



Anti-bullying Policy

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Introduction

Everyone at Westacre Middle school has the right to feel welcome, secure and happy. We aim to provide a safe learning, caring and friendly climate for all pupils to allow them to improve their life chances and help them maximise their potential. We also aim to produce an inclusive environment for all pupils which openly discusses differences between people and celebrates diversity.

We expect pupils to act safely and feel safe in school, including that they understand the issues relating to bullying and that they feel confident to seek support from school should they feel unsafe. We also want parents to feel confident that their children are safe and cared for in school and incidents when they do arise are dealt with promptly and well.

Definition of Bullying

“A form of unacceptable, repeated behaviour happening over time by an individual or group, involving an imbalance of power and that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological.”

BUT it is not bullying when two children/young people of approximately the same age and strength have the occasional conflict or when someone is being unkind through a thoughtless word or action in a one off situation. Children are constantly learning how to get along with others and make mistakes along the way. They need parents, teachers and other adults to model kindness, conflict resolution, inclusion and responsibility.

As a result, children will occasionally do or say something that is hurtful and while it is important to address this behaviour, it is inappropriate to label them as bullies. Instead, we must try to distinguish between hurtful or unkind behaviour and bullying behaviour.

Bullying behaviour can be repeated incidents of:

- Physical – pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching etc.
- Verbal - name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumors, threats, teasing, belittling.
- Emotional – isolating others, tormenting, hiding books, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation and coercion.
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, homophobic abuse, exposure to inappropriate films etc.
- Online /cyber – posting on social media, sharing photos, sending nasty text messages, social exclusion
- Indirect - Can include the exploitation of individuals.
- Financial exploitation of individuals - any threats to individuals that they must provide any monies or possessions to another individual. Bribery or exploitation of any individuals due to financial vulnerabilities.

Under the Equalities Act 2010 it is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of:

- age
- being or becoming a transsexual person
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or having a child
- disability
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion, belief or lack of religion/belief
- sex / gender
- sexual orientation

These are called ‘protected characteristics’.

As part of the requirement on schools to promote fundamental British values, schools must proactively challenge derogatory and discriminatory language and behaviour including that which is racist, homophobic, biphobic or transphobic in nature.

Bullying Prevention

Preventing and raising awareness of bullying is essential in keeping incidents in our school to a minimum. We believe a school's response to bullying should not start at the point at which a child has been bullied. We promote an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat one another and the school staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave.

Values of respect for staff and other pupils, an understanding of the value of education, good self-esteem and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others are embedded in the school curriculum and school environment. These values are reinforced by staff and older pupils who set a good example to the rest (prefect/mentor system).

We aim to develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place. This involves talking to pupils about issues of difference in PSHE lessons, through dedicated events like anti-bullying week and through assemblies where our monthly values are displayed and by regular discussion of possible bullying scenarios. Our school 6 R's programme promotes positive behaviour and learning attitudes and a sense of personal responsibility for our school learning environment.

Restorative Justice Approach

At Westacre Middle School we use a Restorative Justice approach: This approach helps develop a happier school where the focus is on learning and not conflict. A restorative approach encourages pupils to think about how their behaviour has affected others. It helps children to develop respect, responsibility and honesty. Restorative processes aim to put things right and to restore relationships. At Westacre Middle School the people involved in conflict, bullying and relationship problems will be asked what happened, what was the impact and how things can be put things right.

Restorative questions:

1. What has happened?
2. What were you thinking and feeling when it happened?
3. Who has been affected?
4. How could things be done differently?
5. What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

Procedures

- We are a TELLING school. Pupils are explicitly taught to tell an adult in school if they are concerned that someone is being bullied and this is reinforced in assemblies. For those children who may find it difficult to approach an adult, every classroom has a, "Time to talk," box where a child can put their name in and an adult will come and find them discreetly. The member of staff will then find a discreet and safe time to arrange to talk to the child.) In the first instance we would expect the child's class teacher to discuss any issues and suggest possible solutions. If this is ineffective or the class teacher believes he/she needs help in resolving an issue or feels the incident needs to be escalated, he/she will involve a senior member of staff.
- Staff will listen to the child/parent and make a record of any key information with names, dates and times.
- An investigation will then take place (See appendix 1)
- The information will be shared with the Head of year and a member of the SLT
- Both sets of parents will be contacted and informed of any action to be taken.

- If the allegation of bullying is upheld, a senior member of staff will seek to use a restorative approach with the perpetrator(s) and victim(s) together. The perpetrator(s) should fully understand the consequences of their actions on the victim(s), and apologise without reservation. This will only take place if the children feel comfortable and are able to sit together. An appropriate member of staff that the child feels comfortable with will be present as well as a member of the leadership team. Both parties should be clear that a repeat of these behaviours will not be acceptable.
- All bullying incidents must be recorded and kept on file.
- Parents of both parties should be informed.
- Detentions or re-focus may be used as a consequence.
- In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered.
- 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.

Incidents that happen outside of school

Where incidents happen outside school we will support parents in signposting them to appropriate support. We will offer pastoral support if needed. If the incident is having a detrimental effect on the life of the child in school, we will speak to parents and in conjunction with local police take appropriate action.

Engaging with parents and carers

We believe it is important for our school to work with parents/carers to help them to understand our approach with regards to bullying and to engage promptly with them when an issue of bullying comes to light, whether their child is the pupil being bullied or the one doing the bullying. We always encourage parents to contact school if they have any concerns and they will be contacted back by the appropriate member of staff. We will ensure parents/carers are made aware of how to work with us on bullying and how they can seek help if a problem is not resolved. Some parents may need specific support to help deal with their child's behaviour. Where our school identifies that this is the case, we will initially provide support ourselves or signpost the parents to appropriate channels of help.

Safeguarding

We recognise that children are also vulnerable to physical, sexual and emotional abuse by their peers or siblings. Where a child discloses safeguarding allegations of a sexual nature against another pupil in the same setting, the school will seek advice from the Family Front Door or the community social worker before commencing its own investigation.

Other relevant policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- E-Safety & Acceptable Use Policy
- Equalities Policies



Headteacher: Mrs D M Evans



Appendix 1:

Date:	Name/class of alleged victim:	Name/class of alleged perpetrator/s:

Pupil/parent allegation:
Investigation: (Include any witness statements taken)
Signed:
Was alleged bullying confirmed? Yes / No / Insufficient evidence
Any previous incidents of bullying? Yes/No Details:
Outcome/action plan
Signed:
Parent informed: Yes/No
Monitoring Progress: Date 1:
Date 2:
Date 3:

Highlight as appropriate:

Nature of incident:	Bullying behaviours used:
Sexual	Physical behaviour
Racist	Verbal abuse- name calling
Homophobic/Transphobic	Threats
Disability	Sexual Harassment
Home circumstances	Extortion
Cyber bullying	Spreading rumors
Other	Taking/damaging belongings