



WANSTEAD HIGH SCHOOL

Anti-Bullying Policy

April 2020

1. Introduction

Bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals. It can be a barrier to their learning and have serious consequences for their mental health. Bullying which takes place at school does not only affect an individual during childhood but can have a lasting effect on their lives well into adulthood.

By effectively preventing and tackling bullying, schools can help to create safe, disciplined environments where pupils are able to learn and fulfil their potential. (*Preventing and tackling bullying, DfE2017*)

School staff play an important role in recognising incidents of bullying and supporting students, peers and parents of students who have been involved in incidents of bullying.

Wanstead High School recognises our role in 'encouraging good behaviour and respect for others on the part of pupils and, in particular, preventing all forms of bullying among pupils' (*Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006*).

Other key documents also help keep students safe at Wanstead High School. These include:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Extremism and anti-radicalisation of students' policy
- Anti-Bullying policy
- E-Safety policy
- Staff Professional Handbook including Code of Conduct for staff

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Act 1989/2004; and in line with the following:

- The Children Act 1989
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019
- Independent School Standard Regulations 2010
- Preventing and tackling bullying, DfE, 2017
- Behaviour and discipline in schools, DfE 2016
- Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff, DfE

This policy has also been developed using advice and resources from the Anti-Bullying Alliance, The Diana Award, NSPCC, Young Minds alongside feedback and guidance from students at Wanstead High School.

2. Aims

At Wanstead High School we take all forms of conflict, friendship problems, and bullying behaviour seriously.

Our aims are:

- To provide a safe and secure environment for all children in our care.
- To create a happy atmosphere in which both parents and staff work together for the welfare of the students.
- Everyone is mutually valued and respected regardless of gender, race, sexual orientation, beliefs and ability.
- To encourage children to adopt agreed standards of behaviour and values in order to develop a sense of self-discipline and to take responsibility for their own actions.
- To raise the awareness of all teaching and non-teaching staff of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of Bullying, and to be aware of signs of Bullying in non-verbal children and our children with SEND.

- To alert staff to warning signs, risk factors and impact of Bullying.
- To ensure the policy sits within the broader policy framework within school, including the Behaviour Policy, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the E-Safety Policy.
- To develop a structured procedure and framework within the school that will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of Bullying
- To ensure that all forms of conflict, friendship problems, and bullying behaviour education/awareness is in the school curriculum, e.g. school assemblies, and that such awareness does not promote or stigmatise Bullying.

The following principles underpin this policy:

- Duty of care is, as always, paramount.
- The child or young person is central to the whole process and should be given appropriate priority by all involved.
- All school staff will adhere to a consistent response to and understanding of Bullying.
- The emotional wellbeing and mental health of the child and young person must be supported and harm minimised.
- The child or young person will be supported to access service(s) which will assist the child or young person with opportunities and strategies from the effects of Bullying.

3. Scope

In line with the law, this policy defines a child as anyone under the age of 18 years.

This policy applies to all members of staff in our school, including all permanent, temporary and support staff, governors, volunteers, contractors and external service or activity providers.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation and liaising with the governing body, parents/carers, LA and outside agencies.

The school's Pastoral Leaders who include the Deputy Headteacher for Inclusion, the Pastoral Manager and Heads of Year will have general responsibility for handling the implementation of this policy.

Their responsibilities are:

- Policy development and review involving pupils, staff, governors, parents/carers and relevant local agencies
- Implementing the policy and monitoring and assessing its effectiveness in practice
- Ensuring evaluation takes place and that this informs policy review
- Managing bullying incidents
- Managing the reporting and recording of bullying incidents
- Assessing and coordinating training and support for staff and parents/carers where appropriate
- Coordinating strategies for preventing bullying behaviour

Key pastoral staff have completed CPD certified training provided by the Anti-Bullying Alliance which covers the following topics:

- What is bullying?
- Bullying and the Law
- Bullying and SEN/disability
- 10 principles to reduce bullying
- Preventing bullying
- Responding to bullying
- Cyberbullying

5. Definition of Bullying Behaviour

We acknowledge that both friendship problems and bullying behaviour can be upsetting and unpleasant but it is important to distinguish between the two, as the responses to friendship problems will be different to the strategies used to address bullying behaviour.

