



**WESTFIELD HOUSE SCHOOL**

# **Anti-Bullying Policy**

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**Person(s) responsible for Review:**

**Headteacher & Deputy Head of School - Jo Murray and  
John Mallet**

# **Westfield House School statement**

Children are protected from bullying. The head teacher with her staff team will aim to generate an atmosphere where bullying is known to be unacceptable.

Staff members should always promote unfair practice both with children, each other and any other person visiting the school either in a professional or personal capacity.

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# 1. Countering Bullying

All Children have a right to feel confident that this is a safe and healthy environment.

We want to ensure that all Children and staff remain safe from bullying behaviour and have the opportunity to thrive and prosper, emotionally and socially within and outside the home and school.

When bullying is encountered, we will ensure that the procedures are in place to allow:

- Reporting of the incident
- Having incidents of bullying properly recorded
- Having concerns or incidents of bullying properly monitored
- Ensuring appropriate action is taken in response to incidents of bullying and that is followed up

This will ensure that people feel listened to and understand that their concerns have been and will be taken seriously.

Within Westfield a culture of respect and dignity is agreed and promoted amongst the staff, children, and any visitors into Westfield and a set of shared standards of what behaviour and language is acceptable across Westfield will be advocated.

Staff and Children will receive guidance and training that encourages an understanding and appreciation of what bullying is and how it impacts on self and others.

# 2. Definition of Bullying

Bullying is defined as behaviour or actions of a person, group of people or a whole organisation designed to cause distress or to hurt a person or group of people.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding possessions, threatening gestures)
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic - because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyberbullying- e.g. using mobile phones or online social networking sites to intimidate or bully others

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

Accessed June 2019

The above document, published in June 2018, identifies qualitative research to understand anti-bullying practices schools have found effective.

These include approaches to tackling bullying generally and more specific types of bullying, for example:

- racial bullying
- special educational needs and disability (SEND) bullying
- lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) bullying

<https://www.gov.uk/definition-of-disability-under-equality-act-2010>

the above shares the definition of disability.

### **3. General/Prevention**

Staff must be alert to the risk of bullying and should take all reasonable steps to prevent such behaviour. This includes:

- Implementing a clear policy within the home/school that bullying is not acceptable
- Undertaking risk assessments at point of referral and at appropriate stages thereafter
- Providing information and guidance to Children
- Providing clarity to Children on acceptable behaviours
- Drafting behaviour management plans/contracts with relevant children
- Providing opportunities for Children to explore issues of bullying through the curriculum
- Reading stories about bullying or having them read to them;
- Making use of role-plays and social stories
- Having discussions about bullying and why it matters

We all have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Everyone involved in looking after Children shares responsibility for countering bullying and for creating a culture which positively encourages acceptable behaviour and reduces or prevents the likelihood of bullying.

As part of this ethos, everyone must understand what bullying means and what measures should be taken within the home and by individual staff to counter it.

Everyone should also be clear what measures they should take if they suspect bullying or it is reported to them.

In this respect, everyone should be alert to the fact that bullying may constitute significant harm and, if so, must be reported under Safeguarding Procedures.

## 4. Underlying Principles

Bullying is something, which happens in a relationship, which involves some form of hurtful abuse of power, resulting in a wilful conscious desire to hurt another person, or to put him/her under stress.

It may be any of the following: -

VERBAL: As in name calling or making personal comments.

SOCIAL: Like not being spoken to or being left out of activities/games.

MATERIAL: As when possessions are stolen or damaged or extortion takes place.

MENTAL: As when pressure to conform is applied over short periods or Sustained periods.

PHYSICAL: As in harassment or aggression.

SEXUAL: As in harassment or aggression.

RACIAL: As in harassment or aggression.

The seriousness of any bullying will depend on several factors:

- How long has the bullying been going on?
- How is it personally affecting the bullied child?
- The number of children involved.
- The degree of planning and provocation.

Any Child may be bullied but bullying often occurs if a Child has been identified in some ways as vulnerable, different or inclined to spend more time on his or her own. This can apply to many children placed in our homes and schools.

Staff must be very clear of their role in supporting Children to report incidents, which clearly constitute an assault.

Staff must also recognise that bullying can bring Children perceived or actual "Rewards", including:

- The demonstration of superior power.
- A closer group identity.
- Gaining attention or material gains.
- Venting anger, frustration.

- Compensating for lack of success.
- Excitement from the fear of others.

The links between bullying and disruption in Westfield need to be acknowledged and reducing bullying will help reduce problems on the site.

Tracking bullying involves looking at how people treat each other and so will improve the atmosphere of the whole unit.

- A sense of community will be achieved only if home and school take seriously behaviour, which upsets Children as well as staff.
- Promotion of all Children within the site counters isolation of individuals by others, nurtures friendships between Children and supports them to adapt to their living arrangements.
- Support should be offered to Children for whom English is not their first language to communicate needs and concerns.
- Children should be able to approach any member of staff with personal concerns.

## **5. Risk Assessment and Planning**

Individual Plans for Children

As part of the assessment and planning process, the Head teacher must ensure that a risk assessment is conducted on each child to ascertain whether s/he may be a victim or perpetrator of bullying.

If there is any risk, it should be addressed in the young person's plan (e.g. Risk Assessment or an individual education plan) with details of the strategies that must be adopted to prevent or reduce the bullying.

In the absence of such a plan/strategy, the following must apply

## **6. Countering Bullying Day-to-Day**

If they have any concerns, they must discuss them with colleagues and the manager; who should take what actions are necessary to reduce or prevent it.

