



Wellfield High School

Inspire - Challenge - Achieve - Nurture

# ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Wellfield High School is at the centre of a community of inspirational partnerships which nurtures respectful, independent, lifelong learners working together to shape a better future for all.

This policy has been formulated in relation to [Wellfield's Ethos and Values](#) and the Whole School Policy for Safeguarding and Child Protection.

The policy also has due regard to the following legislation and Department for Education guidance,

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- 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
- DfE (2017) 'Preventing and tackling bullying'
- DfE (2018) 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'
- DfE (2019) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2018) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying Advice for Headteachers, Staff and Governing Bodies (July 2017)'
- Cyberbullying: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff (2014)

The purpose of the Anti-Bullying Policy is to:

- Define acceptable standards of behaviour with regard to bullying.
- Ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the acceptable standards of behaviour.
- Ensure that standards are consistently and fairly applied.
- Define the protocol for monitoring bullying behaviour.
- Define the penalties for bullying behaviour.
- To equip students with the skills necessary to thrive and prosper in an ever increasingly competitive world.

Wellfield takes a pride in being a caring community which seeks to maximise the potential of all students regardless of gender, ability, social class, sexual orientation, age, disability, race, culture or background. We seek to provide a framework within which students flourish and become acceptable, responsible and effective citizens through delivery of the curriculum, pastoral structures and the school ethos.

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One of the most important preventative strategies to guard against bullying behaviour is the ethos and culture of our schools. Wellfield students learn to take individual and group responsibility for their own and each other's welfare so that bullying can be more easily identified and addressed.

Every student has the right to feel safe within our school environments.

Bullying can:

- Threaten the safety and happiness of students. When students are bullied their lives can become miserable, they may suffer injury and they may be unwilling to attend school.
- Inhibit educational achievement. Students who are not at ease or feel insecure in the school environment will not thrive.

## 2. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The Governors are responsible:

- For the overall implementation of this policy, ensuring that Wellfield adopt a tolerant and open-minded policy towards difference.
- Ensuring schools are inclusive and analysing any data to establish patterns and reviewing this policy in light of these.

The Executive Headteacher and Executive Director of Student Services are responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy, accounting for new legislation and government guidance.
- Using staff experience of dealing with bullying incidents to improve procedures.
- Analysing data to identify trends, so that appropriate measures to tackle them can be implemented.
- Ensuring staff are appropriately trained.

The Head of School and Personal Behaviour Managers (PBM) are responsible for:

- Corresponding and meeting with parents where necessary.
- Providing a point of contact for students and parents.

Staff are responsible for:

- Being alert to social dynamics in class and during unstructured times.
- Being available for students who wish to report bullying.
- Providing follow-up support after bullying incidents.
- Being alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups.
- Refraining from gender stereotyping when dealing with bullying.
- Understanding the composition of pupil groups, showing sensitivity to those who have been the victims of bullying.
- Reporting any instances of bullying once they have been approached by a student for support.

### 3. DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying is behaviour that 'intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally'.

A one-off misunderstanding or arguments between friends/other students needs to be distinguished from the sustained, deliberate bullying some children experience. The intention makes all the difference. Is the child being wound up on purpose? Is the behaviour vindictive? Does it involve picking on weaker or shy students? Students need to be aware of the consequences of their actions; but accidents and fall outs do happen.

Bullying may be distinguished from other unacceptable forms of aggression in that it involves the dominance of one student by another, or a group of others; is pre-meditated and usually forms a pattern of behaviour rather than an isolated incident.

Bullying includes threatening and intimidating behaviour and is often repeated and habitual. Behaviours used to assert such domination can include verbal harassment or threat and such acts may be directed repeatedly towards particular targets.

Bullying is:

- Deliberately hurtful
- Repeated over time
- Difficult for victims to defend themselves against.