Friendship problems may be an occasional incident where both children disagree and find it difficult to resolve the disagreement without adult help. It is unlikely to be repeated behaviour and may even be accidental, where both children try to resolve the problem. However, we recognise that repeated friendship problems can sometimes lead to bullying behaviour.

Bullying behaviour is defined as - **“The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online”** (*Anti-bullying Alliance*).

There are four key elements to this definition:

- **hurtful**
- **repetition**
- **power imbalance**
- **intentional**

Occasionally an incident may be deemed to be bullying even if the behaviour has not been repeated or persistent – if it fulfils all other descriptions of bullying. This possibility should be considered, particularly in cases of sexual, sexist, racist or homophobic bullying and when children with disabilities are involved. If the victim might be in danger, then intervention will be urgently required.

Bullying can take many forms:

- **Physical** bullying (hitting, punching, finger jabbing, any inappropriate touching, pinching, jostling, damaging or taking property)
- **Verbal** bullying (name calling, put downs, threats, teasing, ridiculing, belittling, name calling, excessive criticism or sarcasm.)
- **Indirect** bullying (rumours or stories, exclusion from a group, shunning, invading privacy, graffiti designed to embarrass, withholding friendship or affection.)
- **Cyber** bullying sending nasty phone calls, text messages or e-mails/chat rooms.

Some bullying is done because a child is deemed to belong to a certain group. This has been labelled ‘prejudice based bullying’, and includes homophobic bullying, racist bullying, sexual or gender bullying, and bullying of students with learning or other disabilities.

6. Who can be subjected to Bullying?

Anybody could be subject to bullying at any time in their life.

A person is bullied when, either as an individual or part of a group, she or he suffers in any way from the direct result of intentional and persistent harassment and/or victimisation by another individual or group.

A person who has been bullied may commonly find it difficult to report their experiences to those who may be able to help them.

Children and young people who are at most increased risk of being the victims or perpetrators of bullying are those who:

- are in foster care or residential homes (looked after children)
- have an Education, Health and Care Plan
- have specific special educational needs

- have a disability or impairment
- are from minority ethnic backgrounds
- are refugees or asylum seekers
- start a school or activity group mid term
- are, or are perceived to be, gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender or questioning of their sexuality or gender
- speak a first language other than English
- are young carers
- have suffered bereavement
- have suffered domestic violence
- have experienced physical or emotional trauma

7. Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

A child 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 child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school
- Begs 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
- Attempts or threatens self-harm
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares/bedwetting
- Regularly feels ill in the morning
- Begins to do poorly in school work
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- Has possessions go “missing”
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Becomes unreasonable when dealing with school issues
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what’s wrong
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above

8. Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place over digital devices such as mobiles phones, computers, and tablets. Cyberbullying can occur through SMS, Text, and apps, or online in social media, forums, or gaming where people can view, participate in, or share content. Cyberbullying includes sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or mean content about someone else. It can include sharing personal or private information about someone else causing embarrassment or humiliation. Some cyberbullying crosses the line into unlawful or criminal behaviour.

The most common places where cyberbullying occurs are:

- Social Media, such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and Twitter
- SMS (Short Message Service) also known as Text Message sent through devices (also Whatsapp)
- Instant Message (via devices, email provider services, apps, and social media messaging features)
- Email

Cyberbullying can include bullying by:

- sending nasty or threatening messages
- posting photos, videos or posts about an individual online, or liking posts or comments about an individual
- trolling an individual or commenting on their posts or pictures saying nasty things
- revealing personal details about an individual online

- starting a group chat to talk about someone
- targeting an individual over and over in an online game.

Some cyberbullying activities could be criminal offences under a range of different laws, including the Malicious Communications Act 1988 and the Protection from Harassment Act 1997. There have been some instances of such prosecutions in the UK.

The Malicious Communications Act of 1988 makes it an offence for:

1) Any person who sends to another person -

(a) a letter, electronic communication or article of any description 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; or

(b) any article or electronic communication which is, in whole or part, of an indecent or grossly offensive nature,

is guilty of an offence if his purpose, or one of his purposes, in sending it is that it should, so far as falling within paragraph (a) or (b) above, cause distress or anxiety to the recipient or to any other person to whom he intends that it or its contents or nature should be communicated. (*The Malicious Communications Act 1988 - s1(1)*)

9. Journeys to and from school

Teachers have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside of the school premises. (*Behaviour and discipline in schools, DfE 2016*), This may include bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should 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 pupil. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed. (*Preventing and tackling bullying, DfE 2017*)

10. 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.

