The West Bridgford School

Anti Bullying Policy

East Midlands Education Trust

Review date:	**Autumn 2026**
Reviewed by:	**Local Governing Body**
Next review:	**Autumn 2029**

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Anti-bullying policy

Introduction

Bullying in all its forms, including cyberbullying can have a devastating effect on individuals. It can be a barrier to learning and have serious consequences for an individual's mental health. Bullying which happens at school does not only affect an individual during childhood but can have a lasting effect well into adulthood.

By effectively preventing and tackling bullying schools can help to create safe, disciplined environments where pupils are able to learn and fulfil their potential.

Whilst we acknowledge these harmful effects on the target of bullying it is also important to note that it is an issue for the whole school community, not just the target and the bully. We need to understand and support children and young people who display bullying behaviour to change their behaviour as well as looking at the rest of the school community who may be drawn in to group behaviour which colludes with, encourages or leaves bullying behaviour unchallenged.

Statement of Intent

At The West Bridgford School we aim to produce an inclusive environment for all pupils where diversity is celebrated. As a consequence we aim to provide a safe, caring and friendly environment for learning for all our pupils to allow them to improve their life chances and help them maximize their potential.

The West Bridgford School is committed to ensuring that all students are able to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without the fear of being bullied. Bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. We would expect pupils to feel safe in school, understand issues related to safety and feel confident to seek support from school should they feel unsafe. We would also want parents/carers to feel confident that their children are safe and cared for in school and that, when incidents do arise they are dealt with promptly and well.

The school aims:

- To increase awareness and to encourage students to report concerns regarding bullying
- To provide protection, support and reassurance for victims
- To develop the self-confidence and self-esteem of all students
- To develop an effective range of emotional resilience skills for all students
- To promote an anti-bullying ethos amongst the whole school community
- To develop an awareness that we all have a shared responsibility to prevent and tackle bullying of all kinds

The school is aware of its legal obligations including the Equalities Act 2010. We are aware of our role within the local community supporting parents/carers and working with other agencies outside the school where appropriate.

The policy was formulated in consultation with the whole school community and is available on the school website and from the school office. A pupil friendly version is displayed in school and is in the Pupil Planner.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation and liaising with the governing body, parents/carers and outside agencies and appointing an Anti-bullying coordinator who will have general responsibility for handling the implementation of this policy.

The Anti –bullying Coordinator & Designated Safeguarding Lead in our school is: -

Mrs. Anna Sharpe

The responsibilities are:-

- Policy development and review involving pupils, staff, governors, parents/carers and relevant local agencies
- Implementing the policy and monitoring and assessing its effectiveness in practice
- Ensuring evaluation takes place and that this informs policy review
- Managing the reporting and recording of bullying incidents
- Assessing and coordinating training and support for staff and parents/carers where appropriate
- Coordinating strategies for preventing bullying behaviour

What is Bullying?

At The West Bridgford School we have adopted the definition of bullying from the Anti-bullying Alliance:

The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or through cyberspace.

Although bullying can occur between individuals it can often take place in the presence (virtually or physically) of others who become the Bystanders or Accessories.

How does bullying differ from teasing/falling out between friends or other types of aggressive behaviour?

- There is a deliberate intention to hurt or humiliate
- There is a power imbalance that makes it hard for the victim to defend themselves.
- It is usually persistent

Behaviour often associated with bullying

Baiting

Baiting can be used in bullying both on and offline. It can be used to bully someone to get 'a rise' out of them and it can be used to antagonise those who might be bullying others to get them to bully. Sometimes baiting is used secretively to try and get a person to explode in a rage or react negatively/loudly so that they get in to trouble.

Banter

The dictionary describes banter as: 'the playful and friendly exchange of teasing remarks'. Bullying is often justified as being just banter. It may start as banter, but some types of banter are bullying and need to be addressed as bullying.

Types of Banter

- Friendly Banter- There's no intention to hurt and everyone knows its limits
- Ignorant Banter- crosses the line with no intention to hurt, will often say sorry.
- Malicious Banter- Done to humiliate a person-often in public

Occasionally an incident may be deemed to be bullying even if the behaviour has not been repeated or persistent – if it fulfils all other descriptions of bullying. This possibility should be considered, particularly in cases of hate crime related bullying and cyberbullying. If the victim might be in danger then intervention is urgently required.

What does bullying look like?

Bullying behaviour can be:

- Physical – pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching etc.
- Verbal - name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, 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

Specific types of bullying include:

- prejudice related bullying of children with special educational needs or disabilities, homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying or related to race, religion or culture
- bullying related to appearance or health
- bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances
- sexist or sexual bullying
- Child on Child abuse

Discrimination and prejudiced based bullying

This policy also acknowledges that it is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of the following protected characteristics (Equality Act 2010)

- age
- gender identity
- 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
- sexual orientation

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, transphobic and disablist in nature. We will record these types of bullying, even that which represents a one-off incident, and report them to the local authority for monitoring purposes.

Other vulnerable groups include

- bullying related to appearance or health
- bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances

Although the above do not currently receive protection under the Equality Act 2010, bullying for these reasons is just as serious. There is no hierarchy of bullying – all forms will be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately.

Prejudice Related Language

Racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disablist language includes terms of abuse used towards people because of their race/ethnicity/nationality; because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender, or are perceived to be, or have a parent/carer or sibling who is; because they have a learning or physical disability. Such language is generally used to refer to something or someone as inferior. This may also be used to taunt young people who are different in some way or their friends, family members or their parents/carers.

