



WALTHAMSTOW HALL
SEVENOAKS

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY (INCLUDING CYBER-BULLYING)

Including the Early Years Foundation Stage

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy as well as Behaviour and Sanctions, Code of Conduct for Staff, Pupils on Confidentiality, E-Safety, Equality and SEND policies as well as documents KCSIE Sept 2020 and the Prevent Duty.

[This is one of a suite of policies at Walthamstow Hall for safeguarding children]

This policy has been drawn up with regard to the Education and Inspections Act 2006, to government guidance issued in 2007: 'Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools(teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/tacklingbullying/safetolearn/), The Independent School Standard Regulations 2010 and Department for Education Guidance October 2014 "Preventing and Tackling Bullying."

Although bullying is not, in itself, a specific criminal act in the UK, some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence; for example, under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1998, the Communications Act 2003 and the Public Order Act 1986. If School staff feel that an offence may have been committed, they should, after consultation with the Headmistress, seek assistance from the police.

Aims of Policy

- To demonstrate that the School takes bullying seriously and that it will not be tolerated.
- To take measures to prevent all forms of bullying in the School and on off-site activities.
- To support everyone in the actions to identify and protect those who might be bullied.
- To demonstrate to all that the safety and happiness of pupils is enhanced by dealing positively with bullying.
- To promote an environment where it is the accepted norm for staff or pupils to tell someone in authority about an apparent case of bullying and to teach pupils that witnesses to potential incidents of bullying also have a responsibility to report them.

General Statement

- At Walthamstow Hall our community is based upon respect, good manners and fair play. We are committed to providing a safe and caring environment that is free from disruption, violence

or any form of harassment so that every one of our pupils can develop her full potential. We expect our pupils to treat members of staff with courtesy and co-operation so that they can learn in a relaxed but orderly atmosphere. All pupils should care and support each other.

- There are clear policies communicated to parents, pupils and staff and we aim to create an environment of good behaviour and respect, with good examples set by staff and older pupils.
- Bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. It goes against all our values and our ethos as a School. We also recognise that bullying perpetrated outside School can spill over into School. We will do what is reasonably practicable to eliminate any such bullying. Sexual harassment will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”. Further information should be referenced in Part 5 and Annex A of KCSIE Sept 2020 regarding peer on peer abuse.
- All staff, pupils and parents should be aware of the negative effects that bullying can have on individuals and the School in general. They should aim to ensure that pupils can work in an environment without fear, and develop resilience including to political, social or religious radicalisation. It is our policy to educate the pupils in our care to manage risk, resist pressure, make safer choices and seek help if necessary, including from potential on-line threats.
- We recognise that we have a duty to educate and protect pupils from child sexual exploitation (CSE) which may include varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement including unwanted pressure from peers to indulge in sexual activity. Sexual bullying including cyber-bullying and grooming are potential dangers.
- We are alert to the fact that FGM may manifest itself through on-line contact / pressure on pupils. All staff are aware that if during the course of their work an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a pupil under the age of 18 this must be reported to the police. (KCSIE Sept 2020)
- “Cyber-bullying”, by text, mobile phone, email, chat rooms or social networking websites is unacceptable and we will do our utmost to eliminate it. (A separate section on cyber-bullying is in the appendix to this policy).
- This Anti-bullying Policy should be read in conjunction with the Walthamstow Hall Behaviour Policy which makes sanctions for bullying clear. Strong sanctions such as exclusion may be necessary in cases of severe and persistent bullying.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is deliberate, intentional behaviour, sometimes repeated over a period of time, aimed at hurting, harming or humiliating another person physically or emotionally. It is at times motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs and disability or because a child is adopted or is a carer. Members of the community should be vigilant for cyber bullying (social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email). Bullying can be physical (including sexual), verbal (including chat rooms/social networking websites) and emotional (by excluding, tormenting or spreading malicious rumours). It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It can involve complicity that falls short of direct participation. Bullying is often hidden and subtle, but it can also be overt and intimidating, i.e. it may occur directly or through cyber-bullying. It may involve actions or comments that are racist, homophobic, or which focus on disabilities or other physical attributes

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such as hair colour or body shape. 'Low level disruption and the use of offensive language can in itself have a significant impact on its target. If left unchallenged.....it can lead to reluctance to report other behaviour'. (*Preventing and Tackling Bullying*, DofE publication July 2017)

Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time. We always treat it very seriously. It conflicts sharply with the School's policy on equal opportunities, as well as with its social and moral principles.

