident will be recorded and given to a member of the Safeguarding Team and any relevant appointment members of the team– A note will be made on the students Shackleton page, it will be noted as a concern and will be in the student's private notes box.
- The designated lead on the bullying case will interview all concerned and will record the incident – All paper records of the incident will be kept and the incident will be logged in the bullying log kept by the Vice Principal.
- Teachers/Personal Tutors and House Parents will be kept informed as necessary.
- When responding to cyberbullying concerns the School will take all available steps to identify the bully, including looking at the School systems, identifying and interviewing possible witnesses, utilizing methods listed in the Screening Searching and Confiscation Policy and contacting the service provider and the police or social services, if necessary. The

police will need to be involved to enable the service provider to investigate the data of another user.

- A bullying incident will be treated as a Child Protection concern where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer, significant harm.
- If content posted online is offensive or inappropriate, and the person or people responsible are known, then the School will ensure that they understand why the material is unacceptable or offensive and will request that they remove it. If the police or social services are involved content will be left for the police to action its removal.
- Where the bullying takes place outside of the School site then the School will ensure that the concern is investigated, and that appropriate action is taken in accordance with the School's behaviour and discipline policy.
- Parents/carers will be kept informed as appropriate.
- Sanctions will be used as appropriate and in consultation with all parties concerned.
- If necessary and appropriate, the police or other local services will be consulted.

## **SUPPORTING STUDENTS**

### **Students who have been bullied will be supported by:**

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their teacher or a member of staff of their choice.
- Be advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how respond to concerns and build resilience as appropriate.
- Reassuring the student and providing continuous support.
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence.
- Working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance.

### **Students who have bullied will be helped by:**

- Discussing what happened and establishing the concern and the need to change.
- Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude and behaviour of the student.
- Providing appropriate education and support.
- If online, requesting content is removed and reporting account/content to service provider.
- Sanctioning in line with School behaviour/discipline policy. This may include official warnings, study support, removal of privileges (including online access when encountering cyberbullying concerns), and fixed-term and permanent exclusions.
- Speaking with police or local services to provide extra support.

## **SUPPORTING ADULTS**

### **Adults (staff and parents) who have been bullied or affected will be supported by:**

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the concern with the designated lead and/or a senior member of staff/Principal.



- Being advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how respond to concerns and build resilience as appropriate.
- Where the bullying takes place outside of the School site then the School will ensure that the concern is investigated, and that appropriate action is taken in accordance with the School's behaviour and discipline policy.
- Reassuring and offering appropriate support
- Working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance

#### **Adults (staff and parents) who have bullied will be helped by:**

- Discussing what happened with a senior member of staff and establishing the concern.
- Clarifying the School's official procedures for complaints or concerns.
- If online, requesting content is removed and reporting account/content to service provider.
- Instigating disciplinary, civil or legal action.

## **ONLINE BULLYING**

### **Definition and description**

Online bullying is defined as the use of technology such as email and social networking sites to deliberately hurt or upset someone or harass or threaten. Unlike physical forms of bullying, the internet allows bullying to continue past School hours and invades the victim's home life and personal space. It also allows distribution of hurtful comments and material to a wide audience. Online bullying is extremely prevalent as students who would not consider bullying in the physical sense may find it easier to bully through the internet, especially if it is thought the bullying may remain anonymous.

Bullying may take the form of:

- rude, abusive or threatening messages via email or text
- posting insulting, derogatory or defamatory statements on blogs or social networking sites
- setting up websites that specifically target the victim
- making or sharing derogatory or embarrassing images or videos of someone via mobile phone or email (for example, sexting/"happy slapping").

Online bullying can affect students and staff members. Often, the internet medium used to perpetrate the bullying allows the bully to remain anonymous. In extreme cases, online bullying could be a criminal offence under the Harassment Act 1997 or the Telecommunications Act 1984.

## **DEALING WITH INCIDENTS**

The following covers all incidents of bullying that involve students at the School, whether or not they take place on School premises or outside School. All incidents should be dealt with under the Schools' behaviour policies and the peer-on-peer abuse guidance.

