



Wilmslow Preparatory School Anti-Bullying Policy **Whole School Policy including EYFS**

Anti-Bullying Policy

This Policy is applicable to all pupils, including those in the EYFS

The Governing Body of Wilmslow Preparatory School (WPS) understands its regulatory responsibilities and will maintain an effective oversight of this policy, by evaluating its effectiveness, and reviewing and implementing change.

This Policy is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for dealing with bullying; it is underpinned by the Mission Statement and the Aims of Wilmslow Preparatory School. The Anti Bullying policy is made available to staff, both teaching and support, pupils and parents and is informed by the DfE Guidance 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (July 2017) and Cyberbullying: Advice for Head teachers and school staff (2014).

WPS recognises its legal duty under the Independent Schools Standards Regulations to make provision for measures to tackle all forms of bullying in so far as is reasonably practicable.

Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident will be addressed as a Child Protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. In such cases the safeguarding procedures should be followed and it may then become necessary to inform external agencies such as the Police or Children's Social Care.

The policy takes account of School values and principles that allow pupils to learn how to interact with others and encourages them to talk about bullying. By means of applying its Anti-Bullying policy, the School seeks to create an environment where opportunities to bully are limited.

The Anti-Bullying Policy is consistent with the principles that underpin our Safeguarding Policy, Discipline Policy, Behaviour and Discipline Policy, eSafety Policy, Equal Opportunities and Race Policy and takes account of the *Prevent* Guidance.

1. Definition

Bullying is behaviour which is repeated over time and intentionally hurts another pupil or group physically or emotionally and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disability, or because a child is adopted or is a carer - it may occur directly or through cyber-technology (social websites, mobile 'phones, text messages, photographs and email). It is the wilful desire to hurt or frighten someone. It can be physical or psychological and can cause psychological damage, and in extreme cases can lead to suicide. The bully is likely to know exactly what he or she is doing, but it is also possible that he or she may not appreciate the effect of their actions. Any behaviour which is deemed to be of a bullying nature will be recorded as such, even if it is a single incident, to enable the School to spot patterns to ensure that a single incident does not become the first of a series. The victim and the bully are both in need of help and the crucial point is that the victim must talk about the situation. Bullying thrives on secrecy and so it is the responsibility of every member of the WPS community to remain vigilant to the threat of bullying at all times and to act immediately if they see or suspect that bullying is happening.

It is important to remember that any pupil, regardless of age, personality and profile within the community, may be subject to bullying from other members of the community. Staff should be especially vigilant of those who may be more vulnerable, such as:

- those new to the community, especially any with a history of social difficulties at previous schools

- those who are distinct from their peers on the grounds of appearance, sexual, gender or cultural identity, background or beliefs.
- those who struggle to develop friendships or do so in inappropriate ways, or whose interests are more solitary

The school understands the seriousness of bullying both physical and emotional which can cause psychological damage and even suicide in extreme cases. Whilst not a specific criminal offence, there are laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour.

Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour. It can be:

- Physical
A child can be physically punched, kicked, hit, spat at etc.
- Verbal
Verbal abuse can take the form of name-calling. It may be directed towards race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disability, or because a child is adopted or is a carer.
- Via Technology(cyber-technology)
A child can be bullied via the internet and e-mail, word documents, online messaging and forums (social websites), mobile telephones and text messaging and photographs. The school has a no mobile phone policy for children and strict guidance on use of mobiles by adults as detailed in the E-Safety Policy and Use of Mobile Devices Policy.
- Exclusion
A child can be bullied simply by being excluded from discussions/activities, with those they believe to be their friends.
- Damage to property or theft
Pupils may have their property damaged or stolen. Physical threats may be used by the bully in order that the pupil hands over property to them.
- Sexual
Pupils may be bullied by unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments .

Initiation ceremonies

Intended to cause pain, anxiety or humiliation

Reasons why someone might be bullied

Racial, Religious and Cultural

Offensive mimicry; racial, religious and cultural taunts or jokes; wearing of provocative badges or insignia; derogatory racial, religious and cultural graffiti; making fun of customs, accent or dress; refusal to co-operate or work with others of a different culture. Bullying because of a person's religious belief.

