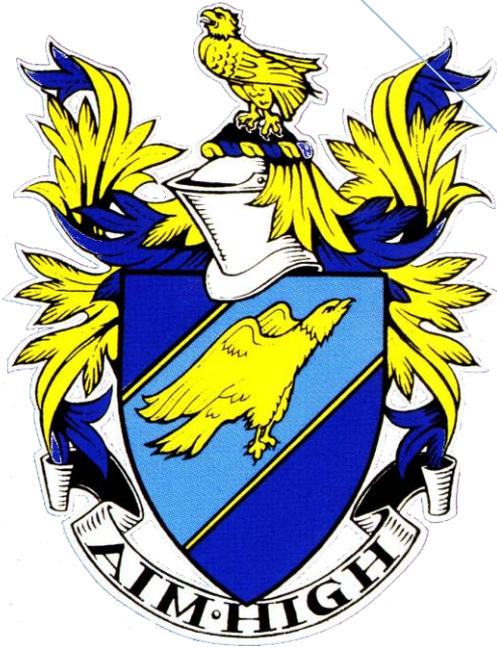


West Hill School



Anti-Bullying Policy

Reviewed by the Board of Trustees

Date: 10th December 2019

Next Review: Autumn 2022

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School ethos

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly, respectful and safe learning environment for all of our pupils. We promote an inclusive ethos that focuses on respecting one another and celebrating difference and diversity.

Bullying and prejudice-based language of any kind, involving pupils, adults towards pupils, staff or parents is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at our school.

We understand the devastating and lasting effect being bullied can have on some children and we will deal with all incidents equally seriously, quickly and effectively, whether it has taken place in or outside of school.

Preventing and tackling bullying is part of our work to support students' social and emotional development and to be recognised as a healthy school.

Statutory duties of school

The Education Regulations 2014 state that the Headteacher of an Academy must ensure that bullying at a school is prevented in so far as reasonably practicable, by the drawing up and implementation of procedures to prevent bullying among pupils and to bring these procedures to the attention of staff, parents and pupils.

Under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 the duties are extended to include preventing/responding to bullying that happens outside school, where it is reasonable to do so. Schools also have a duty to 'safeguard' and promote the welfare of pupils (Education act 2002) and to ensure that children and young people are safe from bullying and discrimination (Children Act 1989).

Definition

The Department for Education's definition in their guidance; "Preventing and Tackling Bullying" July 2017 defines bullying as "behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally".

Examples of bullying

Bullying can take many forms and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

Bullying is any behaviour by an individual or group that:

- Is meant to hurt – the person or people doing the bullying know what they are doing and mean to do it.
- Happens more than once – there will be a pattern of behaviour, not just a 'one-off' incident.
- Involves an imbalance of power – the person being bullied will usually find it very hard to defend themselves.

Bullying can be:

- Direct physical bullying (pushing, hitting, punching, kicking).
- Direct verbal bullying (yelling abuse at another, name-calling, insulting someone, using verbal threats, offensive mimicry of accent and/or pretending not to understand what is said, using discriminatory language).
- Indirect bullying, also known as social bullying or relational bullying (spreading rumours, social exclusion, disclosing another's secrets to a third party, graffiti).
- Cyberbullying –bullying using electronic media, such as email and texts, chat rooms, blogs and social networking sites, sharing derogatory videos and photos via mobile phones.

Who bullies?

Anyone has the capacity to bully. There are no completely reliable predisposition diagnoses. However, those who perceive themselves as low status within a community, institution or group may use bullying in an attempt to artificially boost their status. Self-esteem is therefore a key factor in whether someone bullies or not. This puts equal opportunities and inclusion at the centre of all anti-bullying work in schools.

Who is bullied?

Anyone can be bullied – young person, parent/carer/guardian, staff member or volunteer. People who suffer bullying are often perceived by others to be different. Sometimes the perceived difference is individual to that person – shyness, physical appearance, clothing and possessions, accent, perceived inappropriate behaviour. Frequently the perceived difference comes from assigning an individual to a group. Such bullying would then be designated as class, disability, homophobic, racist, religious or sexist. People can be assigned or be a member of more than one group.

Dealing with bullying

All the staff in our school take all forms of bullying and prejudice-based language seriously and will deal with it promptly and seek to prevent it from taking place. Any bullying incidents are recorded through our behaviour management system on SIMS and these logs are analysed by our pastoral team on a regular basis.

We will investigate and act upon any bullying incident that is reported to school staff, including incidents taking place outside of school e.g. on school or public transport or outside local shops. We will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the Police of the incident.

If bullying occurs we will:

- Talk to all the students involved separately to find out what has been happening and why.
- Explain to the student who is bullying why their behaviour is wrong and try to help them to see this for themselves. Be clear that bullying is not tolerated at school.
- Expect the student who is bullying to engage in a restorative process to enable them to take responsibility for their actions and to agree to stop their behaviour. A restorative meeting may take place, depending on the circumstances.

- Tell the parents/carers involved and keep them informed of how the incident is being dealt with and whether the bullying has stopped.
- Use formal sanctions, such as keeping them in at lunchtimes, detentions, internal and fixed term exclusion.
- Continue to monitor the situation and intervene if the bullying appears to be carrying on or to have started again.

We will also:

- Record all incidents of bullying and prejudice-based language.
- Spend time talking to the student who has been or is being bullied to see if they could benefit from further support such as counselling or from other interventions with our multi-agency team to help them develop their personal and social skills. In serious cases, a child may be referred to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).
- Spend time talking to the student who has done or is doing the bullying and try to find out if there are underlying reasons for their behaviour and if they could benefit from support or interventions to help them manage their behaviour and/or develop their personal and social skills.
- Address with other young people who may have been bystanders, observing or supporting the bullying behaviour, how they could intervene to stop bullying behaviour in future.

Guidance for parents and carers

Your child may not tell you that he is being bullied. However, you may notice some changes in his behaviour, including:

- Be unwilling to talk about their day.
- Look less happy.
- Come home with cuts and bruises.
- Come home with toys and things you have not bought for them.
- Take things from home without you knowing.
- Avoiding certain children or activities.
- Be reluctant to go to school.
- Feeling unwell, often with a headache.
- Anxiety.
- Aggression towards you or others in your family.
- Bedwetting.
- Waking in the night.

If your child is being bullied:

- Take time to listen to your child and stay calm.
- Explain to them that bullying is unacceptable and that no one should have to put up with it.
- Write down what your child has said. If it involves cyberbullying, keep any evidence of emails and texts.
- Encourage your child to talk to their teacher or someone at the school.
- Never intervene with other children or children's parents, but let the school know.

- Contact the school as soon as possible to let us know your concerns. The school will take any incident of bullying extremely seriously and will deal with it quickly to find out why it has happened and to prevent it happening again.
- Staff may not know about the bullying and will need to know what has happened. Staff will discuss with parents and carers action to be taken.

What to do if your child is bullying someone else

It can be a shock to parents and carers that their child could be bullying another child in the school. There are many reasons why some children and young people bully others. Sometimes it's because they are copying someone at school or elsewhere, or being encouraged to bully or that they have been a victim of bullying themselves. It may be hard to spot although one sign could be that they come home with possessions, money or other things that you have not given them.

At West Hill School, we will ensure this policy is regularly publicised to the whole school community and the message that bullying is not accepted is reinforced through whole school activities and information.

Support

Contact:

- National bullying helpline: 0845 22 55 787
- Childline: 0800 1111

Websites:

- <https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk>
- <https://www.supportline.org.uk/problems/bullying-at-school/>
- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/bullying-and-cyberbullying/>