



Adopted by Full Governors on 18.03.2021 Item 46c

Whitley Bay High School

Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy has been updated in accordance with the following documents:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education January 2021
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying July 2017 DfE

At Whitley Bay High School, we strive to create a kind, caring community in which everyone treats one another with respect and sensitivity. Our very distinct ethos is built on strong positive relationships, nurturing student wellbeing and our desire to help students develop a love of learning and become curious and happy learners with high self-esteem.

Every student in school has an equal right to be treated with respect by all members of the school community. We are committed to making Whitley Bay High School an inclusive organisation that welcomes and respects the diversity of all people who work in or visit the school. The Equality Act 2010 covers nine protected characteristics, which cannot be used as a reason to treat people unfairly. Every person has one or more of the protected characteristics, so the Act protects all of us against unfair treatment. The protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Race
- Sex
- Gender reassignment
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Religion or belief
- Marriage and civil partnership

The Equality Act sets out the different ways in which it is unlawful to treat someone, such as direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, victimisation and failing to make a reasonable adjustment for a disabled person or someone who has experienced gender reassignment. This Anti-Bullying policy has been written with Equality at the heart of its policy and principles.

We regard students as individuals, all different but all equal, with varying strengths and interests. Nevertheless, we recognise that sometimes young people can get things wrong and, when things do go wrong, we must act quickly to put them right.

1. Definition

*Bullying can be defined as: **behaviour by an individual or group of individuals, repeated over time, that intentionally makes another person or other persons frightened, upset or unhappy. This could be physical, emotional, verbal, written or electronically mediated abuse in any form (based on DfE definition of Bullying.)***

Although not all reported incidents will necessarily fit into this definition, they will all be investigated speedily and seriously. If the bullying takes place out of school our options are limited, but if this bullying has repercussions in school, then we will investigate it as far as we are able and offer advice to students and parents about involving other agencies if this is appropriate.

2. Responsibilities of the school

Members of staff have responsibilities to recognise and try to solve any bullying problems in the school, by doing the following things:

- To generate a school culture where students feel safe, are safeguarded and bullying in any form is not tolerated.
- To educate students about the impact of bullying, cyber-bullying, cruel and unkind behaviour. Use tutorial time, whole year group assemblies and LEV lessons to do this effectively.
- To work with students, parents, the police and other staff to resolve any occurrences of bullying that arise.
- To recognise and report any signs of distress in students that could be a sign of bullying.
- To listen carefully to any students with a bullying related problem and report all incidents of bullying to the appropriate Head of Year.
- To offer support to students who may have experienced bullying such as working with our learning mentor or school counsellor.
- To take appropriate action when necessary, but only after consulting the victim and gaining their consent.
- To understand the sensitivity of the situation and take care not to cause further problems, in the course of any action undertaken.
- To make sure that victims of bullying are kept fully consulted and informed about what actions have been taken.
- To keep a detailed log of bullying incidents and actions taken so that patterns of activity can be tracked.
- To gather views from students regularly on bullying issues and how we could further support students through our annual 'anti-bullying' survey, LEV lessons or via the student council.
- To regularly train staff and update staff about safeguarding procedures which includes "peer abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up"; (*Keeping Children Safe in Education DfE 2021*).

3. Investigating and Recording Cases of Bullying

- The investigating adult should obtain written accounts of events from both the victim and the bully.
- Normally, the bully will be interviewed and, if the bullying is confirmed by the teacher, he/she will be warned that it must cease. Any subsequent proof of failure to cease will result in the possibility of sanctions, up to and including exclusion from school.
- Parents should be informed of the situation, and possibly invited to discuss the problem, unless the sensitivity of the situation or feeling of the victim make this inappropriate.
- The form tutors of both victim and bully should be informed of the situation (and subject teachers if appropriate).
- A course of action should be agreed with the victim to resolve the problem.
- A specific date for reviewing the situation should be set with both the bully and victim to monitor future behaviour and aim to resolve any ongoing problems.
- Once an incident has been dealt with, support mechanisms need to be set in place for both victim and bully.

- All documentation on incidents of bullying should be placed in individual student files by the Head of Year and reported to the member of the Senior Leadership Team, in charge of pastoral matters, who will keep a central bullying log of reported incidents and the students involved.
- Any bullying behaviour or language that is considered a sensitive issue (racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic or disablist) will be logged on CPOMs.
- The school will, in most circumstances, devote considerable time to meeting with the bully to discuss the impact of their bullying behaviours. This takes time but ultimately has proved to be effective. Furthermore, we acknowledge that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.
- In extreme circumstances we may need to refer to the behaviour and exclusion policies when a case of bullying cannot be resolved.

Information for parents and students

Guidelines to support the Anti-Bullying Policy at Whitley Bay High School

1. Responsibilities of all students

Students in this school need to help us to achieve our aim, through their own efforts. Below are some of the ways in which students can be of help:

- To be aware of the anti-bullying policy and understand that no bullying behaviour will be tolerated.
- To be aware of situations around you, so you can identify bullying and support victims.
- To report any suspected case of bullying to a member of staff in the school.
- To work with members of staff to stop bullying.
- Be sensitive to other students' feelings; it is the perception of the victim that matters most in these incidents.
- Never get involved in any texting activity, online social networking or other new technology activities which might be perceived as cruel or unkind to others – even in a spectator capacity.

2. Victims of potential bullying

- Report cases of bullying to a member of staff in a confidential manner so that they can try to resolve the problem.
- If you feel uncomfortable approaching a member of staff, speak to a friend who could talk to a member of staff for you, or ask your parents to notify us if you have discussed this with them.
- If you feel able yourself, inform the bully that you feel that they are bullying you. If this would make you feel uncomfortable, ask a friend or teacher to tell the bully for you.
- Try not to retaliate when you are being bullied, as it could make the problem worse.

3. Potential bully

On some occasions you may not be aware that your behaviour is identified as bullying. Below are some ways that can help you recognise when a person sees you as a bully:

- Be careful not to behave in a way that could offend or hurt someone's feelings.
- Stop if you can see that a person is becoming upset because of your actions or words.
- Listen if a person tells you that you are bullying them.
- Co-operate with members of staff who approach you with suspected cases of bullying.
- Be very careful with what is sometimes referred to as 'banter', this can cause upset and be a form of bullying.
- Consider your online behaviour and language. If you would not say something to someone you should not post it online. Name calling and abusive or offensive language is bullying whether it is verbal, messaged or posted on any forum.

- Think carefully about your actions on social media. You 'liking' or 'commenting' on somebody else's post could be perceived as cruel or unkind. This could be perceived as bullying behaviour and you could be held responsible.

4. Responsibilities of parents

Parents can often recognise changes to their child due to bullying.

Parents can help the school by:

- Being aware of the anti-bullying policy and understanding that no bullying behaviour will be tolerated.
- Reporting any suspected cases of bullying to a member of staff in the school preferably your child's Head of Year.
- Co-operating fully with the school to resolve any bullying problems.
- Educating your child about what constitutes bullying behaviours.
- Encouraging your child never to take part in any sort of bullying behaviour.
- Understanding the sensitivity of the situation and taking care not to cause further problems by your actions.
- Being highly vigilant about bullying using new technologies and closely monitoring your child's use of phones, social networks and other online media.

Experience tells us that the best way to prevent further incidents of bullying is by educating bullies about the harmfulness of their actions and we want to work together with parents to do this.