Homophobic, Transphobic and Biphobic Bullying

Homophobic, transphobic and biphobic bullying are the official terms that describe bullying motivated by the irrational hatred, intolerance, and/or fear of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBTQ+) people. This can involve any hostile or offensive action against lesbians, gay males, bisexual, transgender people or those perceived to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. This may include a person receiving threats to 'out' them and tell their friends and family about their sexuality or gender, or being compared to LGBTQ+ celebrities or characters that portray particular stereotypes of LGBTQ+ people.

Sexual/sexist

Bullying because of gender or focusing on the issue of sex or unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments

Special Educational Needs and Disability

Bullying because of a specific learning need or physical or mental disability.

Appearance or health

Bullying based upon appearance or health conditions.

Home circumstances

Bullying based on a person's home circumstances where they may be a looked after child, adopted or fostered. This may also include where the child takes on a role of carer within their home setting.

Protected Characteristics

Bullying is based on protected characteristics (age, gender reassignment, marriage, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation) is taken particularly seriously.

Signs of Bullying

A pupil 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 pupil:

- is frightened of travelling to or from School
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to School
- rapid weight gain or loss
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- 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.

2. Aims of Anti-Bullying Policy

- To create a climate in school whereby bullying behaviour is not accepted by any member of the school community, including parents.
- To implement strategies for all pupils, staff and parents to work towards the elimination of bullying.
- To establish effective procedures to identify and deal with bullying if and when it occurs.
- To make use of the curriculum to raise awareness of what bullying is and the school's expectations.
- To provide on-going support and counselling for both victims and bullies.
- To involve outside professional agencies if and where necessary and helpful.
- To identify and record patterns in behaviour or personnel involved that may indicate bullying.

3. Prevention

The school curriculum is an important vehicle for activities designed to prevent an incidence of bullying and every opportunity should be taken to use it to counter bullying, for example:

- Assemblies
- PSHEE
- Circle Time
- Specific Anti-Bullying Weeks (including Odd Socks Day)
- Rewards and Sanctions (as stated in the Behaviour and Discipline Policy)
- Parental involvement
- Presentations by outside agencies, e.g. Theatre companies re bullying; Local Police re E-safety presentation to parents and pupils

These opportunities will include discussions of differences between people and the importance of avoiding prejudiced-based language.

- Raising awareness of staff through training, all staff will keep up to date with their understanding of the principles of this policy and their legal responsibilities in regard to preventing, dealing with and recording incidents of bullying; this will include being aware of possible signs of bullying, identifying action to resolve and prevent problems and knowing how to access sources of support. Pupil matters are discussed weekly in staff meetings.
- Working with parents and guardians. Parents play a key role in the management of incidents of bullying. Any parent who suspects that their child may be being bullied or is involved in bullying other children should speak to their child's Class Teacher. The child should be encouraged by their parents, to talk to their Class Teacher about problems they are experiencing with other children or to talk about their involvement (including when they have found themselves a bystander) in the bullying of other children. All parents are expected to support the School's Anti Bullying Policy.
- Raising awareness of pupil responsibilities. The responsibility for preventing bullying is shared with all adults and children involved in the School. Children are expected to put into practice what they have learnt in School about anti-bullying and to make a positive contribution to the School and the happiness and safety of all the children within it.

These can all be a means of helping with assertiveness, self-esteem, self-awareness, awareness of others, co-operation and conflict. This is not an exhaustive list as teachers may use a range of strategies and areas in the curriculum.

As a school we strive to:

- Organise the community in order to minimise opportunities for bullying e.g. provide increased supervision at problem times.
- Use any opportunity to discuss aspects of bullying, and the appropriate way to behave towards each other.
- Deal quickly, firmly and fairly with any complaints, involving parents where necessary.
- Review the School's Anti-Bullying Policy and its degree of success.
- The school staff will continue to have a firm but fair discipline structure. The rules should be few, simple and easy to understand.
- Not use teaching materials or equipment, which gives a bad or negative view of any group because of their ethnic origin or gender etc.
- Encourage pupils to discuss how they get on with other people and to form positive attitudes towards other people.
- Encourage pupils to treat everyone with respect.
- We will treat bullying as a serious offence and take every possible action to eradicate it from our school.