In the case of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language particularly, dismissing it as banter is not helpful as even if these terms are not referring to a person's sexual orientation or gender identity they are using the terms to mean inferior, bad, broken or wrong. We will challenge the

use of prejudice related language in our school even if it appears to be being used without any intent. Persistent use of prejudice related language and/or bullying will be dealt with as with any other form of bullying.

Where does bullying take place?

Bullying is not confined to the school premises. It also persists outside school, on the journey to and from school and in the local community and may continue into Further Education.

The school acknowledges its responsibilities to support families if bullying occurs off the premises.

Cyberbullying and inappropriate online behaviour

The increasing use of digital technology and the internet has also provided new and particularly intrusive ways for bullies to reach their victims.

Cyberbullying can take many forms and bullying online can often start in school and then be progressed online or start online and influence behaviour in school.

Whilst most incidents of Cyberbullying occur outside school, we will offer support and guidance to parents/carers and their children who experience online bullying and will treat Cyberbullying with the same severity as any other form of bullying.

Cyberbullying can include:

- hacking into someone's accounts/sites
- Posting prejudice /hate messages
- Impersonating someone on line
- Public posting of images
- Exclusion
- Threats and manipulation
- Stalking

We will ensure that our children are taught safe ways to use the internet (see our online e-Safety policy) and encourage good online behaviour.

Responding to bullying

We have clear and well publicised systems to report bullying for the whole school community. This includes those who are the victims of bullying and those who have witnessed bullying behaviour.

The school will take firm and decisive action to deal with any incident of bullying, which is witnessed by or reported to any member of staff. When a member of staff receives information, either directly or indirectly, that a child may have been the victim of a bullying incident, this report will be taken seriously and investigated.

It is possible for a child to report bullying confidentially via our Reprt Bullying button on SharePoint. 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
- Interviewing all parties including target, bully and all others involved
- Implementing appropriate sanctions in line with the school's Behaviour Policy. These will be graded according to the seriousness of the incident but will send out a strong message that bullying is unacceptable.
- extra supervision/monitoring
- creation of a support group/ circle of friends
- review of incidents to look for patterns of behaviour
- individual work with the victim, perpetrator and bystanders
- peer mentoring
- referral to outside agencies if appropriate
- informing/involving parents
- adult mediation between the perpetrator and the victim
- arrangements to review progress

This will be followed up regularly to ensure that bullying has not resumed.

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that 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 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986.

Parental Involvement

The West Bridgford School is firmly committed to working in partnership with parents/carers and believes that the best outcomes emerge when professionals and parents/carers are able to work together when bullying occurs. We recognise the important influence which parents/carers have on their children and would wish to enlist their support when their child is involved in bullying – either as victim or as a perpetrator.

Parents who believe their child is the victim of bullying should share their concerns with the school at the earliest opportunity and be prepared to work with school to keep their child safe in future. All expressions of concern will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. Where parents have concerns about bullying they should contact the appropriate Year Director.

Student Involvement

Students are expected to tell an adult if they have been bullied or if they have witnessed, or are aware of the bullying of another student. Students have access to an online reporting system 'Report Bullying' which they can access through SharePoint.

Staff and Visitor Involvement

If staff or any visiting adults are concerned about a student being subject to bullying, we would expect them to report this in one of the following ways:

- Complete an Online MyConcern report so the Year Director can be informed
- Speak directly to or email the Pastoral Support or Year Director involved with the students particular year group
- As a visitor speak to the member of school staff they are visiting to raise any concerns and be assured they will be followed up with the relevant member of staff

Recording bullying and evaluating the policy

Bullying incidents will be recorded by the member of staff who deals with the incident and these are stored by the Deputy Head for Intervention/Behaviour. Information stored in the school will be used to ensure individual incidents are followed up. It will also be used to identify trends and inform preventative work in school and development of the policy. This information will be reported to governors annually and discussed with staff. Records are kept on a centalised spreadsheet accessible only by the pastoral team and in accordance withe GDPR guidance.

This policy will be reviewed and updated every three years.

Strategies for preventing bullying

As part of our ongoing commitment to the safety and welfare of our pupils we have developed the following strategies to promote positive behavior and discourage bullying behaviour.

- Ensuring that the school actively promotes the celebration of difference and diversity
- At whole school level – through assemblies when children will be informed of the school's zero-tolerance policy and the actions that will be taken to prevent bullying taking place. Assembly time will also be used to challenge the notion that there can be innocent, neutral bystanders with regards to the issue of bullying.
- Anti-Bullying Week in November and Safer Internet Day in February will be used as an opportunity to raise the profile of this issue.
- At classroom level – especially through PSHE and Citizenship the focus will be on developing strong anti-bullying messages and encouraging the building of friendships
- Specific curriculum input in areas of concern such as cyberbullying and internet safety
- The West Bridgford School recognises that there are particular times when students may be more vulnerable to bullying – lunch and break times and the beginning and end of the school day. Arrangements will be made to ensure that at such times there is adequate supervision available to reduce the risk of bullying incidents. The Learning Centre will be particularly used to provide support for vulnerable students.
- There are locations around the school where incidents of bullying are more likely to occur and again arrangements will be made to ensure that these are properly supervised or pupils will be forbidden access to these areas.
- Students will have the opportunity to contribute to the school's Anti-Bullying Policy through Year and School Councils.

- Peer Mentors will be available for those students requiring extra support and be encouraged to organise anti-bullying campaigns in school and discourage the “bystander culture”.
- Restorative Justice
- Parent Information Events/ information on the school website
- Staff training and development for all staff
- All Pastoral Staff have access to and have completed the Anti-Bullying Alliance programmes which are updated every two years

Links with other policies

Safeguarding and Child Protection

Behaviour Management

Equality Scheme

Reference Documents and Related Policy/Guidance

- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying DfE July 2017
- Pathway to Provision

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