



OMNE BONUM DEI DONUM

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Anti-Bullying Policy

Legal Framework

- *Every Child Matters 2003*
- *The Children Act 2004*
- *The Education and Inspections Act 2006 Section 89*
- *The Equality Act 2010*

Guidance Documents

- *Preventing and Tackling Bullying – Advice for Head Teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies (2011)*
- *Malicious Communications Act 1988*
- *Protection From Harassment Act 1997*
- *Malicious Communications Act 1988*
- *Communications Act 2003*
- *Public Order Act 1988*

This document should be read in conjunction with the school's Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy. The school is committed to train staff on a regular basis to manage all aspects related to both policies. This policy pays due regard to the DfE document '**Preventing and Tackling Bullying – Advice for Head Teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies 2011**'

Physical or emotional abuse of pupils is not acceptable at the school and it is everyone's moral and legal duty to prevent it from happening (Children's Act 1989). Bullying is taken very seriously at the school and all reported incidents are recorded and appropriate action taken. Parents are encouraged to support the work of the school and the children are regularly reminded of their responsibilities for the happiness of those around them. Staff regularly receive formal and informal training and are encouraged to look for and report worries about children in their care.

It must be recognised that bullying in any of its forms can have significant and long lasting physical and psychological implications for the 'victim' and that in some forms (i.e. discrimination, harassment or threatening behaviour) legal implications for the 'perpetrator'.

Aims

It is the aim of this school to:

- Have a bullying free environment
- Enable children, parents and staff to feel confident in reporting concerns about any member of the community
- Have robust and effective systems for dealing with all levels and types of bullying
- To ensure that all members of the community know how to respond appropriately to a complaint or knowledge of bullying



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In order to work towards the aim of a bullying free environment the following guidelines are laid down.

Basic Principles

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

Bullying can take many forms and is often motivated by prejudice

- Bullying can include, but is not limited to:

- Verbal abuse i.e. name calling and teasing
- Physical attack
- Threats
- Psychological abuse i.e. isolating or spreading rumours
- Racial, religious, cultural, sexual/sexist and/or homophobic comments or reactions
- Extortions of money or property
- Targeting perceived weaknesses including those with special educational needs or disabilities
- Cyber-Bullying i.e. Social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email

- Prevention of bullying concentrates on raising the self-esteem of all pupils and staff and creating an atmosphere of mutual respect
- If bullying occurs both victims and perpetrators must receive support
- Recording and review of incidents must occur to detect patterns where they exist
- Monitoring should include both formal and informal questioning of all sections of the School Community
- Whilst generally addressing bullying between pupils the school recognises its responsibilities to ensure that no member of the community (including any adult) suffers abuse or discrimination

- Although bullying is not in itself a criminal act in the UK, some types of harassing or threatening behaviour or communications could be a criminal offence under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986. If staff feel that an offence may have been committed, they should seek assistance from the police.

The Responsibility of the School

1. The ethos of the school encourages and supports an atmosphere of mutual respect and understanding.
2. Pupils are helped to develop positive strategies and to become assertive without using threats or violence. This process is on-going but is formally addressed in PSHE lessons, assemblies and tutorial periods. Opportunities for this education may also occur in project work, drama, literature, stories, historical, events and the study of current affairs.



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3. Pupils are assured that someone will listen to their version of events.
4. Systems are in place to allow all staff to report concerns about pupils to the SMT, the pupil's Tutor or Head of House. Pupils being bullied will be consulted and kept informed of any action being taken.
5. In serious incidents, statements will be taken and recorded from all involved in and witnessing incidents. This information is recorded on PASS by the lead teacher and a copy given to the Deputy Headmaster.
6. When appropriate, counselling by an appropriate person will be offered to all sides.
7. The school will undertake to remove from school on a temporary or permanent basis anyone who makes another person's life miserable. These decisions will be made at the discretion of the Headmaster. Consideration will be given to the relevant policies of Behaviour and Exclusion and all normal rights to appeal will exist.
8. Duty rotas, school routines and general staffing will be designed to be preventative to limit the opportunities for bullying to occur and will consider both times and areas of the school where bullying could be a higher risk.

Pupils and Parents' Responsibilities

Pupils and Parents should follow the guidelines as issued at the beginning of the academic year in the leaflets (*We are Anti-bullying – Information for pupils* and *We are Anti-bullying – Information for parents*) issued by the Safeguarding Officer and the Deputy Headmaster. This information is issued to new pupils upon their entry into the school throughout the academic year.

Staff Responsibilities

It is unrealistic to expect that action to manage incidents will not be necessary. Strategies need to be in place and known in order that a common policy is operating.

The following guidelines must be adhered to:

- Incidents need to be resolved, not just smoothed over
- Blame may not all be one sided and there may not be a need to establish a blame
- It may be difficult to prove what really happened. Talk to as many people as possible
- Levels of tolerance vary enormously from child to child
- Removal of a child from the school (bully or bullied) may not always solve the problem
- Adults are crucial to helping with these problems but the emphasis should also be to help pupils deal with bullying issues themselves
- Both victim and alleged bully must be spoken to. Do not jump to conclusions
- Counsel both sides. It may be necessary to point out that a child's behaviour can open them to bullying and they may be able to reduce the risk of becoming a target
- Seek advice and inform senior staff of your investigation and action. Ensure that recording is meticulous
- A meeting between the two sides may be appropriate
- Peers may be useful in helping in the follow up but ensure the victim is happy with this approach



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- Ask yourself the question; is this a child protection issue that needs referring to the school's safeguarding officer? Seek advice if unsure of the answer to this question.

