



North Wootton Academy  
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| Name of policy:   | Anti – Bullying Policy  |
| Lead member of staff with responsibility for this policy: | Michele Hammond, Craig Blackmur   |
| Date of governors meeting when policy agreed:             | 9 <sup>th</sup> May 2022  |
| Type of governors meeting:                                | Academy Council   |
| Date of implementation:                                   | May 2022  |
| Details of dissemination:                                 | The policy is available for all staff, visitors, pupils and parents.  |
| Linked Policies:  | Behaviour, Anti-Racism, Equality and Diversity, Online Safety, PSHE & RSE, SEN, Whistle-blowing and Safeguarding. |
| Frequency for review:                                     | Annually  |

### Aims and Objectives

All bullying is wrong and damages individual children (and staff), potentially for a life time. It is therefore a school priority to ensure we develop a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable, and one in which it is everybody’s responsibility to prevent it. North Wootton Academy must be a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety or fear.

This policy aims to both prevent bullying and produce a consistent and effective school response to any bullying incidents that may occur. Our school TEAMWORK values are firmly embedded within it.

### What is Bullying?

**‘Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online.’ (Anti-Bullying Alliance definition)**

Bullying can take many forms (for instance, peer on peer, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and

ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; we will make our own judgement about each specific case.

The school understands that it has a particular role in supporting all protected and vulnerable groups including race, SEN & disabilities, LGBT, gender and LAC.

### **Prevention**

The school is fully aware that the education of our pupils is the greatest preventative measure to issues of bullying within the school. Our TEAMWORK values underpin this beginning in EYFS through to Year 6.

At the centre of the anti-bullying approach is our school message that we are required to: **'Stand up and Speak Out!'** when confronted with concerns around bullying.

The personal development of our children as well as their academic education is orientated towards promoting opportunities for all to collaborate in a positive setting. We create opportunities for all pupils to interact with as wide a range of peers as possible deliberately trying to group pupils in ways that will develop the social cohesion of our pupils. It is a genuine belief that the promotion of belonging to a 'TEAM', be it in sports, drama, choir, volunteering or even in a small group task, is the greatest way in which we can help all of our pupils to 'belong' and provide the social security needed to stop the imbalance of power between pupils that is often the cause of feeling bullied.

The school is aware that even within a group, the ability to Stand Up, Speak Out still relies on a degree of self-confidence. Therefore, the school brings into school self-defence teachers on a termly basis to enable all pupils to actively practise being assertive and learn basics techniques that may give them more confidence in such a setting.

### **Raising awareness across the school**

Schools are places where children and young people learn, develop and grow, but they are not isolated from the stereotypes and prejudices that exist in the wider world. We teach tolerance and respect for others and how to take a stand against actions which are wrong. Therefore, a large section of our curriculum directly links to our TEAMWORK values of Open-mindedness, Respect and Kindness:

- Open-mindedness Day – where we encourage all to dress without fear of comment
- Heritage Day – where the school looks to celebrate the many backgrounds that constitute our school community
- Debating sessions – where the ability to respectfully debate contentious issue is a key focus of the curriculum
- A golden thread of PHSE topics that promote tolerance and understanding
- A recently updated Relationship and Sex Education curriculum with a focus on positive relationships and the wellbeing of ourselves and others

Ongoing, these aspects of the pastoral curriculum create a school culture in which bullying is less likely to occur.

Each year, we fully take part in the nationwide school focus known as Anti-Bullying Week. This is organised in conjunction with The Anti-Bullying Alliance.

## **Safeguarding**

Our approach looks to ensure the safety of our pupils as a priority and therefore, supports the aims of Keeping Children Safe in Education and the Education and Inspections Act 2006. We understand our clear responsibility to respond to bullying, in particular Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006; the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Duty 2011; and the Children Act 1989.

Keeping Children Safe in Education is updated yearly. This document refers to Peer on Peer/Child on Child Abuse as an area of growing concern. Peer on Peer Abuse has the potential to become a safeguarding issue. Our RSE curriculum now includes this.

**Peer on Peer Abuse definition** taken from the Safeguarding Network is:

**‘Any kind of physical, sexual, emotional or financial abuse or coercive control exercised between children both on and offline.’**

Behaviour concerns are recorded within our Child Protection Online Management System (CPOMS) to ensure chronological tracking, follow up and triangulation with our Designated Safeguarding Team.

## **Identification**

Despite our best efforts, it is clear that on occasion, pupils will act negatively towards one another and therefore, the school is proactively looking for when repeated incidents of negativity may link together and develop into bullying.

