



Wolgarston High School

Anti-Bullying Policy

Frequency of Review: Annually

Policy based on Guidance from REAch2

Amendments

PJT/SMC – Jan 2018

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1. Anti-Bullying

Introduction

1.1. Wolgarston High School is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Like all communities and families people have disagreements, fall out and have people they do not like. When this turns into bullying of any kind, it is unacceptable at our School. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively while ensuring they are fully investigated. The School is a 'telling School'. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

Objectives

- 1.2. The aim of this policy is to ensure that all Governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents:
- o Have an understanding of what bullying is;
 - o Know what the School policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises;
 - o Know that as a School we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported and that the school will take the appropriate action in the best interests of all children involved;
 - o Know that: bullying will not be tolerated.

What is Bullying?

1.3. Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, which is unprovoked, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

- Bullying can be perpetrated by an individual or small group against someone where the bully or bullies are easy to identify.
- Bullying can also occur when an individual experiences repeated hurtful behaviour from the community but no individual is repeatedly involved. This may be because the student stands out from the community and bullies are much harder to identify.

Bullying is an emotive word and as a school we will only classify incidents as bullying where they meet the definition above. We understand that children and parents often use this term inaccurately in what are upsetting situations that cause anxiety and distress, when children fall out.

Bullying can be repeated actions under any of the following categories:

- o **Emotional** being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures);
- o **Physical** pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence;
- o **Racist** racial taunts, graffiti, gestures;
- o **Sexual** unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments;
- o **Homophobic** because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality;
- o **Verbal** name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing;
- o **Cyber** all areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse, mobile threats by text messaging & calls, misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities.

Safeguarding and Bullying?

1.4. Keeping Children Safe in Education (2016) stipulates the responsibility of schools with regard to bullying and links to useful guidance.

The key responsibilities are:-

When there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm' a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern under the Children Act 1989. Where this is the case, the school staff should discuss with the school's designated safeguarding lead and report their concerns to their local authority children's social care and work with them to take appropriate action.

External support can be given to pupils whether or not it is deemed a child protection concern. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, schools may need to draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child engaging in bullying.

Peer on Peer abuse including bullying, gender based violence/sexual assaults and sexting is a specific safeguarding issue. Where a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, this must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Leads using the record of concern system operated in accordance with the safeguarding policy.

Please note 'significant harm' is a complex legal term. There are no absolute criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. More often it is an accumulation of significant events, both acute and longstanding, which interrupt, damage or change the child's development. Typically, this would involve social services, police or both and a child being placed on a child protection plan.

The School will Deal with Bullying by

- 1.5. Ensuring that the whole School understands what bullying means, including what a bully is, what a victim is and what a bystander is.
- 1.6. Making clear that a zero tolerance approach to bullying is in place in the School.
- 1.7 Encouraging children to report incidents without feeling they are breaking any kind of unwritten pupil code of not informing on each other.
- 1.8. Stressing the role of the bystander – the person who can intervene and help the situation. Research shows that bullying will stop in less than 10 seconds nearly 60% of the time when peers intervene (Pepler). We encourage the bystander to get involved as opposed to watching and colluding in any bullying they witness.
- 1.9. Taking incidents seriously, investigating and if necessary, acting upon them quickly and fairly.
- 1.10. Providing opportunities to raise awareness of bullying issues and providing a whole school focus for anti-bullying activities.
- 1.11. Develop children's own resilience. This may involve exploring feelings through role-play and viewing bullying situations from both sides.
- 1.12. Providing a structured, well-staffed environment for pupils during school breaks.

When Dealing with Bullying the Staff will

- 1.13. Respond sensitively.
- 1.14. Investigate the incident ensuring any bullying has stopped.
- 1.15. Record all incidents of bullying on incident forms and keep them in on file. Where there is a risk of 'significant harm' complete a record of concern and refer to the DSL.
- 1.16. In the first instance meet with the bullies and victims individually.
- 1.17. If appropriate, facilitate a meeting between the bully and victim as an opportunity for the bully to understand how their actions have affected the life of the victim.
- 1.18. Contact the parents of both the victim and the child displaying bullying behaviour to discuss the problem if appropriate.

