




Anti-Bullying Policy

2024/25

Version and Date 2.0 March 2024	Action/Notes Addition of risks of AI Updated procedures Updated Staffing
Policy Review Frequency - Annual	Statutory- Yes
Date of next Review - September 2024	Website- Yes
Signature of Headteacher 	Approved by governors date - 6th June 2024



VALUES

At The Whitby High School, every individual is valued for who they are and what they contribute to our school. Values are intended to support the personal, social and spiritual development of every person throughout our school.

Our values are:

COMMITMENT We commit to doing our best and always striving to improve.

INCLUSIVITY We value diversity and the unique contributions each individual brings to this school.

KINDNESS We treat everyone the best that we can, no matter who they are or how we feel about them.

RESPECT We respect one another's right to safety and dignity at school. We will speak to each other with calmness, politeness, and civility.

AIMS

We seek to fulfil the needs of learners in a caring, happy environment, enabling them to realise their true potential as young people and citizens.

We aim to enable our learners to:

PREPARE for adult life in a happy, caring and purposeful environment

ACHIEVE their full potential regardless of individual need

CARE for everyone and encourage respect and tolerance

ENJOY education and rejoice in success

Policy aims

The aim of this policy is to provide students with a caring, inclusive and safe working environment that enables all students to be free from bullying, discrimination and harassment.

Bullying, in any of its forms, breaches The Whitby High School's rules within our 'Positive Relations Policy' and will not be tolerated. We are committed to upholding the principle that bullying is not acceptable at The Whitby High School and, should bullying occur, it must cease immediately. We promote our values of Commitment, Inclusivity, Kindness and Respect and the understanding that our school community will have diversity amongst all its members. Through this policy, we aim to help parents/carers and students know where to go and what to do in the event of a bullying issue.

Our pledge to parents/carers and expectations of students

The Whitby High School refuses to accept any kind of bullying, discrimination or harassment and this is reflected in its 'Positive Relations Policy' and other policies which promote equal opportunities. We expect students to respect the rights of every member of the school community, regardless of appearance, race, gender, sexual orientation/gender reassignment, disability (including SEND) or religion.

Our expectations are made clear on a regular basis through assemblies, curriculum activities, form time activities and form tutor periods.

Any incident of bullying, discrimination or harassment made known to the school will be investigated and appropriate action will be taken. The Whitby High School takes a firm line against such behaviour and a range of sanctions, including permanent exclusion from school, will be considered.

Such behaviour is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Other policies which are related to this policy

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Equality of Opportunity Policy
- The Positive Relations Policy (Conduct)
- Use of Reasonable Force Policy

Please note: This policy mainly refers to 'bullying'. This is for simplicity – discrimination and harassment towards others will be treated in the same manner.

This policy aims to produce a consistent response by the school to any bullying incidents that may take place. It is to act as a guide to students, staff and parents/carers. The overall aim is to create an environment free from the anxiety and stress that bullying and discrimination cause, whereby individuals can flourish and fulfil their potential. The onus is on prevention of bullying and discrimination but swift action will be taken when dealing with such cases. The Whitby High School promotes a culture whereby victims of bullying are confident to come forward and report matters and a culture of support, which has the voice of the child at its core.

Every member of our school community is entitled to:

- feel valued and respected
- feel safe and secure
- be encouraged to express their thoughts, fears and concerns without embarrassment

- take responsibility to work towards these aims by showing concern for others.

Defining Bullying

The Whitby High School's Anti-Bullying Policy is informed by the law and government advice. More details on bullying and the law can be found at www.gov.uk/bullying-at-school

There is no legal definition of bullying. However, bullying is defined as 'behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, which intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally' (DfE definition).

Repeated bullying usually has a significant emotional component, where the anticipation and fear of being bullied seriously affects the behaviour and wellbeing of the victim. However, a single comment can also have a very significant impact and could be regarded as bullying. Also a person may experience the same comment from a wide range of individuals and feel undermined or distressed as a result. The impact of any comment/s or action/s on the victim must be taken into consideration. Any student who is frequently unkind may be contributing to a culture of bullying.

Bullying is usually: repeated intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally or humiliate often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender, socio economic circumstances or sexual orientation

It takes many forms and can include (but is not limited to):

- physical (e.g., hitting, kicking, shoving)
- verbal (e.g., teasing, name calling, insulting)
- indirect (spreading malicious information about someone, excluding someone from social groups)
- prejudicial and discriminatory (targeting students belonging to specific groups, e.g., homophobic, transphobic, racist, anti- Semitic, Islamophobic or against children with special education needs or disabilities or who are perceived as different in some way or against students as a result of their physical appearance)
- making threats spreading rumours or malicious comments seeking retribution following 'alleged snitching'
- taking belongings provocation (e.g., throwing things in class, kicking the back of a chair, tripping in a corridor)
- cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (for example, email, social media networks and instant messenger platforms) taking photos or videos without permission

Artificial Intelligence

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard.

