



WILSON'S SCHOOL

Anti-bullying Policy

Approved by Trustees: Summer 2024

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1. Introduction

There is considerable evidence to show that bullying can have a long-term impact on the welfare of children. Bullying impacts their wellbeing (often leading to anxiety and sometimes depression), can impact their attendance to school and become a significant barrier to learning. Bullying is associated with lower levels of school engagement and achievement.

Bullying is completely antithetical to the guiding principle of the school's Code of Conduct: that everybody "must show courtesy, respect and kindness to all, at all times". Bullying does not only affect its victims but makes the school community less safe for everyone, limiting opportunities to learn and thrive. We therefore aim, by means of this policy, to prevent bullying at Wilson's School.

At Wilson's School:

- Everyone has the right to be valued and treated with respect.
- Everyone has the right to feel happy and safe.
- No-one deserves to be the target of bullying.
- Pupils who bully are encouraged to learn different ways to behave.

1.1 The purpose of the school Anti-bullying Policy (referred to elsewhere as 'the policy') is to:

- Prevent bullying from happening between pupils who attend the school.
- Make sure that bullying is stopped as soon as possible if it does happen.
- Make sure that those involved in bullying receive the support they need.
- Provide information to all staff, volunteers, pupils and their families about what we should do to prevent and deal with bullying.

2. Legislation and Statutory Requirements

There are several pieces of legislation setting out measures and actions for schools in response to bullying, as well as criminal and civil law. These include (but are not limited to):

- The Education and Inspection Act 2006 (2011)
- The Equality Act (2010)
- The Children Act (1989)
- Protection and Harassment Act (1997)
- The Malicious Communications Act (1988)
- Public Order Act (1986)

The Department for Education (DfE) provides specific guidance to schools:

- Bullying at school
- Preventing and tackling bullying (2017)
- Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education (2021)
- Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools (2022)
- Behaviour in schools (2024)

By law, all state schools must have a behaviour policy in place that includes measures to prevent all forms of bullying among pupils.

3. Definitions

There is no legal definition of bullying. However, it's usually defined as behaviour that:

- Is repeated;
- Is intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally;
- Is often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation; and
- Takes many forms, including:
 - physical assault
 - teasing or name calling
 - taking money or possessions
 - spreading malicious rumours
 - excluding someone from a social group
 - making threats
 - cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online.

Bullying behaviour is usually driven by a desire to exert power, control, or dominance over the victim, rather than by any genuine conflict or misunderstanding. It can often occur where there is an actual or perceived power imbalance or where the perpetrator has some form of power or control over the victim.

(See Appendix 1 for the distinction between bullying and child-on-child abuse.)

4. Bullying and the School Curriculum

The school delivers a curriculum which:

- Promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society.
- Promotes the value of mutually respectful relationships through the delivery of the RSE curriculum.
- Celebrates diversity and inclusion.
- Helps pupils learn effective ways of resolving conflict positively.

Within the curriculum, the school raises awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in PSHE lessons, PSHE days, form time, assemblies and subject lessons as appropriate in an attempt to reduce and raise awareness of such behaviour. Pupils are told how to report bullying and how it is dealt with.

Assemblies address different forms of bullying (including that based on discrimination) in a systematic way. In assembly, teachers openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexuality and also children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities. Pupils are taught that using any prejudice based language is unacceptable.

5. Where and to Whom the Policy Applies

This policy applies to all staff, pupils, parents/carers, trustees and partner agencies working in Wilson's School. It includes journeys to and from school, work experience, day and residential trips and courses (see 5.1 below).

Sanctions will be used as appropriate in consultation with all parties concerned and in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

5.1 Bullying away from the school premises

As outlined in the Behaviour in schools guidance 2024, schools have the power to sanction pupils for misbehaviour outside of the school premises to such an extent as is reasonable.

Increasingly within society, social media and other online platforms are used as vehicles for bullying (cyberbullying). Although non-physical, this type of behaviour can be particularly damaging to the victim as they often feel that they have no escape from the perpetrator.

Preventing and tackling bullying, UK Government 2017 provides additional clarification: *School staff members have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises. Sections 90 and 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 say that a school's disciplinary powers can be used to address pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff, but only if it would be reasonable for the school to regulate pupils' behaviour in those circumstances. **This may include bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.***

Conduct outside the school premises, including online conduct, that schools might sanction pupils for misbehaviour includes:

- When taking part in any school-organised or school-related activity;
- When travelling to or from school;
- When wearing school uniform;
- When in some other way identifiable as a pupil at the school;
- That could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school;
- That poses a threat to another pupil; or
- That could adversely affect the reputation of the school.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 The role of trustees

The school trustees review this policy in line with the review policy timetable. They are also involved in disciplinary proceedings as appropriate.