In cases of bullying in which the victim is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm (in its widest sense) this should be considered a safeguarding matter and procedures outlined in the Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy should be followed.

In cases of sexual harassment, we mean 'conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online as well as offline. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child on child, as well as adult on child.

Signs of Bullying

Bullying – whether physical or emotional – may cause psychological damage and is taken very seriously. Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is being bullied include:

- Unwillingness to return to School.
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet.
- Comments made by pupils of an extreme or coercive nature.
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually poor work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others.
- Books, bags and other belongings suddenly go missing, or are damaged.
- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons).
- Diminished levels of self-confidence.
- Frequent visits to the Medical Centre with symptoms such as stomach pains, headaches etc.
- Unexplained cuts and bruises.
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class.
- Choosing the company of adults.
- Difficulty in sleeping or experiencing nightmares.
- Talking of self-harm, suicide or running away.

NB it is important to recognise that some young people suffering child sexual exploitation (CSE) do not exhibit external signs of this abuse.

Although there may be other causes for some of the above symptoms, a repetition or a combination of these signs of bullying should be investigated by parents or teachers.

KCSiE September 2020: 'The initial response to a report from a child is important. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.'

Preventative Measures

We take the following preventative measures against bullying:

- We devote time in staff INSET training towards ensuring that staff are trained to cope with incidents as and when they arise. Training covers School policies, legal responsibilities and sources of support.
- We use appropriate Assemblies to explain the general School policy on, and approach to, bullying. Our PSHEE programme is structured to give pupils an awareness of their social and moral responsibilities as they progress through the School. The programme is structured to enforce the message about community involvement and taking care of each other.
- Other lessons, particularly RS, English and Drama, highlight the issue of bullying and reinforce this message by teaching moral and spiritual values that show bullying to be unacceptable, and by developing social skills.
- Assemblies and other lessons will, where relevant and appropriate, include discussion of differences between people and the importance of avoiding prejudice-based language.
- All our pupils are encouraged to tell a member of staff at once if they believe that bullying is taking place.
- All reported incidents are recorded and investigated at the earliest possible stage. We always monitor reported incidents.
- We have a strong and experienced pastoral team of Tutors, Heads and Assistant Heads of Key Stages, 3, 4 and 5, and Deputy Heads who are trained in handling any incidents as an immediate priority and are alert to possible signs of bullying.
- Our pastoral team gives support and guidance to other staff on handling and reporting incidents, and on the follow-up work with both victims and bullies.
- Staff are always on duty at times when pupils are not in class and patrol the School site. They are trained to be alert to inappropriate language or behaviour.
- Our Medical Centre, notice boards and Student Planner display advice on where pupils can seek help, including details of confidential help lines and websites connecting to external specialists, such as ChildLine, Kidscape and Samaritans.
- We provide leadership training to our Peer Mentors in Year 11 and the Sixth Form to offer support and assistance to younger and to vulnerable pupils.
- We reserve the right to investigate incidents that take place outside School hours and on School visits and trips that occur in the vicinity of the School, involving our pupils, as well as any cyber-bullying of a pupil, evidence of which may have been composed and /or sent from outside the School.
- We have clear policies which we communicate to parents, pupils and staff and have an environment of good behaviour, with helpful examples set by staff and older pupils.

Responsibilities

It is the duty of all members of staff to deal with incidents according to the policy and procedures, and never to let an incident pass unreported, whether on site or an off-site activity.

The Headmistress:

The Headmistress has a legal duty under the ***School Standards & Framework Act 1998*** to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among pupils. She will:

- Determine the strategies and procedures in conjunction with the Deputy Heads.

- Ensure that the procedures are brought to the attention of all staff, parents and pupils.
- Report regularly to the Governing Body on this issue.

The Deputy Heads will:

- Be responsible for the day to day management of the policy and systems.
- Ensure that there are strategies and procedures in place to help both the bullies and the bullied.
- Keep the Headmistress informed of incidents.
- Arrange relevant staff training which will include anti-bullying strategies.
- Determine how best to involve parents in the solution of individual problems.

