

# Woodchurch High

*A Specialist Engineering College and Training School*



## Anti Bullying

# POLICY DOCUMENT

April 2009

Approved by the Curriculum Committee

Approved by the Full Governing Body

Reviewed at Full Governors Meeting April 2009, September 2009



# ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

## 1. **OTHER POLICIES:**

This School policy has been developed in line with legal requirements and statutory guidance.

These obligations are highlighted in a range of government initiatives (see Section 2 of the overarching Safe to Learn: Embedding Antbullying Work in Schools guidance) (2007). Also: Working Together to Safeguard Children (2006), Children's Act (2004), Every Child Matters 5 outcomes, Education and Inspectors Act (2006), Race Relations Act (2002), Disability Equality Duty (2006). Equality Act (2006), National Strategies on Behaviour and Attendance, National Healthy Schools Programme, Wirral Anti Bullying Guidance.

This Policy is linked to the School's Behaviour Policy. The Safeguarding Policy and the PSHCEE Policy. In addition there are many aspects of this policy that have a connection to the Health Promoting Schools scheme, our Health and Safety Policy as well as our Equal Opportunities Policy.

## 2. **WORKING PARTY**

This policy was originally developed by a working party of Senior Staff, Staff, Parents, Pupils and non teaching Staff.

This review was undertaken by:

M Loney, Assistant Headteacher Pupil Progress and Welfare

V Oldham, Assistant Headteacher Director of Specialism / International Links / Head of PHSCEE

in consultation with various stakeholders including

- Pupils from school (particularly including pupils with S.E.N)
- Parents (via VLE)
- Non Teaching staff via discussions

The original working party raised awareness of the policy through

- Discussions in PSHCE lessons
- Presentations in assemblies
- Presentations to staff and governors
- Meetings of the school forum
- Discussions with P.T.A.
- Discussion with pupils
- Discussion with pupils from feeder schools
- Newsletter sent to parents

For this review we have raised awareness and invited responses through:

- Assemblies

- Meetings with forums of pupils
- Questionnaires on the VLE for pupils and parents
- Meetings with non-teaching staff
- Introducing peer mentors to the school
- Setting up the SNAP website

This policy was reviewed in the light of the responses to our consultations.

### 3. STATEMENT OF INTENT/AIMS OF POLICY

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed, safe and secure environment.

Bullying of ANY KIND is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a TELLING SCHOOL. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff. NO ONE deserves to be a victim of bullying. EVERYBODY has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

Aims of this Policy:

The aims of the Woodchurch High School Antibullying Policy are therefore:

- To ensure that all those connected with the school understand what is meant by the term 'bullying' and are aware that bullying behaviour will not be tolerated under any circumstances.
- To prevent and deal with any behaviour deemed as bullying
- To promote a school ethos where bullying is regarded as unacceptable by everyone
- To ensure a safe and secure environment is created in which everyone is able to work and learn.
- To nurture amongst the whole school community the values of responsibility, duty and respect, both for oneself and others.
- To provide a transparent, easily understood system for responding to reported incidents of bullying.

### 4. WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying can be defined as

**“Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally”**

Bullying can be:

- Related to race, religion or culture
- Related to pupils with additional needs and disabilities

Research shows that children with additional needs and disabilities are more at risk of bullying than their peers.

- Related to appearance or health conditions e.g. medical conditions such as eczema or psoriasis can lead to pupils becoming targets.
- Physical limitations such as size and weight etc can also result in bullying
- Related to sexual orientation i.e. homophobic bullying
- Linked to home circumstances (e.g. young carers or L.A.C)
- Sexist or sexual bullying
- Cyberbullying. This is a method of bullying rather than a 'type' of bullying. It includes bullying via text messages; instant messenger services (MSN); social network sites; via email; and via images or videos posted on the internet or via mobile phones.

Bullying can take place between pupils, between pupils and staff, or between staff; by individuals or groups, face to face, indirectly or using a range of cyberbullying methods. It can be unfriendly including tormenting, pushing, kicking, hitting etc. Emotional, physical or verbal (name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours).

#### **5. SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS:**

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school
- Doesn't want to go to school / use public bus
- Begs to be driven to school
- Changes their usual route
- Is unwilling to go to school
- Begins to truant
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- Cries themselves to sleep or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the morning
- Begins to do poorly in school work
- Comes home with clothes torn or books 'damaged'
- Has possessions which are damaged or 'go missing'
- Asks for money or starts stealing money
- Has dinner or other monies continually 'lost'
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Comes home starving (money/lunch has been stolen)
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what's wrong
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above

- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received

These signs and symptoms could and may well indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

## 6. **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Creating a safe environment is crucial for effective learning and ensures that all pupils' rights for a positive school experience are met.