Some bullying can be a hate crime.

A hate crime is any occurrence that is perceived by the victim, or any other person to be one of the following:

- Racist
- homophobic
- transphobic (discrimination against transsexual or transgender people)

Or because of a person's:

- religion
- beliefs
- gender identity or disability

A hate crime is not only limited to a personal attack. Name calling, violence, property attacks such as graffiti, verbal attacks, and abusive messages either by phone, mail or via the internet can also be seen as hate crimes. No hate crime is too minor to report to the Police, they will record all incidents brought to their attention whether or not a crime has been committed.

11. Whole school approach

Issues surrounding friendships and bullying behaviour are taught through the Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education Curriculum (PSHCE), through Drop Down Days and Tutor Time. Students are taught to explore healthy relationships, including the positive aspects and benefits of friendships and the negative aspects of relational conflict.

Whole School Assemblies are also used to discuss bullying and raise awareness of what bullying looks like, including how students can respond and report. Anti-Bullying Week themed assemblies are held annually in co-ordination with The Anti-Bullying Alliance and The Diana Award. Bullying is also a focus of assemblies where the theme is Mental Health, Social Media and Online Safety.

All staff monitor behaviour and intervene when it becomes inappropriate in order to prevent bullying to develop. Those staff on duty during break and lunchtimes are aware that any concerns in relation to bullying or peer group issues which could lead to bullying, are reported immediately to the pastoral team.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development is covered across the curriculum, enabling students to:

- Respect each other including people from different religious, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds
- Recognise the difference between right and wrong
- Understand the consequences of their actions
- Understand the effects of their behaviour on others

12. Reporting and Recording Procedures

This policy offers a framework for addressing Bullying in an effective and supportive context in order to help staff, students and parents identify incidents of Bullying and be confident in the reporting and responses to such incidents.

Our procedures will be annually reviewed and up-dated in accordance with new and revised legislations, policies, guidance, and student and parent voice.

Children are encouraged to report any negative behaviour, even if they are not sure whether it is bullying. We recognise reporting bullying can be difficult and therefore the school has a range of verbal and non-verbal communications in order to allow our students to feel safe when reporting incidents.

They can do this through:

Speaking to any member of school staff

- Students can report incidents to their Form Tutor, Head of Year, Assistant Head of Year and members of the school's pastoral team who are based in the Learning Zone.
- Students can also utilise the schools dedicated email address for reporting bullying incidents stopbullying@wansteadhigh.co.uk
- Students can also submit a ticket through the schools 'Drop in Box' which will direct a member of the Pastoral Team to check in with them

Speaking to a parent/carer

- Parents/Carers can then contact the school via the Designated Safeguarding Leads, the students Head of Year or by using the schools dedicated email address stopbullying@wansteadhigh.co.uk

Speaking to a peer or another member of the school community

- Students are regularly reminded how to report incidents through Tutor Time and Assembly. Students can report concerns about their peers or any incidents of bullying Form Tutor, Head of Year, Assistant Head of Year and members of the school's pastoral team who are based in the Learning Zone.

The student will then be spoken to by a member of the school's pastoral team using the questions below as guide:

Exactly where and when did the bullying take place?

Draw a picture if it helps (if outdoors, there may be CCTV or similar to refer to)

Were there any other young people around at the time?

(If the young person can draw or describe where bystanders were, this will be useful information to support further investigation)

Was there an adult around at the time?

(This will be useful information to support further investigation)

Do you know the names of the people who bullied you?

(The school has a photo book which can be used to help students identify individuals involved)

Can you remember exactly what happened or what was said? What happened next?

Has this happened before?

How did it make you feel?

What would you like to happen now?

It is important students are listened to and believed. It is also important the member of staff listens to the wishes and feelings of the student and informs them of any actions which are going to be taken.