Sanctioning Bullying

- 1.19. Punishing bullies does not end bullying. At Wolgarston High School we stress that it is the bullying behaviour, rather than the person doing the bullying, that is not acceptable.
- 1.20. The bully will be encouraged to understand how their actions have caused distress and anxiety.
- 1.21. Bullies are to be disciplined in line with the School's Behaviour Policy and appropriate sanctions applied.
- 1.22. We will ensure all actions are communicated to the relevant parties and recorded.
- 1.23. The staff are available to ensure the victim is supported in rebuilding their confidence. Support for the bully may include liaising with parents or referrals to outside agencies (CAMHS).

Further Guidance for Children

- 1.24. Do not bully other people – it is not kind.
- 1.25. If you see someone being bullied- help him or her by telling a member of staff.
- 1.26. If you are being bullied TELL SOMEONE!

Further Guidance for Parents Recommended by the Department for Education

1.27. Top tips if your child is being bullied

1. If your child tells you they are being bullied, thank them for coming to talk to you. It takes a lot of courage to tell someone you are being bullied but it's the first step to sorting out the problem. Try not to get upset (it may be hard!) Remain calm and assure them that you will help them sort things out. Talk to them about the definition of bullying as a repeated action rather than a one-off but don't be dismissive if the incident has only happened once. It has obviously had an impact for your child to report it.
2. Listen to your child. Ask them to tell you in detail about what has been going on, what the bullying has involved and how it has made them feel.
3. Ask your child what steps they would like to take next. It's hard not to take over, but try to avoid this: talk through solutions through with your child. What would they feel comfortable with?
4. If the bullying is happening at school ask to see a teacher. This may involve having a phone conversation initially. You may be tempted to talk to the bully's parents but this can have negative repercussions for your child. A teacher may help to encourage others to keep an eye on your child at school during the day and could also help set up a system (with your child's approval and support) to report any instances of bullying. All schools are required by law to have an Anti-Bullying Policy which outlines how bullying is reported and dealt with in school.

5. Talk to your child about whom they can talk to and where they can go if they are being bullied during the day. There may be clubs at break times where they could go to feel less vulnerable.
6. Encourage them to not retaliate or react to the bullying, as this often fuels bullying behaviour. Get them to practise being assertive and having strong body language and facial expressions. Tell them to remove themselves from the situation as quickly as they can and to report any instances of bullying to an adult.
7. Monitor your child. Ask them how school has gone and check in regularly with a teacher to see how they are getting on during the day. If you don't get a detailed response ask questions. Stay positive.
8. Bullying can hugely reduce a child's confidence and self-esteem. When your child is at home try to highlight their strengths and do activities which they enjoy and which help relieve stress.
9. Keep a log/record of your child's bullying incidents so you have evidence should you need to take the matter higher up in the school.
10. Don't let the problem get you down. It's understandable to be worried but try to remain positive and not to worry - that's the best route to developing an action plan.
11. Give the school chance to work with your child to try and reduce the bullying. If you feel the school is not doing enough to address the bullying, you may want to take the matter to the School Governors.

1.28. Signs and symptoms:

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:

- o Is frightened of walking to or from school;
- o Doesn't want to go on the school;
- o Begs to be driven to school;
- o Changes their usual routine;
- o Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic);
- o Begins to truant;
- o Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence;
- o Starts stammering;
- o Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away;
- o Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares;
- o Feels ill in the morning;
- o Begins to do poorly in school work;
- o Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged;
- o Has possessions which are damaged or " go missing";
- o Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the bully);

- o Has unexplained cuts or bruises;
- o Comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen);
- o Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable;
- o Is bullying other children or siblings;
- o Stops eating;
- o Is frightened to say what's wrong;
- o Gives improbable excuses for any of the above;
- o Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone;
- o Is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received.

These signs and behaviour could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

1.29. Help from outside agencies:

You may find the following web sites useful:

- www.bullying.co.uk
- <https://parentzone.org.uk/article/top-tips-if-your-child-being-bullied>
- o www.bbc.co.uk/education/archive/bully
- o www.childline.co.uk
- o www.antibullying.net
- o www.kidscape.org.uk

You may find the following telephone numbers useful:

- o Advisory Centre for Education (ACE): 0808 800 5793
- o Children's Legal Centre: 0845 345 4345
- o KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline (Mon-Fri, 10-4): 0845 1 205 204
- o Parentline Plus: 0808 800 2222
- o Youth Access: 020 8772 9900

1.30. Monitoring and Review

The School will review this policy every year.