Expectations of appropriate pupils behaviour is made explicit in our behaviour policy. This requires a whole school approach which aims to develop a shared awareness and understanding so that a consistent approach to bullying will be taken, all members of the school community sharing responsibility for preventing and combating bullying.

Headteacher / Senior Management Team are responsible for:

- Dissemination of policy to whole school community
- Effective implementation of policy
- Staff training and awareness raising
- To ensure all adults who work with pupils are aware of school policy and work within its framework
- To monitor review and evaluate the effectiveness of the policy
- Report to governors on request
- Liaise with LEA to ensure best practice

### **Staff**

All school staff need to consider the influence of their own behaviour towards students. All staff have a duty to ensure that their dealings with pupils do not promote bullying by using

- Deliberate humiliation
- Promoting the message that some people are fair game
- Official approval of status and power as a means of control
- A pronounced hierarchy where the message is 'do as I say not as I do'.
- Methods which make it difficult for pupils to seek help if they are being victimised
- Methods which leave no time to listen to vulnerable pupils.

Instead the staff should

- Treat pupils with respect
- NOT set up victims
- Presenting a good role model – use power and authority appropriately
- Explicitly state that bullying is not acceptable
- Actively seek to change pupils attitudes towards bullying where appropriate

## **Governors**

- Should support Headteacher in following guidelines
- Liaise in LEA to ensure the best advice available and ensure that the school policy is in line with National and Local guidelines

## **Parents**

- Should take their child's concerns seriously
- Should let the school know of their concerns as appropriate
- Support key messages being given to pupils and where appropriate attend meetings and contribute in a positive way to actions aimed at solving any problems

## **7. EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES TO PREVENT AND RESPOND TO BULLYING**

The continuing response to bullying by the school is to develop an ethos where bullying is seen as unacceptable. This will be driven forward by work carried out in various forums and using varied strategies.

### **Curricular Approaches**

The most effective way of preventing bullying through the curriculum is to create effective learning environments in which

- The contribution of all pupils is valued
- All pupils feel secure and able to contribute appropriately
- Stereotypical views are challenged and pupils learn to appreciate and view positively differences in others
- Pupils learn to take responsibility for their actions both in school and in the wider community
- All forms of bullying and harassment are challenged
- Pupils are supported to develop their social and emotional skills e.g. through art, music, poetry, drama and dance.

Some specific curriculum areas which lend themselves particularly well to this kind of work are in PSHCE Citizenship.

Other areas where anti bullying work can be delivered are through assemblies, tutorial time and in the SEAL programme and resources which seeks to systematically and progressively develop pupils social and emotional skills/procedures.

### **Preventative Procedures and Strategies**

The following paragraphs list some of the key strategies that we use to prevent or reduce bullying. These might not remain appropriate if there has been violence involved.

#### **Procedure**

- All staff will intervene at anytime if they see any behaviour that they suspect may be bullying.

- Any pupil who witnesses bullying will either intervene if they feel it is necessary for the victims' safety and then report the incident to an appropriate adult or if they do not feel confident report the incident immediately to an appropriate adult.
- Any adult who receives a report of bullying behaviour will treat it seriously and pass the information on to the form tutor or directly to the Pupil Progress Leader.  
**NB** Care must be taken to consider the position of the person reporting the bullying. It may at times be inappropriate to reveal the identity of the source.
- Pupils can report incidents on the SNAP website (anonymously if they wish) directly to the police or through peer mentors.
- Form Tutors receiving reports of bullying should initially investigate and then pass the information on to the appropriate Pupil Progress Leader. The Pupil Progress Leader should be informed in all cases of bullying.

A number of strategies may then be implemented depending on the circumstances of particular incidents. A single strategy is unlikely to provide a complete solution. These may include:

- Peer mentoring
- Active Listening
- Anger Management
- Assigning a Learning Mentor
- Behavioural / Friendship Contracts
- Restorative justice approaches
- Counselling
- Rewards
- Sanctions
- No blame approach
- ESW involvement
- School nurse involvement

Victims of bullying will be provided with appropriate support and help from staff utilising some of the above strategies. Once the bullying has been dealt with, the victim will be followed up on to check that there has been no reoccurrence of the bullying.