Our pupil voice safety surveys annually indicate that our pupils feel safe. Any child who indicates to the contrary is spoken to immediately, reassured and other appropriate action taken by senior staff. Pupils know that we care about them and will actively listen to the concerns that they have.

In addition, the Principal actively encourages parents to make contact with the school whenever there are concerns. School staff endeavour to answer all emailed/phoned-in concerns within 24 hours of receiving these.

The school accepts however, that for some children shyness may be a barrier in speaking with an adult and therefore, every one has an ‘emotion peg’ with which to peg an adult if they are scared or need to talk. In addition, the Principal has a suggestion box outside of his office which is checked weekly and in most cases, pupils can ask for help via letter.

Accepting that even these systems may still miss cases, the school complete an annual bullying survey, directly checking that all pupils know what bullying is, what they can do if they are aware of it and most importantly, if they have experienced this. A follow-up is then completed by the Deputy Principal with every pupil of concern, asking them directly if there is a problem with which they need help. In addition, the Deputy Principal monitors all reported behaviour issues looking for trends to follow-up on.

## **Online Bullying**

The school does not see a distinction between bullying that takes place within the school day or that which takes place outside of school. Therefore, we aim to deal with any reports of online bullying or those taking place externally, in the same manner in which we would address those in school if they involve our pupils.

In regard to online bullying, we would simply ask for parents to email us or allow the school staff to view any comments that have been made.

### **Establishing the Extent of Bullying**

Once staff are clear that there has been harm or upset cause, school staff will speak with all pupils involved to try to ascertain the level to which this is a behaviour issue or one that needs to be more formally investigated as a case of bullying. Our Principal's Bullying Log is evidence that bullying is rare within North Wootton Academy, but we are mindful never to be complacent.

The following stepped approach will therefore be followed if such a concern is suspected:

If a member of staff is made aware that a child is either being bullied or bullying then the following action will be taken:

1. The member of staff will inform the class teacher.
2. The class teacher will listen to the child and discuss the child's concerns.
3. If the class teacher feels that the behaviour and concerns suggest bullying, then the teacher will pass on his/her concerns to the Deputy Principal/Principal. The Deputy Principal will also routinely monitor the behaviour tracking log and whole school pupil voice surveys. The Deputy Principal will use this to identify potential victims of bullying and speak with each.
4. Any pupils of concern will be pass on to the Principal who will make a decision as to whether a full investigation into bullying is required. At this point, parents will be contacted to discuss whether they agree with this course of action. If all agree, a formal investigation will begin.
5. In some circumstances a parent will contact the school to report a case of bullying. In this case steps 3 and 4 will be taken and reported back to the parents. At this point, parents are asked if they are satisfied with the school's actions or whether would like to make a formal complaint of bullying. With the latter, a formal investigation will also begin.

### **Formal Investigation of Bullying**

6. The Principal will speak to the person who is carrying out the alleged bullying. They will also speak with as many peers as possible to gather a full understanding of the situation; this will include the alleged victim. All parents will be notified at this time their child has been spoken to about a bullying issue.
7. All conversations will be recorded within the Principal's Bullying log which is reported upon in the Termly Principal's Report presented to the Local Governing Body.
8. Considering the balance of evidence gathered, the principal will make contact with all parents concerned and arrange a separate meeting to discuss the matter. The parents of the victim will be asked whether they feel that the matter has been dealt with appropriately or whether they would like further action. If parents are confident with the actions taken, a letter will be sent to all parents of those involved explaining this in full.
9. The Principal will offer both the victim and the perpetrator of bullying any additional support that may be necessary.
10. The situation will be monitored to ensure the bullying has stopped with ongoing follow-up by the principal for both victim and bully. Information regarding the issue will be passed to class teachers as the children move on through the school so no further issue occurs.
11. In the event that parents are not satisfied with the actions taken, they will be directed to the Trust complaints policy.

## **Responding to bullying**

We apply disciplinary measures in line with our Positive Behaviour Policy to pupils who bully in order to show clearly that their behaviour is wrong. Disciplinary measures must be applied fairly, consistently, and reasonably taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable pupils. It is also important to consider the motivations behind bullying behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator. Where this is the case, the child engaging in bullying may need support themselves.