The following procedures must be adhered to:

- A record of any incidence of bullying or conflict between pupils, as well as its outcome must be kept on the files of all pupils involved. This information is entered onto the notes section of the PASS database system for each pupil. The purpose is to provide background to any future incidents should they occur.
- The Deputy Headmaster also has a copy of the incident and outcome in a file located in the DH study which enables patterns to be identified and the ability to evaluate the effectiveness.
- Parents of the victim(s) will be contacted as appropriate in order to keep them updated regarding progress of the investigation. This will be conducted by the lead member of staff in the investigation.
- At its conclusion, the parents of the bully will be contacted, to indicate the nature of the incident and the nature of the response to include whether or not there is to be a sanction imposed.
- Staff members are to be informed of the problem so that relations between those involved can be monitored. This is particularly important, for instance, for subject teachers who may have those involved in their lessons.
- An address to a group — peer, form, year or other group may be regarded as appropriate depending upon the nature, range and groups involved in the incident.

After the Event

The School will offer a proactive, sympathetic and supportive response to children who are the victims of bullying. The exact nature of the response will be determined by the particular child's individual needs and may include:

- Immediate action to stop the incident and secure the child's safety
- positive reinforcement that reporting the incident was the correct thing to do
- reassurance that the victim is not responsible for the behaviour of the bully
- strategies to prevent further incidents and reprisal
- sympathy and empathy
- counselling
- assertiveness training
- extra supervision/monitoring
- creation of a support group
- peer mediation/peer mentoring
- informing/involving parents
- adult mediation between the perpetrator and the victim (provided this does not increase the victim's vulnerability)
- arrangements to review progress



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The School fully appreciates the need to address the behaviour of the bully and must adopt a variety of approaches to prevent re-offending. It will adopt a supportive, pragmatic, problem-solving approach to enable bullies to behave in a more acceptable way.

The School does not believe that the use of punishment in itself, or alone, is always appropriate in managing this problem but is of the view that the positive use of sanctions can be useful in demonstrating to bullies that there are consequences to their actions, their behaviour is unacceptable, and as an element in promoting change.

The following options will be considered:

- Immediate action to stop an incident of bullying in progress
- Engagement with the bully to reinforce the message that their behaviour is a breach of school rules and is unacceptable
- Loss of lunch break-time privileges
- Detention
- Removal from class/group
- Withholding participation in sports or out of school activity (if not an essential part of the curriculum)
- Parents informed
- Counselling/instruction in alternative ways of behaving
- Peer mentoring
- Adult mediation between the perpetrator and the victim (provided this is safe for the victim)
- Internal suspension
- Fixed periods of suspension
- Formal warning
- Expulsion (in extreme cases which may involve violence)

Sanctions

It is very difficult to define what will be an appropriate sanction for each case of bullying as each will be different and sanctions will be the subject of discussion. The School will respond to incidents of bullying behaviour in a proportionate way – the more serious the cause for concern the more serious the response. When sanctions are felt to be necessary, they will be applied consistently and fairly.

Those sanctions available to the school are:

- detention with the Deputy Headmaster
- exclusion from certain areas of school premises
- placement on a Positive Report Card
- official warnings, formal or final, to cease offending and conditional on not re-offending
- internal suspension
- fixed term suspension
- expulsion (Authorised by Headmaster/Chairman of Governors only)



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Online Reporting: help@westhillpark.com

Pupils have the capability to report any bullying issue they may be having through the school ICT network system by using a 'Help' icon which is prominently displayed on the front page of their desktop. When each pupil logs in with their unique login and password, they have the option to click on the 'Help' icon which directs them to a self explanatory form. This requires the input of basic data about the incident. This information is then sent to the Headmaster, Deputy Headmaster and the Safeguarding Officer. It is the responsibility of the Deputy Headmaster to instigate follow up action, recording and evaluating.

This confidential way of reporting incidents is not isolated to the school site and can be accessed from the child's home through their external log in. This facility offers the child greater reassurance that their actions are confidential. The form clearly states that ultimate confidentiality cannot be guaranteed if the incident constitutes a very serious issue. This way of reporting eliminates any anonymous complaints as all entries can be tracked.

Confidential Box

Pupils may post notes into the confidential box in the telephone box in the school's main entrance and on the Boarding main corridor. This may give a child the reassurance to 'tell' when otherwise they may not. This box gives confidentiality to the child at the point of most stress but it is important to realise that ultimate confidentiality can not be guaranteed if the incident constitutes a very serious issue. It may not be possible to follow up anonymous complaints.

The Deputy Headmaster and the Head of Boarding are responsible for the regular checking of this box and for instigating follow up action, recording and evaluating.

Reviewed: January 2012 NR

Review Date: January 2013