A pupil suspected of bullying will be given the opportunity to explain their behaviour during investigation. Only when the incident has been fully investigated may a pupil be sanctioned for their behaviour.

Sanctions will be applied fairly, proportionately, consistently and reasonably taking account of any additional needs or disabilities that pupils may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable children. Bullying by these pupils is no more acceptable than bullying by other pupils and it will be made clear to them that their actions are wrong and appropriate sanctions imposed.

However, for a sanction to be reasonable and lawful, we must take into account the nature of the child's SEN / disability and the extent to which the child understands and is in control of what he / she is doing.

Disciplinary penalties have three main purposes:

- To impress on the perpetrator that what they have done is unacceptable
- To deter them from repeating this behaviour
- To signal to other pupils that the behaviour is unacceptable and to deter them from doing it.

The sanctions we impose for bullying are intended to hold pupils to account for their behaviour and ensure they face up to the harm they have caused and to learn from it. They also provide an opportunity for the pupil to put right the harm they have caused.

The consequences of bullying will reflect the seriousness of the incident. Sanctions can vary from letters of apology, detentions, withdrawal of privileges at lunchtime and break, withholding participation in extra curricular events to fixed term exclusions. In the most serious and persistent cases permanent exclusion may be justified particularly where violence is involved. Such sanctions will be determined by the Pupil Progress Leader and / or a Senior Management Team member.

### **Involving Parents**

- Parents of both the perpetrator and the victim should be informed by the Pupil Progress Leader / Assistant Pupil Progress Leader as soon as bullying has been confirmed through investigation. (An interim telephone call whilst an ongoing lengthy investigation is taking place is desirable.)
- Thereafter parents should be communicated with regularly until the matter is resolved and a letter / phone call sent advising them as to the final decision of the school with regard to the incident.
- Parents of the bully should be invited in to discuss their child's behaviour where appropriate constructively at an early stage rather than as a last resort.
- If a parent contacts school to report that their child has been bullied their concerns should be taken seriously and they are referred to the appropriate Pupil Progress Leader / Assistant Pupil Progress Leader. If they are unavailable then to a member of the Senior Management Team. These staff should:
  - Ask for details and record the information
  - Make a further appointment to explain actions and to find out if they bullying has stopped
  - Follow up with staff to ensure the appropriate action has been taken.
  - Ensure the school policy has been implemented

As a school, it is important for us to work with parents to help them then understand the stance of the school on bullying. We should offer a range of approaches to parents as appropriate to help them deal with this child's behaviour either in-house or by signposting the parents to appropriate channels of support including referral to appropriate Children's Services e.g. CAMHS, Educational Psychologist.

All incidents of confirmed bullying will be recorded and kept in the pupil's file. If a school transfer takes place it is important that a copy of the record of any bullying incident is retained by the school.

#### **8. IMPLEMENTATION:**

To ensure that the whole-school community continues to adopt the policy on bullying, we will keep awareness raised through the following:

- PSHCE lessons
- Assemblies
- Newsletters / VLE
- SHARP website
- Displays / Posters
- School Forum consultations
- Prospectus
- New Staff Induction and training

#### **9. MONITORING:**

The monitoring of the policy will be an on-going process. All incidents of bullying will be logged on our electronic behaviour management system (IRIS) by the Pupil Progress Leader / Assistant Pupil Progress Leader / Senior Management Team.

This system will enable a cohesive data collection system and enable easy analysis.

It will inform us of:

- Number of incidents
- Type of incident
- Age of bully / victim
- Location of incident

The Assistant Headteacher in charge of Pupil Welfare will collate and analyse the data and liaise with the Headteacher and the Pastoral Team as appropriate.

#### **10. EVALUATION:**

In order to ensure the effectiveness of the policy a process of evaluation will be carried out. The results of this evaluation will be included in our SEF under Section 4b and 4d.

This evaluation will involve consultation with the whole school community via:-

- Questionnaire
- PSHE lesson/form time
- School forum/Year meetings
- VLE
- Parents views at parents' evenings/PTA
- Staff meeting agenda item]
- Peer mentor reports

If successful we hope to see

- A reduction in bullying incidents
- Pupils more prepared to report bullying
- Pupils less accepting of bullying
- Heightened staff awareness of bullying

The evaluation will be the responsibility of the Assistant Headteacher/Senior Teacher Pastoral in conjunction with the Headteacher.

**11. REVIEW:**

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years. It will appear on the agenda of the Governing Body annually.

The date of the next review will be March 2011.