The Heads of Key Stage will:

- Be responsible for ensuring that the School's positive strategies are put into practice.
- Develop and update anti-bullying sections in the PSHEE programme and monitor their effectiveness.
- Know the School's procedure and deal with any incidents that are reported.

Form Tutors will:

- Be responsible for liaising with the Heads of the Key Stages over all incidents involving pupils in their form.
- Be involved in any agreed strategy to achieve a solution.
- Take part in the anti-bullying programme in the PSHEE course.

All School staff (academic and non-academic) will:

- Know the policy and procedures.
- Be observant for any incidents of bullying.
- Deal with incidents according to the policy.
- Never let any evidence of bullying pass by unreported, whether on-site or during an off-site activity.

Procedures for dealing with incidents:

If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be investigated and dealt with initially and immediately by the teacher approached. The teacher will inform the appropriate Head of Key Stage and the details of the incident will be recorded. Where an incident is suspected or reported to a non-teaching member of staff, they should immediately liaise with the appropriate Head of Key Stage.

- Depending upon the seriousness of the incident, the Head of the appropriate Key Stage and/or the Deputy Heads will interview all parties and keep a record. Form tutors and relevant subject staff will be kept informed. In very serious incidents where, for example, a racial or homophobic element to bullying is suspected, the Headmistress will be notified immediately.
- The victim will be interviewed by a member of the pastoral team (with another member of staff present), separately from the alleged perpetrator. It will be made clear to her why revenge is inappropriate. She will be offered a strategy to help herself.

- The alleged bully will be interviewed (also with another member of staff present) at a later stage by a member of the pastoral team, separately from the alleged victim. If the allegation is confirmed, it will be made clear why her behaviour was inappropriate and caused distress. She will be offered guidance on modifying her behaviour, together with an appropriate disciplinary sanction.
- The Head of the relevant Key Stage, in conjunction with the Deputy Heads, will determine the appropriate strategy and plan of action to prevent further incidents of such reported bullying. This is likely to involve discussion with all parties involved, either individually or by bringing all sides together or both. Positive procedures involving changing the attitude and behaviour of bullies, will be used as far as possible. It is likely, however, that sanctions will also have to be used against bullies. The Head of the relevant Key Stage will oversee the implementation of the policy in conjunction with form tutors. The Deputy Heads will be kept informed.
- Parents will be kept informed by the Deputy Heads/Heads of the relevant Key Stage. Parents of pupils who are being bullied, and parents of the bullies, will be involved in a solution to the problem, as deemed appropriate by the Head of Key Stage 3/Key Stage 4/Sixth Form in consultation with the Deputy Heads.
- Any of the School's formal punishments can be used against bullies as appropriate. For persistent offenders, or incidents considered to be gross acts of aggression, a pupil could be permanently excluded.
- The Deputy Heads will keep the Headmistress informed and update her regularly until the matter is resolved.
- In very serious and persistent cases, and only after the Headmistress has been involved, it may be necessary to make a report to the Police or to Social Services. However, it is the policy of Walthamstow Hall to attempt to resolve such matters internally under the School's own disciplinary procedures unless the matter is of such gravity that a criminal prosecution is considered likely.
- A record is kept of cases of bullying and alleged bullying so there is a clear picture of such incidents throughout the School in the Bullying Register.
- The management of personal data is in line with statutory requirements (see Data Protection Notice for Pupils, Parents and Guardians)

Monitoring and Review

The Deputy Heads will make a regular report to the Headmistress who keeps a record of serious incidents in the Central Bullying file. The Headmistress will consider the pattern, frequency and trends in types of incidents and review the strategies taken. The Headmistress will report annually at least, and where one of more series incidents have occurred, more frequently, to the Governing Body.

Cyber-bullying

This should be read in conjunction with our e-Safety policy

General Statement

- With increasing availability of electronic devices that give unrestricted access to the internet, online safety is very important and forms part of our safeguarding and anti-bullying arrangements.
- All bullying is damaging but cyber bullying and harassment, in addition, are invasions of privacy. They may also involve criminal acts.
- The School will support any victims and do everything possible to detect those involved.
- We will use all sanctions available to us, up to and including permanent exclusion to correct, punish or remove pupils who bully fellow pupils or harass staff in this way, in or out of School.
- It is the duty of all members of the School community to report any instance of cyber-bullying or harassment they know about or suspect.
- The Network Manager and ICT team actively manage hardware, software and connectivity.