The Whitby High school recognises that AI has many uses to help pupils learn, but may also have the potential to be used to bully others. For example, in the form of 'deepfakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real.

The Whitby High School will treat any use of AI to bully pupils in line with our **Positive Relations** policy.

As per the legislation from Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024, it is important to note that

bullying falls within the definition of peer- on- peer (child on child) abuse.

Staff at The Whitby High School will report any concerns regarding peer-on-peer abuse to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'.

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence. These include: violence or assault theft repeated harassment or intimidation, for example name calling threats and abusive phone calls, emails or text messages

The Whitby High School will report incidents to the police where, in our professional judgement, school has been or will be unable to secure an appropriate resolution for an incident or sequence of events. Parents and students retain the right to report any incident to the police that they believe should be reported. The Whitby High School will always work closely with the police, taking direction from them where appropriate. Where criminal offences have taken place, The Whitby High School will inform the police. These include: where abuse from bullying constitutes a hate crime upskirting (involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm.)

Headteachers have the legal power to make sure students behave outside of school premises when their behaviour has a direct impact on the reputation of the school community, for example, when students are wearing school uniform. This includes bullying that happens off the school premises, for example, on public transport or in a town centre.

Further to government advice and the law, Ofsted requires that schools keep records of all incidents of bullying.

Preventing Bullying

It is widely recognised that prevention is the most effective way of combating bullying and discriminatory behaviour. The school will take every opportunity to demonstrate to students, through the curriculum and by example, that it is totally opposed to bullying and discrimination.

All school staff will, wherever possible, intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. This includes being visible on corridors between lessons and fulfilling duties around the site to maintain order.

The school will encourage students to report any incidents to a teacher or other adult at school. Students will be told that they may bring a friend with them if they wish. The school will ensure that all staff, students and parents/carers are aware of this policy.

To promote our values of Commitment, Kindness, Inclusivity and Respect we take positive action to foster an ethos of working together successfully. Strategies that promote this at The Whitby High School include:

- an effective transition programme
- recognise the importance of building a culture of tolerance at the earliest possible stage
- promoting resilience in working with others through the curriculum model that demands

students work in different class groupings during their school career

- content in tutor time and assemblies that focuses on personal development, life in modern Britain and British values
- supporting the holistic development of the 'whole child' through our Pace Pledges
- student leadership programmes
- proactively create opportunities for students to get to know one another
- school council and student voice
- support and empower bystanders and/ or witnesses
- targeted support in school for key students and groups to promote cooperation with others (ELSA, mentoring)

Identifying Bullying

Changes in behaviour that may indicate a student is being bullied include (but are not limited to):

- unwillingness to go to school or return after a break
- belongings suddenly going missing or being damaged
- change to established habits (e.g., giving up extra activities, sitting inside instead of going out, changing usual routines for break and lunch)
- diminished levels of self-confidence
- inability to concentrate
- anxiety, depression, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet
- repressed body language and poor eye contact
- frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class
- reluctance to leave the classroom at the end of lessons or day
- choosing the company of adults
- frequent visits to a form tutor, student services or year leader
- unexplained injuries
- difficulty in sleeping, nightmares
- talking of self-harm or running away.

Dealing with Incidents

Any incidents will be taken seriously and dealt with as quickly as possible. Staff who receive a report of an incident from a student will:

- listen to the student's account of the incident
- reassure the student that reporting the incident was the right thing to do
- make it clear to the student that they are not to blame for what has happened
- make a note of what the student says
- explain that the student should report any further incidents to a teacher or other member of staff immediately.

Staff will ask the student:

- what has happened
- how often it has happened
- who was involved
- where it happened
- who saw what happened
- what they have done about it already
- how the school can support them.

The matter will then be referred to the appropriate Pastoral Leader for action.

Resolution Strategies

The nature of bullying means that every incident is different. Members of the Pastoral Team will use their judgement to select appropriate strategies and actions to resolve an incident.