It may be appropriate to convene a meeting, preferably with the young person/people concerned, to discuss strategies to prevent or reduce the bullying. This may include the following:

1. The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise;
2. In serious cases (see next paragraph), some form of sanction or exclusion from the other Child will be considered;
3. If possible, the Children will be reconciled;

4. After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be continuously monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

If the bullying is persistent or serious, the parent/carer of the child should be consulted.

If external parties are unavailable, staff may take what immediate actions are necessary to reduce or prevent bullying from occurring and then inform the senior team as soon as practicable.

## **7. Notifications and Management Review**

There are different notifications procedures depending on the persistence and seriousness of the bullying. Please refer any areas of uncertainty to the DSL team and/or Headteacher.

### **7.1 Minor or Non-Persistent Bullying**

Where bullying is not persistent or not serious it should be notified to the senior team at the first opportunity; the senior team will decide whether to inform external parties and what further actions to take.

### **7.2 Persistent or Serious Bullying**

If the bullying is persistent or serious, it is deemed to be an Incident which must be notified to the senior team and relevant external parties within 24 hours or as soon as practicable thereafter.

The external parties should decide whether to inform the young person's parent(s) and, if so, who should do so.

The senior team and external parties should consider whether the bullying may constitute significant harm; if this is likely, a referral should be made as per the Safeguarding Policy.

The senior team must conduct a management review.

## **8. Recording**

There are different recording procedures depending on the persistence and seriousness of the bullying

### **8.1 Recording of Minor or Non-Persistent Bullying**

Where bullying is not persistent it should be noted on MyConcern and young person's points sheet in detail.

### **8.2 Recording of Persistent or Serious Bullying**

Persistent or serious bullying is deemed to be an Incident, and therefore should be recorded as such (where it is possible the specific category of bullying e.g. verbal/physical/cyberbullying should be identified and highlighted in the incident report so that different incidents of bullying can be monitored as required).

The Head teacher is responsible for reviewing the incidence and nature of bullying in the school as part of regular quality audits and reports to the governing body.

Other records that must be completed will depend on the actions taken by staff.

Please refer to Behaviour policy for Incident and Physical Intervention Guidance, for details on reporting.

## 9. Guidance for Children

Social workers and carers should ensure that all Looked After Children are provided with guidance on how to deal with and report bullying.

All children at school should have access to relevant posters/leaflets written in their preferred communication format and accessible in each individual child's home (eg on a Pecs noticeboard – or in a drawer in communal area of the home – as appropriate)

## 10. Dealing with Allegations/Suspicions

In order to maintain an effective strategy for dealing with bullying each staff group needs to:

Challenge traditional idea's about bullying e.g.

- It's only a bit of harmless fun.
- It's all part of growing up.
- Children just have to put up with it.
- Adults getting involved make it worse.

Clear messages must be given that bullying is not acceptable.

Children must be reassured that significant adults involved in their lives are dealing with bullying seriously.

A climate of openness should be established in which Children are not afraid to address issues and incidents of bullying.

All complaints should be taken seriously and recorded in the complaints book. Children should be aware of the options available to them if they feel the matter is not being dealt with satisfactorily.

### **Respond appropriately.**

Ascertain the nature of the bullying; always consider the young person's safety.

If the bullying is that of a physical assault, should medical attention be sought? Also, consideration should be given in respect of police involvement, are there child protection issues to consider?

Give reassurances. Let the Child know you are pleased they have been brave enough to tell, say you believe them, and you are sorry it has happened, stressing that it's not their fault.

Offer counselling/support to the bullied and the bullying young person.

Where appropriate, parents should be informed and updated on a regular basis. They should also when applicable, be involved in supporting programmes devised to challenge bullying behaviour.

All incidents should be noted on MyConcern and the child's points sheet, and specific detail given within incident reports.

Any injuries should be recorded and cross-referenced in the accident book and accident recording forms.

## **11. Resolving/Reducing Incidents of Bullying**

Create an anti-bullying climate within Westfield that is conducive to equality of opportunity, co-operation, and mutual respect for differences. This can be achieved by, i.e.

- Low Tolerance of minor bullying "nipping in the bud" the incidents at the earliest sign.
- Never ignore victims of bullying, always show an interest/concern.
- Publicly acknowledge the bullied young person's distress.
- Organise quality groups, which allow Children to work together to identify their own problems, causes and solutions with careful sensitive facilitators.
- Encourage interdependence and feelings of mutual respect, reciprocity, compassion and assertiveness.

It is important when addressing bullying behaviour to avoid accusations, threats or any responses that will only lead to the Child being uncooperative, and silent.

Focus on the bully behaviour rather than the young person, explore, and where possible deal with the reasons for the behaviour. Staff should regularly carry out recorded risk assessments of the times, places and circumstances in which the risk of bullying is greatest and take action to reduce it.

Assess what he/she does and what he/she gets out of it.

Give a clear explanation of the extent of the upset the bullying has caused, encourage them to see the bullied child's points of view, reward any good behaviour towards other children.

Closely monitor the Child (bully and bullied) within the home and school.

If a culture of bullying continues to prevail and any child feels the issue remains unresolved then staff should ensure that the children are aware of the avenues open to them other than making another complaint through the school's complaints procedure.

## **12. Incidents of Bullying Outside the School**

Any incidents of bullying reported to staff, which may have occurred in their home community should be acted on immediately.

A full account should be gathered including where possible, locations, times, names of children involved and the names of any adults or teachers who may be aware of the incident.

This should be passed onto parents/carers and relevant school staff. Staff should ascertain the process of investigation and what will happen next. This should be passed onto the young person and make arrangements for the Child to be updated on the outcome.

You might want to visit the following websites where you can link with guidance and resources concerned with dealing with the problems of bullying

[www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)

<https://www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk/>