

WICKERSLEY

SCHOOL & SPORTS COLLEGE

POLICIES

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY



WSSC Anti bullying Policy

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Statement of intent

Wickersley School and Sports College believes that all pupils are entitled to learn in a safe and supportive environment; this means being free from all forms of bullying behaviour. This policy outlines how instances of bullying are dealt with, including the procedures to prevent occurrences of bullying.

These strategies, such as learning about tolerance and difference as part of the school's curriculum, aim to promote an inclusive, tolerant and supportive ethos at the school.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 outlines a number of legal obligations regarding the school's response to bullying. Under section 89, schools must have measures in place to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils. These measures are part of the school's Behavioural Policy, which is communicated to all pupils, school staff and parents.

All staff, parents/carers and pupils work together to prevent and reduce any instances of bullying at the school. There is a zero tolerance policy for bullying at Wickersley School and Sports College.

1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006

- Equality Act 2010
- Children Act 1989
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
 - Public Order Act 1986
 - Communications Act 2003
 - Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Education Act 2011

This policy has been written in accordance with DfE advice, including, but not limited to:

- DfE 'Preventing and tackling bullying' (2017)
- 1.2. This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the school's:

- Behavioural Policy
- E-safety Policy
- Equality Policy

2. Definition

1.3. For the purpose of this policy, bullying is defined as persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another person or group.

1.4. Bullying is generally characterised by:

- Repetition: Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over a period of time.
- Intent: The perpetrator(s) means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.
- Targeting: Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.
- Power imbalance: Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.

1.5. Vulnerable pupils are more likely to be the target of bullying due to the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are

different from themselves. Vulnerable pupils may include, but are not limited to:

- Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Pupils who are adopted.
- Pupils suffering from a health problem.
- Pupils with caring responsibilities.

3. Types of bullying

- 1.6. Many different kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying and can be related to almost anything. Teasing another pupil because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual-orientation, home life, culture, disability, or special educational needs are some of the types of bullying that can occur.
- 1.7. Bullying is acted out through the following mediums:
- Verbally
 - Physically
 - Emotionally
 - Online (Cyber)
- 1.8. **Racist bullying:** Bullying another person based on their ethnic background, religion or skin colour. Racist bullying is a criminal offence under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Public Order Act 1986.
- 1.9. **Homophobic bullying:** Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.
- 1.10. **Transphobic bullying:** Bullying based on another person's gender 'variance' or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.
- 1.11. **Sexist bullying:** Bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.
- 1.12. **Sexual bullying:** Bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal or nonverbal sexual dimension/dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes.
- 1.13. **Peer on Peer abuse:** children can abuse other children. This can include (but is not limited to) bullying (including cyberbullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexting and initiating/hazing type violence and rituals.

4. Statutory implications

- 1.14. The school understands that, under the Equality Act 2010, it has a responsibility to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act; advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and foster

good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

1.15. The school understands that, under the Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998, it could have charges brought against it if it allows the rights of children and young people at the school to be breached by failing to take bullying seriously.

1.16. Although bullying itself is not a criminal offence, some types of harassment, threatening behaviour and/or communications may be considered criminal offences:

- Under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to electronically communicate with another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, or in a way which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or contains information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.
- Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by means of a public electronic communications network, a message, or other matter, that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information through any media, including internet sites.
- Other forms of bullying which are illegal and should be reported to the police include: violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation and hate crimes.

5. Prevention

1.1. The school clearly communicates a whole-school commitment to addressing bullying in the form of a written statement (Statement of intent, see section 1) which is regularly promoted across the whole school. (Assemblies/Awareness week).

1.2. All reported or witnessed instances of bullying in the school are investigated by a member of staff.

1.3. Staff encourage pupil co-operation and the development of interpersonal skills through the use of group work and pair work in line with restorative practice techniques.

1.4. All types of bullying are discussed as part of the PSHE curriculum, and diversity, difference and respect for others is promoted and celebrated through various lessons.