6.2 Staff with key responsibility for addressing bullying:

- Tutorial Programme (PSHE) co-ordinated by the PSHE and RSE Coordinator
- Management of bullying in the school community: Deputy Head responsible for Behaviour and Attitudes.
- Designated Safeguarding Lead where safeguarding issues apply, including the involvement of external agencies.

6.3 All staff (teaching and support):

- All staff should be familiar with the content of the school's anti-bullying policy.
- Assess the situation and decide on the appropriate action to be taken.
- Seek advice from and/or notify a member of pastoral staff or SLT at the earliest opportunity if they have concerns about any incident of bullying.
- Deal with any emergency procedures to ensure the safety of pupils and staff, if necessary
- Consistently adhere to the safeguarding procedures and the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy within the school.

6.4 Pupils and parents/carers

Parents/carers play a vital role in the prevention of bullying. They should:

- Be aware of the school's anti-bullying policy and discuss this with their child, supporting the school's ethos of respect and acceptance.
- Engage fully in the education of their child, regularly discussing pertinent issues relating to how positive relationships can be nurtured and conflict resolved.
- Be aware of the school's procedures for dealing with bullying as described below.

6.5 The role of the bystander

The whole school community, including pupils, teachers and other members of staff have a responsibility to report any incident of bullying if they witness it or know of its existence.

Bystanders can passively accept bullying by watching and doing nothing. Often without realising it, these bystanders also contribute to the problem. Passive bystanders provide the audience a bully craves and the silent acceptance that allows bullies to continue their hurtful behaviour.

Through assemblies and PSHE, we promote the idea of the 'helpful bystander', who can:

- Directly intervene, by discouraging the bully, defending the victim, or redirecting the situation away from bullying.
- Get help, by rallying support from peers to stand up against bullying or by reporting the bullying to adults.

7. Reporting Bullying

Pupils must be encouraged to report abuse, either to a member of staff, to the school counsellor or to one of the support agencies promoted within the school (e.g. school nurse). Pupils may wish to have their identity protected if they are reporting abuse to a member of staff – this request should be respected whenever possible.

8. Responses for Managing Bullying

8.1 Dealing with an incident

The following steps should be taken when dealing with an incident:

- All suspected or reported incidents of bullying will be taken seriously and treated sensitively by the member of staff who has been approached. No assumptions should be made about the capacity of the victim to defend themselves.
- A clear account of the incident must be recorded and given to the Head of Year or Director of Key Stage. Support should be offered to the pupils involved to produce a written report.
- The HoY or an appointed member of staff will interview all concerned and will record the incident and pass on details to the school's Pastoral Secretary.
- Parents of all parties will be notified and kept informed of developments as appropriate.
- Form tutors and subject staff will be kept informed of developments as appropriate.
- If there are wider child protection implications (i.e. where there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'), the Designated Safeguarding Lead will become involved.
- When responding to cyberbullying allegations, staff may seek permission to search the alleged perpetrator's phone, or that of the victim.

8.2 Support for pupils who have been bullied

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported in one or more of the following ways:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a form tutor or member of staff of their choice.
- Reassuring the pupil.
- Offering on-going support with a designated member of staff.
- Restoring self-esteem and self-confidence.
- Referral to the school counsellor or school nurse or other professional.
- Offering continuous support and advice to parents as necessary.

8.3 Help for pupils that have bullied

Pupils who have bullied will be helped in one or more of the following ways:

- Discussing what happened.
- Discovering why the pupil became involved.
- Establishing the wrong-doing and the need for change.
- Informing parents or guardians to help change the attitude of the pupil.
- Referral to school counsellor or other professional.
- Referral to Anger Management training if appropriate.
- Some form of reconciliation between the parties - where considered appropriate.

9. Sanctions

Perpetrators of bullying are subject to sanction as set out in the school's Code of Conduct.

10. Links with Other Policies

This policy should be considered in conjunction with the other written policies listed below:

- Code of Conduct
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- School Visits Policy
- Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Appendix 1

Bullying typically involves repetitive and deliberate behaviour that is intended to harm or intimidate another person.

Child-on-child abuse (often referred to as peer-on-peer abuse) refers to any form of harmful behaviour or mistreatment that occurs between children or young people. It encompasses a broader range of behaviours than bullying and may include physical, sexual, emotional, or coercive actions.

While some instances of child-on-child abuse may involve elements of bullying (such as power dynamics or repeated behaviour), others may be more opportunistic or situational in nature. The intent behind child-on-child abuse can vary widely, from seeking power or control to acting out of confusion, coercion, or learned behaviour.

In summary, while bullying and child-on-child abuse share some similarities, such as harmful behaviour between peers, they differ in terms of the scope of behaviours involved, the context in which they occur and the underlying intent driving the behaviour. Both are serious concerns that require proactive measures to prevent, address, and support those affected.