Definition:

“Cyber-bullying involves the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others” (B. Belsey). Cyber-bullying can involve Social Networking sites, emails and mobile phones, used for text messages and as cameras.

Specifically, by ‘cyber-bullying’ we mean:

- Bullying by texts or messages or calls on mobile phones.
- Use of mobile phone cameras to cause distress, fear or humiliation.
- Posting threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating material on websites.
- Hi-jacking email accounts.
- Making threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating remarks in chat-rooms/social networking sites.
- Posting threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating material on reunion sites.
- Anything similar to the above that arises from emerging technologies.

There should be no doubt that cyber-bullying is generally criminal in character under Section 127 of the **Communications Act 2003** and the **Protection from Harassment Act 1997**.

Cyber-bullying – preventative measures

The School will:

- Keep up to date with regard to appropriate filtering and monitoring systems as advised at the UK Safer Internet Centre (KCSIE Sept 2020).
- Block access to inappropriate websites from School equipment, this will ensure children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in School.
- Monitor all ICT pupil and staff communications on School equipment.
- Do its utmost to ensure that all images of staff and pupils are secure.

- Issue all pupils with their own personal School email address. Access to sites such as 'Hotmail' is not allowed.
- Adhere to BECTA guidelines regarding e-teaching and the internet.
- Offer guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and cyber-bullying in PSHEE lessons which cover blocking and removing contacts.
- Offer guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords and other personal details safe.
- Seek to build resilience and awareness in pupils so that they make safer choices and are ready to seek help if necessary.
- The School will provide in-service training to enable staff to respond appropriately to reports of cyber-bullying or harassment and will have systems in place to respond to it.

School Systems:

- In the Junior School, pupils may only bring their mobile phone into School in exceptional circumstances. In these instances the pupils take it straight to the School Office in the morning where it is locked away for the duration of the School day.
- Mobile phones in Years 7 – 11 are collected in by Form Tutors during morning registration and kept by the Deputy Head. They are returned during afternoon registration at 3:50 pm. Any Junior School or Year 7 – 11 Senior School pupil found to be in possession of a mobile phone during the School day will have it confiscated.
- Staff who are made aware of or who suspect any instances of cyber-bullying should report this to the Head of Key Stage as appropriate. They in turn will ensure that the relevant Form Tutor is informed as well as the Deputy Heads. The course of action taken as a consequence will vary depending on the nature of the offence. It is likely to involve the Network Manager as well as parents. The Headmistress will be kept informed.

Advice to Parents

- Parents should be aware of the School's Code of Conduct for Use of School Computers and guidelines for using text, email, instant messaging and social networking sites which are also included in the Student Planner.
- Parents should understand and be aware of their daughter's use of mobile phones and ICT in their home environment. If, as a consequence, they have any concerns related to their use, or if they become aware of any cyber-bullying incidents related to School, they should contact their daughter's Form Tutor and/or a member of the Junior Management Team, Head of relevant Key Stage to discuss their concerns. An appropriate course of action will then be determined.

Advice to Pupils

All the essential anti-bullying messages apply. You must tell someone so that action can be taken to stop it. For cyber-bullying in particular:

- Do not answer abusive messages but log them and report them.
- Do not give out personal details.
- Never reply to abusive emails.
- Never reply to someone you do not know.
- Stay in the public areas of chat rooms.
- Be aware of and follow the School's Code of Conduct for the use of School Computers.

Procedures for dealing with cyber-bullying:

Procedures for dealing with any reported cases of cyber-bullying are the same as those outlined in the Anti-Bullying Policy. Further details, including the ICT Code of Conduct, are included in the Student Planner and in the Walthamstow Hall e-Safety Policy.

This policy has regard to the guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

Walthamstow Hall policies are approved, ratified and reviewed regularly by the Governing Body in the light of statutory requirements.

Revised Feb 2021
Date of next review Feb 2022

Signed: Date:

Mrs J Adams
Chairman of the Governing Body