4. Procedures to Follow For Pupils

All new pupils are briefed on the School's expected standards of behaviour through the Home/School Agreement. They are told what to do if they encounter bullying. Whistle-blowers who act in good faith will not be penalised and will be supported. Bullying thrives on fear and silence. It is important that the School encourages pupils to be brave, and to talk. Pupils can talk to any member of staff. If the pupil needs

support, and they probably will, then they might ask a friend to accompany them. This friend may have witnessed events and will be a useful ally. The bully themselves may be acting out of a lack of self-worth and low self-esteem, and they too may feel the need to talk to someone about it.

If pupils know that someone else is being bullied: Don't stand and watch; fetch help. Tell an adult immediately. Teachers have ways of dealing with bullying without getting you in to trouble.

If a friend tells you that they are being bullied, try to persuade them to tell a teacher themselves. If this does not happen, you should tell a teacher yourself.

Do not condone, or pretend to condone bullying. Show that you and your friends disapprove.

Be sympathetic and supportive to someone who may be being bullied.

Be careful about teasing people or making personal remarks; if what you are about to say may be hurtful, do not say it.

All our pupils are encouraged to tell a member of staff at once if they know that bullying is taking place, so that the School can take steps to help the victim. Pupils are encouraged to be sceptical about rumours concerning other pupils rather than adding to them and to consider how they would feel if in the position of the person targeted.

Staff will

- Receive training to ensure they maintain awareness and are equipped to deal with issues in this area as well as understanding legal responsibilities.
- Be aware of early signs of distress or withdrawal in pupils.
- Ensure that all accessible areas of the School are patrolled effectively to reduce the risk of bullying at times and places where it is most likely.
- Use any opportunity to discuss aspects of bullying and the appropriate way to behave towards each other, e.g. PSHEE Programme, assemblies, specific Anti-Bullying Week and through the curriculum.
- Build positive self-images among the pupils.
- Commend appropriate behaviour.
- Offer positive role models in terms of mutual respect, listening and problem solving.
- Always take the allegation seriously and make the victim know that you are on their side.
- Establish whether there is any immediate threat to their welfare, either physical or psychological.
- Be sensitive, reassuring and emphasise that they are not alone in dealing with the problem and make sure that they are aware of all the support mechanisms available both within and outside the School.
- Use open questions to encourage them to describe the situation in their own words.
- Not promise confidentiality but reassure pupils that the situation will be dealt with sensitively.
- Keep a written record of information disclosed, using the wording used by the pupils, the nature of proof, any discussions held and actions taken. This should be dated and signed by the member of staff and copied to the pupils' central file and the Anti-Bullying file. This will enable evaluation of the effectiveness of the approach adopted as well as enabling the identification in trends.
- Report the matter immediately to the Headteacher.
- Deal quickly, firmly and fairly with any complaints involving parents where necessary.

It can be extremely difficult for a pupil to speak out, whether they are the victim themselves or see the bullying of another. Even if a disclosure or report has not been made but a member of staff suspects that a pupil is subject to bullying from others, this must be reported to the Headteacher. An opportunity will then be created by an appropriate member of staff for the pupil to speak in private and in a safe environment.

Any potential safeguarding issue must be reported directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who will decide whether it is appropriate to involve local agencies including children's social care and the police. A bullying incident must be treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. Staff must act strictly in accordance with the School's Safeguarding Policy at all times. However, in exceptional circumstances or if any pupil is in immediate danger, the instruction above does not prevent any member of staff from contacting the police and /or Social Services. Thereafter, the member of staff should report the incident as quickly as possible to the DSL.

The Form teacher will communicate with parents, who should be advised of the situation as early as possible. Allegations of bullying are highly emotive for parents on all sides and it is essential to ensure that they are kept well-informed throughout and able to support their children.

The victim will be supported throughout the process. The perpetrator is reprimanded, punished appropriately, the sanction reflecting the seriousness of the incident and warned that there must be no recurrence of such antisocial behaviour. The perpetrator is given suitable help and guidance. Records are kept on central log with the Headteacher.

Parents

The School will work closely with the parents to deal with instances of bullying.

