



# Anti-Bullying Policy

Non Statutory Policy

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For internal use.

Link to other policies:

- Behaviour for Learning;
- Child Protection Policy & Procedures;
- Missing Child;
- Attendance and Punctuality;
- SEND;
- SMSC/PSHE
- Acceptable use of ICT Policy





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## 1. Rationale

As a provider of education firmly rooted in Christian values and teachings, we take seriously our legal responsibility to provide all members of our Academy community with a safe environment, free from fear of prejudice or harm. As a Christian Academy we recognise that all members of the Academy community are created in the image of God, and as such, they deserve to be recognised for their uniqueness as individuals. The Academy has a key role in preparing young people for their adult lives in society. Thus the promotion of equality and diversity is important for both now and for the future. It is our Christian duty to support all children so they are able to use their God given talents to the full. As such, any form of bullying has no place in our Academy community, and this applies to the relationships between adults and adults, between adults and students, and between the students themselves. In this respect, members of staff should be free from bullying by Parents/Carers and/or students. As an Academy, we all have a responsibility to treat others as we would like to be treated ourselves and it is expected the behaviour of students, teaching staff, support staff and Parents/Carers will reflect this. We accept that all students have the right to be educated in a caring, friendly and secure environment. We believe that this policy upholds those beliefs.

## 2. Policy aims

This policy intends to ensure that:

- all understand what bullying is;
- clear guidelines are provided for students, staff, governors, Parents and Carers;
- a consistent approach to bullying is established and maintained.

## 3. Duties

The Academy has a legal responsibility to address any concerns raised regarding allegations of bullying as outlined in the following legislation:

- **Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006** - provides that maintained schools must have measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst students. These measures should be part of the school's behaviour policy which must be communicated to all students, school staff and parents.
- **Independent School Standards Regulations 2010** - provide that the proprietor of an Academy or other independent school is required to ensure that an effective anti-bullying strategy is drawn up and implemented.
- **The Equality Act 2010** - provision against discrimination of all forms is covered under a new public sector Equality Duty, which came into force on 5 April 2011. It replaces the three previous public sector equality duties for race, disability and gender, and covers age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Equality Duty has three aims. It requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:
  - eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act;
  - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it;

- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- **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'*. Where this is the case, the school staff should report their concerns to their local authority children's social care. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, schools may need to draw on a range of external services to support the student who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child engaging in bullying.

**Advice from the DfE regarding criminal law states:**

*'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.*

*If school staff feel that an offence may have been committed they should seek assistance from the police. For example, under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety or to send an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.'* (Preventing and Tackling Bullying – Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies: October 2014).

#### **4. Definition of bullying and types of bullying recognised by the Academy**

The governing body of St Wilfrid's has agreed to adopt the following definition in line with current Government guidance. **Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group.** Bullying falls into two main categories:

- emotionally harmful behaviour such as verbal taunting, spreading hurtful rumours, excluding people from groups, and cyber-bullying via technology;
- physically harmful behaviour such as kicking, hitting, pushing or other forms of physically abusive behaviour.

**The behaviour constitutes bullying if it is repetitive, wilful or persistent; intentionally harmful, or if there is an imbalance of power, leaving the person who is bullied feeling defenceless.** It is also important to acknowledge that bullying behaviour can and does occur anywhere - in schools, within the home and the community.

**It is not bullying when there is no intention or harm, i.e. behaviour is thoughtless or accidental, there is a one-off fight/argument between students, there is a good reason why others cannot be included in a group activity or if a student is called a name which they are happy with, e.g. a nickname that is not derogatory in nature.**

The perception of bullying is also taken very seriously.

St Wilfrid's anti-bullying policy covers all types of emotional and physical bullying, including bullying relating to:

- race, religion or culture - racial taunts, racial graffiti, gestures;
- special educational needs or disabilities - abuse of anyone who is vulnerable – children with physical disabilities, those on the Autism Spectrum, gifted and talented or those with

educational needs. Also any bullying of children who are carers and children who have suffered a death in the family;

- appearance or health conditions;
- sexual orientation - homophobic – any hostile or offensive actions against lesbians, gay males, bisexual or those with transgender dysphoria or those perceived to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or questioning their sexuality. See below;
- sexist or sexual bullying - unwanted physical contact or abusive comments, sexual taunts, gestures or graffiti;
- school staff, whether by students, Parents/Carers or other staff;
- cyberbullying – of students and/or staff via technology – internet/computers/mobile phones/other electronic devices including the use of any form of social media. See below.

#### **Additional information on specific types of bullying:**

**Homophobia** is a dislike or fear of someone who is lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender/transsexual, (LGBT). At its most benign, it involves passive resentment of LGBT men and women. In its most destructive form, it involves active victimisation. Such attitudes can also affect anyone who is perceived to be homosexual or who does not conform to stereotypical standards of masculine or feminine behaviour. Challenging and responding to homophobia will also help address concerns regarding gender-based bullying, and stereotypical images of masculinity and femininity.