These will include some of the following:

- immediate action to secure a student's safety
 - positive reinforcement to a victim that disclosure was the right decision
 - sympathy and empathy
 - interviewing peers separately and agreeing future actions and behaviour
 - appropriate sanctions and/or contracts
 - restorative conversations between peers
 - offer a mentor
 - informing and / or meeting parents
 - additional supervision or monitoring of a student or students for a period of time
 - asking relevant staff to monitor a situation and report any further concerns
 - referral to school nurse or other agency
 - ensuring the needs of the victim are met
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- support and educate students who might genuinely not know or understand they have done something wrong
 - consideration of and actions to meet the needs of students who have been found to be bullying others.

If there are concerns that a student is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of the bullying, it will be treated as a child protection concern and reported to a Child Protection Officer, who may in turn refer the matter to the Local Authority.

If there are serious concerns about the mental health of the victims, appropriate support will be sought through iArt (social services) and any necessary referrals submitted.

Support for the victims of bullying

The main focus of school staff will be to support the victims of bullying in all cases. There are a number of strategies which can be used to support the victims:

- a designated member of staff for students to go to when feeling anxious (nominated by or agreed with by the student)
- 'wishes and feelings' work will be done by pastoral staff (using the school proforma)
- referral into the school welfare system, which offers a range of bespoke support
- 'safe areas' at unsupervised times during the school day
- early collection from school (short-term basis)
- accessing the Study Support Room to keep up-to-date with subject matter (short-term)
- accessing the 'buddy' system run by older students
- home contact to monitor the situation and feelings of the victim.

Support will be agreed with parents/carers and students. It is vital that parents/carers are involved at all stages and that contact is maintained by both parties (school and parent/carer) to share any relevant updates.

It is good practice for the school to continue to monitor known bullying cases. Moreover, it is important that Pastoral Leaders and form tutors liaise closely to monitor the behaviour of the victims of bullying. Changes in behaviour may be explained by the impact of such events.

Support for the Bullies to Change

Staff will spend time to help students who have bullied others to change their behaviour. If a student is bullying others, staff will:

- talk to the student and explain that bullying is wrong and makes others unhappy
- discuss with the student how to join in with others without bullying
- talk to the student about how things are going at school, their progress and friends
- give the student lots of praise and encouragement when they are being kind and considerate to others
- possibly refer the student to the 'Restorative Justice' programme, through the pastoral system, in order to reflect on how their behaviour impacts on others
- use outside agencies, such as the community police (PCSO), when appropriate.

Bullying of Students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Students with SEND are at particular risk of bullying. The school will:

- ensure that students with SEND are fully integrated into the life of the school
- ensure that all staff are aware of students who are vulnerable and understand their particular needs
- ensure that staff training covers the specific ways in which bullying affects students with SEND
- use the curriculum to explore the issue of "difference" and give students the opportunity to explain to their peers what it is like to have their special needs or disability
- encourage a positive relationship with the parents of students with SEND
- assess any trends or patterns in incidents of bullying affecting this group of students.

Recording Incidents

All incidents of bullying and discrimination and the resultant discussions with the students involved will be recorded on the CPOMs system, along with the school's response.

Co-operating with Parents and Carers

The school will ensure that parents/carers are aware of this policy. If you suspect that your child is being bullied, you should contact the school as soon as possible. It is vital that the school is informed, in order for the matter to be dealt with.

We respectfully request that parents/carers do not take to social media to criticise the school without first going through the appropriate channels, which are:

- 1) make contact with your child's tutor
- 2) make contact with the relevant Pastoral Leader
- 3) if you remain unhappy, please make contact with the Deputy Headteacher (pastoral).

We also strongly advise you to check your child's use of e-mail/internet facilities or mobile phone (text messaging and social media sites). The school is here to help and our main concern is for

the happiness and welfare of our students.

Advice to students

Please follow the steps outlined below:

- 1) Reports incidents as soon as possible. **DON'T SUFFER IN SILENCE.** Should you feel uneasy about speaking to staff about the issue, report it through the school 'App' or SHARP system. There is a publicised 'drop-in' service every week, whereby students can report issues anonymously.
- 2) Be assertive but not aggressive. Tell the perpetrator to stop, say you don't like their behaviour. If it continues, don't let the perpetrator see you are upset. This is what they are trying to achieve.
- 3) Avoid risky situations. Don't go into isolated areas.
- 4) Be proud of yourself – you have got qualities and strengths. Don't let perpetrators make you feel ashamed of yourself.
- 5) Don't be tempted to stay away from school. Come to school, report the situation. We will investigate it and support you.

Monitoring and Review Moving Forward Together This policy is regularly monitored by the Headteacher and Governing Body to ensure that it is working as effectively as possible.

The review date is one the front of the policy.