Open communication between the Form Teacher and parents is encouraged, and staff should make contact if worried about a pupil's well-being. Parents are advised to:

- be aware of distress or changes in behaviour or attitude in their children.
- take an active interest in their children's social lives, discussing friendships and how free time is spent;
- encourage their children to report bullying immediately whether they be witnesses or victims of negative behaviour;
- share information or concerns openly with staff;
- Discourage your child from hitting back as this will only exacerbate the issue.
- Encourage your child to talk to his/her tutor about any worries.
- Know the part they are able to play in preventing bullying, including when they may find themselves as bystanders.

All parents are able to access the School's anti-bullying policy via the School office.

Summary of Procedures to Follow

- Children feel able to report bullying to any member of staff and that the matter will be treated seriously. Staff are available during the school day and before and after school.
- Through staff meetings and specific training staff are aware of the threshold for reporting bullying issues to external agencies (such as police/children's social care).
- Any bullying incident is recorded on an Incident Log, kept in the Incident file (locked in the Headteacher's Office). The Headteacher reviews this twice a term (or more frequently if necessary) in order ensure that any patterns in bullying behaviour or peer-to-peer issues within the school community can be identified and addressed.
- The Headteacher reports to staff termly on the effectiveness of behaviour management within the school at which time any patterns of behaviour, person/s can be identified and acted upon.
- The Headteacher will report annually to the Governing Body on the effectiveness of behaviour management within the school at which time any patterns of behaviour, person(s) can be identified and acted upon.
- Staff are aware that a bullying incident should be treated as a safeguarding concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

5. Management of Incidents

Our aim must be to provide a secure environment where pupils can report any incident confidently knowing that it will be taken seriously.

Staff should be available to listen to:

- Any concerns and to inform the Headteacher of incidents they feel are of a serious nature.
- Investigate any allegation as soon as possible.
- Record the incident in the School's Incident Book to enable records to be centralised.
- Record the incident on School Base so that all teachers can view and this information can be reported to Governors
- Respond appropriately and consistently in line with the Discipline and Behaviour Policy.
- Follow up.

If bullying is suspected, we talk to the suspected victim, the suspected bully and any witnesses. If any degree of bullying is identified, the following action will be taken:

Help, support and counselling will be given as is appropriate to both the victims and the bullies:

We support the **Victims** in the following ways:

- By offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about the experiences with their class teacher, or another teacher if they choose.
- Informing the victim's parents/guardians.
- By offering continuing support when they feel they need it.

We also discipline, yet try to help the **bullies** in the following ways:

- By talking about what happened, to discover why they became involved.
- Informing the bullies' parents/guardians.
- By continuing to work with the bullies in order to get rid of prejudiced attitudes as far as possible.
- By taking one or more of the four disciplinary steps described below to prevent more bullying, we would envisage that steps 3, 4 and 5 would only be used in the case of serious incidents.

6. Disciplinary Steps

1. They will be warned officially to stop offending.
2. Informing the bully's parents/guardians.
3. If they do not stop bullying they will be suspended for a minor fixed period (one or two days).
4. If they then carry on they will be recommended for suspension for a major fixed period (up to five days) or an indefinite period. The Headteacher will be in consultation with the Governing Body.
5. If they will not end such behaviour, they will be recommended for permanent exclusion (expulsion).
6. Any instances of Cyber Bullying will result in an immediate two days' suspension.
7. The Headteacher will inform Chair of Governors and a decision will be made to contact the police or social care if it is assessed that the child is believed to be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm,

WPS takes bullying very seriously; staff awareness is raised through training. Every effort is made to reduce the risk of bullying at all times and to monitor places and situations where it might be likely to occur.

Other Useful Websites

Bullying Alliance – www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

Kidscape – www.kidscape.org.uk

Childnet – www.childnet.com

Childline – www.childline.org.uk

Stonewall – www.stonewall.org.uk

Mencap – www.mencap.org.uk

CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection – www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Children's Commissioner – www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

Review date: September 2026



INCIDENT LOG

Please log all incidents

Pupil's Name	Class:
Date	Member(s) of Staff
Parents informed	YES / NO circle please

Is this an incident of bullying? circle	YES / NO	please
If yes, please provide details in the space below		

Is this on the basis of protected characteristics? circle	YES / NO	please
If yes, please provide details in the space below		

Please ensure that you give a brief description of what occurred, the name of all the pupils involved where applicable and action taken.

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Signed: _____ Headteacher	Signed: _____ Member of Staff	_____ Date
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