- 1.5. Seating arrangements in class can be changed and organised in a way that prevents instances of bullying.
- 1.6. Potential victims of bullying can be drawn into working groups with children who do not abuse or take advantage of them.
- 1.7. Opportunities to extend friendship groups and interactive skills are provided through participation in special events, for example, drama productions, sporting activities and cultural groups.
- 1.8. All members of the school community are made aware of the school's Anti-bullying Policy.
- 1.9. All staff members receive training on identifying and dealing with the different types of bullying.
- 1.17. Safe and supervised places are available for pupils to go to at lunch if they are involved in conflict with their peers, or wish to avoid a bully.
- 1.18. Pupils deemed vulnerable, as defined in chapter two, will meet with their key workers as required to ensure any problems can be actioned quickly.
- 1.19. All teachers will also offer an 'open door' policy allowing pupils to discuss any bullying, whether they are victims or have witnessed an incident.
- 1.20. Before a vulnerable pupil joins the school, the 'pupil' transition mentor will develop a strategy to prevent bullying from happening, this may include giving the pupil a buddy to help integrate them into the school.

6. Signs of bullying

- 1.21. Some of the signs that a pupil may be a victim of bullying include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Being frightened to travel to or from school
 - Asking to be driven to school
 - Unwillingness to attend school
 - Truancy
 - Becoming anxious or lacking confidence
 - Saying that they feel ill in the morning
 - Decreased involvement in school work
 - Returning home with torn clothes or damaged possessions
 - Missing possessions
 - Missing dinner money
 - Asking for extra money or stealing
 - Cuts or bruises
 - Lack of appetite

- Unwillingness to use the internet or mobile devices
 - Becoming agitated when receiving calls or text messages
 - Lack of eye contact
 - Becoming short tempered
 - Change in behaviour and attitude at home
- 1.22. Although the signs outlined above may not be due to bullying, they may be due to deeper social, emotional or mental health issues, so are still worth investigating.
- 1.23. Where a member of staff has concerns about student's well-being, they will be spoken to in order to determine the underlying issues, whether they are due to bullying or other issues

7. Staff principles

- 1.24. Prevention is at the forefront of the school's Anti-bullying Policy.
- 1.25. The anti-bullying policy is underpinned by the 'Wickersley Values' which are displayed in every classroom and around the school site and are constantly reinforced by staff.
- 1.26. Staff treat reports of bullying very seriously.
- 1.27. Staff do not ignore signs of suspected bullying.
- 1.28. Unpleasantness from one pupil towards another is always challenged and never ignored.
- 1.29. Staff take action immediately when they become aware of a bullying incident; this applies to all staff, not solely teaching staff. Staff are required to either 'play' or 'pass', as outlined in procedures (section 10).
- 1.30. If a member of staff believes a pupil is at risk of harm, they will inform Julie Betteridge/Helen Alderson or Kelly Miller immediately.
- 1.31. Follow-up support is given to both the victim and bully in the months following any incidents, to ensure all bullying has stopped.

8. Key roles and responsibilities

- 1.32. The governing board evaluates and reviews this policy to ensure that it is non-discriminatory.
- 1.33. It is the responsibility of all staff to be alert to possible bullying of pupils and to deal with incidents as the highest priority.
- 1.34. H Alderson reviews and amends this policy, taking into account new legislation and government guidance, and using staff experience of dealing with bullying incidents in the previous year to improve procedures.

- 1.35. SDP keeps a record of all reported incidents, (CFCs, CPOMS) including which type of bullying has occurred, to allow for proper analysis of the data collected.
- 1.36. H Alderson will analyse the bullying data in order to identify any trends in the types of bullying occurring and implement the appropriate measures to tackle it.
- 1.37. H Alderson arranges appropriate training for staff members.
- 1.38. Each Head of year or SDP rep corresponds and meets with parents/carers where necessary. They also provide a point of contact when more serious bullying incidents occur.
- 1.39. All members of staff ensure that they are alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups, and that they inform SDP of such observations.
- 1.40. All staff will avoid gender stereotyping when dealing with bullying.
- 1.41. All staff understand the composition of pupil groups, showing sensitivity to those who have been the victims of bullying.
- 1.42. All staff have a duty to report any instances of bullying once they have been approached by a pupil for support.
- 1.43. Parents/carers are advised to inform their child's form teacher/SDP if they are concerned that their child may be being bullied or be involved in bullying.
- 1.44. Pupils are advised to inform a member of staff if they witness bullying, or are a victim of bullying.
- 1.45. Pupils are taught not to make counter-threats if they are victims of bullying.
- 1.46. Pupils are taught to walk away from any dangerous situations and avoid involving other pupils in incidents.
- 1.47. Pupils are advised to retain all evidence of cyberbullying.

9. Cyber bullying

10. Wickersley School and Sports College views cyberbullying in the same light as any other form of bullying and will follow the sanctions accordingly.
11. The school will support pupils who have been victims of cyberbullying by holding formal and informal discussions with the pupil about their feelings and whether the bullying has stopped, in accordance with chapter 12 and chapter 13 of this policy.