The School's safeguarding, anti-bullying and behaviour policies and acceptable use policies cover the issue of online bullying and set out clear expectations of behaviour and sanctions for any breach.

Any incidents of online bullying should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Led who will record the incident on the incident report form and ensure that the incident is dealt with in line with the School's anti-bullying policy. Incidents should be monitored, and the information used to inform the development of anti-bullying policies.

Where incidents are extreme, for example threats against someone's life, or continue over a period of time, consideration should be given to reporting the matter to the police as in these cases, the bullying may be a criminal offence.

## **ONLINE BULLYING OF SCHOOL STAFF**

- Principals should be aware that School staff may become victims of online bullying by students and/or their parents. Because of the duty of care owed to staff, Principals should ensure that staff are able to report incidents in confidence and receive adequate support, including taking any appropriate action against students and parents.
- The issue of online bullying of School staff should be incorporated into any anti-bullying policies, education programme or discussion with students so that they are aware of their own responsibilities.
- Incidents of online bullying involving School staff should be recorded and monitored by the Designated Safeguarding Lead in the same manner as incidents involving students.
- Staff should follow the guidance on safe IT use in section 3.4 of this policy and avoid using their own mobile phones or email addresses to contact parents or students so that no record of these details becomes available.
- Personal contact details for staff should not be posted on the School website or in any other School publication.
- Staff should follow the advice above on online bullying of students and not reply to messages but report the incident to the Principal immediately.
- Where the bullying is being carried out by parents the Principal should contact the parent to discuss the issue. A home/School agreement with the parent can be used to ensure responsible use.

## **MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW**

The monitoring of all incidences of bullying will be reviewed by a designated member of the Senior Leadership Team by examining the bullying log to determine the number of incidences of bullying that have occurred in the year, to evaluate how effective an intervention programme was and what the overall outcome was. This review will be recorded in the annual report to the Principal and the Safeguarding Governor.

## SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS AND GUIDANCE:

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: [www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)
- Childline: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)
- DfE: “Preventing and Tackling Bullying. Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies”, and “Supporting children and young people who are bullied: advice for schools” October 2014: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>.
- DfE: “No health without mental health”: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/no-health-without-mental-health-a-cross-government-outcomes-strategy>
- Family Lives: [www.familylives.org.uk](http://www.familylives.org.uk)
- Kidscape: [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)
- MindEd: [www.minded.org.uk](http://www.minded.org.uk)
- NSPCC: [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)
- Victim Support: [www.victimsupport.org.uk](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk)
- Young Minds: [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)
- Young Carers: <https://www.carersuk.org>

### Cyberbullying:

- Childnet International: [www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com)
- National Online Safety <https://nationalonlinesafety.com/>
- Digizen: [www.digizen.org](http://www.digizen.org)
- Internet Watch Foundation: [www.iwf.org.uk](http://www.iwf.org.uk)
- Think U Know: [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)
- UK Safer Internet Centre: [www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk)

### LGBT :

- EACH: [www.eachaction.org.uk](http://www.eachaction.org.uk)
- Pace: [www.pacehealth.org.uk](http://www.pacehealth.org.uk)
- Schools Out: [www.schools-out.org.uk](http://www.schools-out.org.uk)
- Stonewall: [www.stonewall.org.uk](http://www.stonewall.org.uk)

### SEND:

- Changing Faces: [www.changingfaces.org.uk](http://www.changingfaces.org.uk)
- Mencap: [www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk)
- DfE: SEND code of practice: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

### Racism and Hate:

- Anne Frank Trust: [www.annefrank.org.uk](http://www.annefrank.org.uk)
- Kick it Out: <http://www.kickitout.org>
- Report it: [www.report-it.org.uk](http://www.report-it.org.uk)
- Stop Hate: [www.stophateuk.org](http://www.stophateuk.org)

- Show Racism the Red Card: <http://www.theredcard.org/>