The three main types are:

- Physical – e.g. hitting, kicking, pushing, punching, taking or hiding belongings, damaging property.
- Verbal – e.g. name-calling, insulting, threatening, writing unkind notes, making offensive remarks, making racist, homophobic or sexist remarks whether they are made directly or indirectly via mobile phones
- Indirect – e.g. spreading unpleasant rumours or hurtful stories; sending malicious e-mails, texts, chat or social networking/ online comments or messages (Cyber bullying)

### 4. PREVENTATIVE STRATEGIES

Wellfield uses a number of strategies to highlight the effects of bullying with a view to minimising incidents. These strategies include:

- Immediate intervention with any evidence recorded and acted upon.
- Curriculum intervention via PCSHE.
- Promotion of emotional intelligence
- The use of assemblies and Form Tutor activities
- The use of peer mentors who offer peer support.
- The use of in-tutor Year 11 'Buddies' assigned to Year 7 on induction.
- Consultation – regular surveys to find out student views on bullying within school and to act upon suggestions and findings of the survey
- Highlighting awareness throughout the school via the use of posters.

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- The use of Personal Development Centre offices as supervised 'safe rooms'.
- Parent information evenings as appropriate where a number of issues relating to bullying may be discussed; these issues include the use of cyber bullying by students.
- Using restorative approaches where-ever possible to resolve conflict between students.

### 5. CYBER BULLYING

- Cyber bullying is the use of Information Communications Technology (ICT) particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else. It can form the invasion of home/personal space at any time.
- The audience can be very large and reached rapidly
- People who cyber bully may attempt to remain anonymous. This can be extremely distressing as the cyber bully may never be in the same physical space as their victim
- It can involve text/voice messages, images, viruses, polls
- Some instances of cyber bullying are known to be unintentional – a comment or something said online that was never intended to be forwarded on.
- Bystanders can also become accessories to the bullying by passing on a humiliating image.

Bullying is never acceptable. Wellfield has a duty to protect all its members and provide a safe, healthy environment. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006) outlines the legal powers which relate more directly to cyber bullying. The Head of School has the power 'to such an extent as is reasonable' to regulate the conduct of students when they are off site. The EIA also provides a defence for school staff in confiscating items such as mobile phones from students. The 'Rewards and Behaviour Policy' comprises 'Searching, screening and confiscation at school'.

This type of bullying usually takes place outside school but has consequences for students whilst within the school environment. Parents and students are advised that they should download or copy all messages so that they may be used as evidence; to alert the school of cyber bullying incidents; to contact the service provider and the Police. Students are also advised that they should always report such incidents to their parents/teachers and to 'Block the Bully'.

### 6. RACIAL BULLYING INCIDENTS

Racial bullying is designed to intimidate, humiliate, ridicule or undermines the confidence of another student by reason of the student's race, colour, ethnic or national origin.

It includes:

- Ridiculing an individual because of cultural differences;
- Embarrassing or derogatory remarks, racist jokes and name calling;
- Written abuse and the display of offensive material including graffiti or the wearing of emblems or insignia;
- Deliberate physical and/or verbal abuse;

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- Differential treatment e.g. isolation or non-co-operation or exclusion from social activities.

All reported incidents of racial bullying **MUST** be fully investigated. If proven, the incident **MUST** be recorded, reported to the Education Authority via the 'Racist Incident' form and to the Governors. Parents **MUST** be informed of proven racist incidents.

### **7. HOMOPHOBIC BULLYING**

#### **What is homophobic bullying?**

Any hostile or offensive action against lesbians, gay males, bisexuals or transgender persons or those perceived to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.

These actions might be:

- verbal, physical, or emotional (social exclusion) harassment, insulting or degrading comments, name calling, gestures, taunts, insults or 'jokes'
- offensive graffiti
- humiliating, excluding, tormenting, ridiculing or threatening refusing to work or co-operate with others because of their sexual orientation or identity.

Any reported incidents will be dealt with in accordance with the Anti-Bullying Strategy outlined below.

### **8. SEXIST OR SEXUAL BULLYING**

Sexist and sexual bullying affects both genders. Boys may be victims as well as girls, and both sexes may be victims of their own sex. Sexual bullying may be characterised by name-calling, comments and overt 'looks' about appearance, attractiveness and emerging puberty. In addition, uninvited touching, innuendos and propositions, pornographic imagery or graffiti may be used.