12. In accordance with the Education Act 2011, the school has the right to examine and delete files from pupils' personal devices, e.g. mobile phones, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone.
13. If an electronic device is seized by a member of staff, and there is reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, the device must be given to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable.
14. If a staff member finds material that they do not suspect contains evidence in relation to an offence, the headteacher will decide whether it is appropriate to delete or retain the material as evidence of a breach of the relevant policies.

15. Procedures

- 1.1. Minor incidents are reported to SDP, who investigate the incident, set appropriate sanctions for the perpetrator and informs the head of year of the incident and outcome.
- 1.2. When incidents are reported to a member of staff, they are obliged to either *play or pass*. *Play* means the member of staff investigates and follows the incident through to resolution. *Pass* involves passing the student on to a member of staff with the capacity to *play* to resolution; this will usually be SDP.
- 1.3. When investigating a bullying incident, the following procedures are adopted:
 - The victim, alleged bully and witnesses are all interviewed separately
 - Members of staff ensure that there is no possibility of contact between the pupils being interviewed, as far as is practical, including electronic communication
 - If a pupil is injured, members of staff take the pupil to Matron for a medical opinion on the extent of their injuries
 - A room is used that allows for privacy during interviews
 - A witness is used for serious incidents
 - If appropriate, the alleged bully, the victim and witnesses, are asked to write down details of the incident; this may need prompting with questions from the member of staff to obtain the full picture
 - Premature assumptions are not made, as it is important not to be judgemental at this stage
 - Members of staff listen carefully to all accounts, being non-confrontational and not attaching blame until the investigation is complete

- All concerned pupils are informed that they must not discuss the interview with other pupils
16. Due to the potential for sexist, transphobic and sexual bullying to be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviour, staff members involved in dealing with the incident are required to consider whether there is a need for safeguarding processes to be implemented.

17. Actions and Sanctions

- 1.10. If the member of staff investigating is satisfied that bullying did take place, the pupil will be helped to understand the consequences of their actions using restorative practice techniques, and warned that there must be no further incidents.
- 1.11. The member of staff investigating informs the pupil of the type of sanction to be used in this instance (detentions, service-based activities, etc.) and future sanctions if the bullying continues.
- 1.12. If possible, SDP will attempt reconciliation, using restorative practice techniques, and obtain a genuine apology from the bully. This will either be in writing to the victim (and/or witnesses if appropriate), or face-to-face, but only with the victim's full consent. Discretion is used here; victims will never feel pressured into a face-to-face meeting with the bully.
- 1.13. Parents/carers are informed of bullying incidents and what action is being taken.

18. Support

- 1.14. SDP informally checks whether the bullying has stopped and always tells students to come back if it restarts
- 1.15. If necessary, group dynamics are broken up by members of staff by assigning places in classes or allocating 'zones' at transition times.
- 1.16. The victim is encouraged to tell a trusted adult in school if bullying is repeated.
- 1.17. The victim may be encouraged to broaden their friendship groups by joining lunchtime or after-school club or activity.
- 1.18. Restorative Practice strategies are employed as judged appropriate to help resolve conflict and restore relationships.

19. Follow up support

- 1.4. The progress of both the bully and the victim are monitored by HOY and SDP. One-on-one sessions to discuss how they are progressing may be appropriate.
- 1.5. Pupils who have been bullied are supported in the following ways:

- Being listened to
- Having an immediate opportunity to meet with their **SDP** or a member of staff of their choice
- Being reassured
- Being offered continued support
- Being offered counselling, where appropriate 1.6. Pupils who have bullied others are supported in the following ways:
- Receiving a consequence for their actions
- Being able to discuss what happened
- Being helped to reflect on why they became involved
- Being helped to understand what they did wrong and why they need to change their behaviour
- Appropriate assistance from parents/carers

20. Bullying outside of school

- 1.7. The Headteacher has the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside of the school premises. This can relate to any 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.
- 1.8. Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it is investigated and acted on. In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying, members of staff can only discipline the pupil on school premises, or elsewhere when the pupil is under the lawful control of the member of staff.
- 1.9. The headteacher has a specific statutory power to discipline pupils for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives the headteacher the power to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises, and therefore, not under the lawful charge of a school staff member.
- 1.10. The Headteacher is responsible for determining whether it is appropriate to notify the police of the action taken against a pupil.
- 1.11. If the misbehaviour could be of a criminal nature, or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police are always informed.