- The incident will then be discussed with the student engaging in bullying
- Information will be gathered from witnesses to explain what they saw
- Students will be asked to provide a written account. The school will make reasonable adjustments and use a scribe for any student who may find this difficult
- Parents will be informed and provided with an overview*

**Where there are any safeguarding concerns the schools Designated Safeguarding Leads will seek advice from External Agencies*

Sanctions will be applied in line with the schools Behaviour Policy. These might include:

- Official warnings to cease offending or withdrawal of certain school privileges
- Detention
- Involvement of the Safer Schools officer (the Police)
- Exclusion from certain areas of school site
- Internal Exclusion
- Fixed Term Exclusion
- Parents of those involved will be informed of any action taken
- Records will be kept on students' files

Where a child or group of children deny involvement in bullying behaviour the children concerned will be observed and monitored. The child being bullied may be asked to record and report any incidents which cause them concern.

All incidents whereby students report a concern are logged on the school's system. This applies to friendship/peer group issues which can lead to bullying or build a picture of sustained of **hurtful, repetitive** and **intentional** behaviours (see S5, P3).

Friendship/peer group incidents which are logged to detect patterns of behaviour do not count against any students conduct record. This only applies when an incident of bullying has been found and subsequently sanctioned.

13. School support

Wanstead High School recognise incidents of bullying can have impact on all students involved regardless of whether they are the aggressor, target, bystander or witness. Therefore, the school has a number of support strategies for any student who requires support prior to, after or during an incident of bullying being reported and sanctioned.

Support for the victim is essential both immediately following the incident and during an agreed period of review. Peer support, staff support, parental support and outside agency support may all be essential to ensure that the victim does not suffer any long-term effects. After a period of time staff will meet with the victim to reassess the situation and the relationship between those involved.

Children who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Having an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff
- Continuous support, by means of sessions with the School Counsellor or Learning Mentor
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence, by means of individual or group work from the schools Pastoral Curriculum

It is recognised that support must be given to the perpetrator. Disciplinary procedures against the perpetrator(s) are intended to change or modify behaviour rather than label anyone as a bully. Such procedures may include:

- Positive behaviour strategies
- Reflecting on their behaviour either through written work or during a session with a Learning Mentor
- Discussion about the effects and impact of bullying
- Involvement of other agencies and services such as an Educational Psychologist and New Rush Hall Outreach where deemed appropriate

Students at Wanstead High School voice they appreciate the opportunity to discuss what has happened through restorative practices facilitated by members of staff. Whilst this is not suitable for all incidents, where possible it gives students the chance to discuss their views and feelings in a safe environment. It also allows some resolution for students, enabling students to co-exist without ill feeling.

Staff facilitating restorative conversations will use some of the following prompts to help students explore their feelings.

- What happened?
- What were you thinking/feeling at the time?
- What are you thinking/feeling now?
- Who's been affected by what happened and how?
- What do you/they need?
- What needs to happen to make things right?

Where there has been significant impact to a student's emotional well-being and/or school attendance an Individual Education Plan (IEP) will be considered.

14. Monitoring

As aforementioned incidents whereby a student has reported a concern are logged on the school's system. This applies to friendship/peer group issues which can lead to bullying or build a picture of sustained of **hurtful**, **repetitive** and **intentional** behaviours (see S5, P3).

Friendship/peer group incidents which are logged to detect patterns of behaviour do not count against any students conduct record. This only applies when an incident of bullying has been found and subsequently sanctioned.

The school maintains an Anti-Bullying log which details a description of the incident alongside those students involved and individual outcomes/sanctions for each student. These logs and data recorded on the school's system often provide context for any repeated incidents or students who are repeatedly involved in incidents.

Recording incidents also enables the schools to:

- Manage individual cases effectively
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of strategies
- Demonstrate decision making processes

Helplines and services available for young people:

YoungMinds Crisis Messenger

- Provides free, 24/7 crisis support across the UK if you are experiencing a mental health crisis
- If you need urgent help text YM to 85258
- All texts are answered by trained volunteers, with support from experienced clinical supervisors
- Texts are free from EE, O2, Vodafone, 3, Virgin Mobile, BT Mobile, GiffGaff, Tesco Mobile and Telecom Plus.

Childline

- www.childline.org.uk
- If you're under 19 you can confidentially call, email or chat online about any problem big or small
- Freephone 24h helpline: 0800 1111
- [Sign up for a childline account](#) on the website to be able to message a counsellor anytime without using your email address
- Chat 1:1 with an [online advisor](#)

The Mix

- www.themix.org.uk
- If you're under 25 you can talk to The Mix for free on the phone, by email or on their webchat. You can also use their phone counselling service, or get more information on support services you might need.
- Freephone: 0808 808 4994 (13:00-23:00 daily)