Any reported incidents will be dealt with in accordance with the Anti-Bullying Strategy outlined below.

### **9. PREJUDICIAL BULLYING**

Prejudicial bullying is based on prejudices directed towards specific characteristics, e.g. SEND or mental health issues.

Students with SEND or mental health issues may have heightened vulnerability and staff will not assume that possible indicators of abuse relate to the student's SEND and will always explore indicators further.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed of any allegations of abuse against pupils with SEND. They will record the incident in writing and, working with the SENCO, decide what course of action is necessary, with the best interests of the student in mind at all times.

Any reported incidents will be dealt with in accordance with the Anti-Bullying Strategy outlined below.

## **10. STRATEGY & RESPONSE TO BULLYING**

Wellfield takes a 'zero-tolerance' approach to all forms of bullying. Staff respond consistently and effectively to incidents. This indicates to students that incidents are taken seriously thereby encourages them to report incidents and discourages those behind the incidents. However, Staff can only deal with incidents that are reported to them by students or parents, or those incidents which alert concerns.

All staff will be vigilant at all times and watch for potential bullying situations. Students will be observed in both formal and informal situations, i.e. prior to the start of school and

- In lessons
- At break time
- At lunchtimes
- On the stairs and corridors during lesson changeover
- At the end of school

All staff will respond to a bullying incident or concern where it is observed first hand or reported by a student or parent.

- Where incidents of bullying are observed, staff MUST report the incident to the relevant Personal Behaviour Manager (PBM) who will record and investigate the incident.
- All incidents of reported bullying must be fully investigated by the appropriate PBM who will decide upon the most appropriate course of action.
- PBMs must report all proven incidents of bullying to the Executive Director of Student Services and entered onto the Central Record of Bullying.
- Parents must be informed of proven incidents of bullying.
- Agreed support strategies must be put into place for those falling victim to bullying to ensure that there is no repeat.
- Agreed support strategies must be put into place for the bully to prevent a repeat of the behaviour.

### **Level of Response**

This will depend upon the severity, nature and frequency of the offence.

- For one-off incidents such as mild teasing or name calling a reprimand by the teacher or PBM may be sufficient with a warning that such behaviour must not be repeated. It will be made clear that if the behaviour is repeated then further action will follow. Parents will be informed.

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- The school will use all of the disciplinary penalties (in line with the Rewards & Behaviour Policy) including, as appropriate, the removal from the group/class or particular lesson and being placed on internal exclusion; withdrawal of break or lunchtime privileges; detention; withholding participation in educational visits, end of year trips or sports events which are not essential to the curriculum; completion of work or extra work; or carrying out a useful task in the school.
- If a member of staff believes that an incident may escalate during the course of the day, he/she MUST inform the PBM immediately who will determine the action to be taken.

### Contact with Parents

Where an incidence of bullying has been brought to the attention of the PBM and has been proven, the PBM will decide upon the nature of the contact with the parents.

- As a general rule, if the incident has been dealt with successfully in school contact with parents may be restricted to information via a letter or in some cases a telephone call. The PBM should make a record of the telephone call.
- If the incident is more serious parents should be invited into school to discuss the matter with the PBM or a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

In both cases the parents should be asked to support the school in enforcing its Anti-Bullying Policy and should be made aware that any repetition would result in more serious action being taken.

The PBM should also make contact with the victim's parents to discuss the situation and offer guidance.

### Parental Concerns.

If parents are unhappy that their expressed concerns about incident of bullying have not been addressed they should, in the first instance, contact the Executive Director of Student Services. If they are still not satisfied they should seek an appointment with the Head of School.

### 11. POLICY REVIEW

This policy is reviewed every two years by the Executive Headteacher and Chair of Governors.

Signed by:			
Mrs L Gwinnett	Executive Headteacher	Date	February 2020
Mr C Gaynor	Chair of Governors		