## **Restorative Practice**

Known as 'RJ', our whole school Restorative Justice approach has evolved as a key element within our Positive Behaviour Policy helping pupils to understand each other's behaviour thus aiming to avoid further negative escalation. Relationships are restored and repaired between both parties by getting advice from a trusted peer in our Wellbeing Team or an adult can also mediate.

RJ, adult discussions and drawing visual consequences e.g. Circles of Harm and Visual Behaviour Plans are useful tools but we also understand that sometimes a child just needs some space (see point 1 below) and time to reflect, self-regulate and feel ready again to positively engage with others.

After an incident, there will be on-going monitoring of the well-being of the bullied pupil and the behaviour and welfare of the bully. This includes tracking by a designated Teaching Assistant.

If the child who carries out the bullying continues, then the Principal will do the following:

1. Time out at break times and lunchtimes
2. Alternative roles given during lunch such as supporting the tidying of the lunch hall
3. Therapeutic Intervention such as Thrive/ELSA sessions, trusted peer support
4. Fixed term exclusion at lunchtimes
5. Fixed term exclusion during the school day
6. Part-time timetable
7. Managed move
8. Permanent exclusion

## **Working with parents/carers**

The school seeks to build a partnership with parents/carers in addressing bullying. A question around parental perception of bullying will be a permanent feature with the parent annual survey to ensure with the results communicated to parents in newsletters.

Parents/Carers will be given the right to discuss their concerns / incidents of bullying with the class teacher, Deputy Principal and Principal in a respectful way. Should a parent have a complaint they may seek a meeting with the Principal to discuss. Parents should feel confident that we will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issue in a way that protects the child; furthermore, they can reinforce the value of good behaviour at home.

As noted, the school would welcome emailed/phoned-in concerns and would aim to address these with 24 hours.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

Anti-bullying policies are most effective when all school staff understand the principles and purpose of the school's policy, its legal responsibilities regarding bullying, how to resolve problems, and where to seek support. Therefore, the policy would suggest the following key stakeholders should undertake these roles and responsibilities:

### **The Role of Governors**

The governing body supports the Principal in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. This policy statement makes it very clear that the governing body does not accept or allow bullying to take place in our school, and that any incidents of bullying that do occur are taken very seriously and dealt with appropriately.

The governing body monitors the incidents of bullying that occur, and reviews the effectiveness of the school policy regularly. The governors require the Principal to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying and to report to the governors on a termly basis.

The governing body would also be principally involved in any reported issues related to staff bullying or accusations of, in conjunction with the local authority as per the Trust's Safeguarding and Whistleblowing Policy.

### **The role of the Principal**

It is the responsibility of the Principal to ensure that there is an anti-bullying strategy and that all staff are aware of it. The Principal ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. The Principal draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, the Principal may decide to use assembly as a forum in which to discuss with other children why this behaviour was wrong. A visual drawing of the consequences may be considered appropriate too with individuals. The Principal will also instruct staff to discuss issues around bullying with their pupils in class time where necessary. The Principal sets the school climate of mutual support and praise for success to make bullying less likely.

### **The Role of the Teacher**

Teachers in our school take all forms of bullying very seriously. Where a teacher is made aware of allegations of bullying or witnesses bullying they will follow the agreed anti bullying strategy.

Teachers attempt to support all children in their class and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. They have class rules on display created by everyone concerned. Teachers will plan and deliver lessons throughout the year on how to prevent bullying and how to deal with it. They will also discuss the impact bullying has on others.

Teachers (and all other staff in school) will record behaviour concerns in line with our Positive Behaviour Policy using CPOMS – Child Protection Online Management System.

Teachers will also oversee the Student Council/Wellbeing Team within their class to guide and advise them to help their peers.

### **The Role of Parents**

Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying should contact the school immediately with a view to discussing their concerns with the class teacher. Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school. We would ask that this involves any acts of cyber-bullying that take place out of school but involve our students as the school would aim to deal with such episodes as if they had taken place in school.

### **The Role of the Pupil**

Pupils are taught and expected to demonstrate our school TEAMWORK values. Open-mindedness, Respect and Kindness underpin Anti-Bullying and positive relationships across our school. Children are expected to consider the wellbeing of others as well as themselves.

All pupils will understand our approach and are clear about the part they can play in preventing bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders who need to '**Stand Up and Speak Out!**' They will commit to understanding what constitutes bullying and learn how to not bully others. Our pupils will learn the skills needed to deal with bullying should it occur. Pupils will take responsibility for their actions and know that using any prejudice based language is unacceptable.

**UPDATED** May 2022

REVIEW ANNUALLY