**Homophobic bullying** is often present in an environment that fails to challenge and respond to homophobia. It can take the form of rumourmongering, social isolation, text messaging and frightening looks, as well as more obvious forms of bullying.

It does not just affect young people who identify as LGBT. In schools, homophobic bullying can directly affect any young person whose life choices, interests or needs do not conform to accepted gender norms, as well as adult members of the Academy community who are LGBT, and anyone who may have friends or relatives who are LGBT. This can, in turn, affect the whole Academy community by giving out the message that bullying is tolerated, and that the Academy environment is unsafe. The Academy ethos influences every aspect of Academy life, and can be a key determinant in the success of work to challenge homophobia. At St Wilfrid's all individuals should be free from such bullying.

**Managing religious sensitivities** may create contrasting views on homosexuality between (and within) different religious faiths and are often seen as an obstacle to addressing homophobia in schools. At St Wilfrid's we consider that most religions and faiths are based on fairness and justice. The key issue to address is not so much the range of religious beliefs about sexuality, but rather the need to challenge discrimination and promote the respect and equality of all young people, regardless of their sexuality. The Academy has a Community Cohesion Lead and any concerns regarding racial differences are addressed as appropriate by this individual.

#### **Cyber-bullying**

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which may occur in, or outside, the Academy. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and is more widely accessible as people may forward on content easily via social media.

The wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 give teachers' stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones within the Academy. These include images/videos taken without the consent of the student or member of staff, whether these have been circulated or not.

Cyber-bullying takes different forms – threats and intimidation, harassment or “cyber-stalking” (e.g. repeatedly sending unwanted texts or instant messages), vilification/defamation, exclusion or peer rejection, impersonation, unauthorised publication of private information or images and videos, and the manipulation/use of another student’s ICT area.

The procedures for dealing with cyber-bullying are similar to those we use for anti-bullying. Tackling cyber-bullying can often be more challenging as, on many occasions, it can take place outside of the Academy, (although not always), and the evidence can be difficult to gather. We rely on Parents monitoring their children’s use of technologies, e.g. the internet and mobile devices, with particular regard to social networking sites, to assist the Academy in tackling this form of bullying. **If a Parent or child becomes aware of cyber-bullying or inappropriate use of the internet or mobile devices, then they should try and record any instance through the use of the screenshot/print screen, i.e. taking a digital image of the screen they can view. They should then save it or print it, and bring it into the Academy.** This may be used by the Academy in line with our anti-bullying policy or the police/other agencies, should it be deemed necessary as evidence.

Inappropriate use of Academy ICT facilities to enable bullying will also be addressed in line the Acceptable Use of ICT policy and may lead to the withdrawal of ICT provision for a student. The Academy implements Impero for the protection and safety of our children and young people. ‘Smoothwall’, is our web filtering system that blocks any inappropriate searches and search results; all inappropriate usage can be monitored via a report upon request.

#### **Liaison with outside authorities:**

As an Academy, we are totally committed to preventing all forms of bullying, and all instances of bullying will be investigated quickly, thoroughly and appropriately and any action taken will be proportionate and in line with the sanctions outlined in this policy and the Behaviour for Learning Policy. Where appropriate, referrals to outside agencies including the Police will be made, (see section 3 p. 4 *Advice from the DfE regarding criminal law*).

#### **Bullying outside school premises**

*‘Teachers have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises “to such an extent as is reasonable”. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre. Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on. The Principal should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator in their local authority of the action taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed. In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying the teacher can only discipline the pupil on school premises or elsewhere when the pupil is under the lawful control of the staff member.’* (Preventing and Tackling Bullying – Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies: October 2014).

## **5. Signs and Symptoms of Bullying – advice for Academy staff and Parents**

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

- has low self-esteem;
- is more anxious/insecure, becomes withdrawn or lacks confidence;

- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away;
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares;
- begins to have behavioural problems at school;
- school work shows a decline;
- feels ill/feigns illness;
- has poor attendance, is unwilling to go to school (school phobic) or begins to truant;
- is frightened of walking to, or from, school;
- doesn't want to go on the school/public bus;
- begs to be driven to school;
- changes their usual routine;
- stops eating/excessive eating;
- is frightened to say what's wrong;
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged;
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing";
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully);
- has unexplained cuts or bruises;
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable;
- is increasingly secretive regarding internet and mobile phone use

## 6. Procedures for reporting incidents of bullying

### Advice for students:

Where a student is subjected to, or witnesses bullying, this should be reported as soon as possible in one of the following ways:

- Inform any member of staff as soon as possible;
- Speak to one of the Anti-Bullying Ambassadors, trained via the Princess Diana Foundation. These students are identifiable by the lapel badge they wear. Alternatively, speak to one of the POD staff and they can advise you and/or make contact for you;
- Report to a Prefect and they will offer support and seek appropriate assistance from Academy staff;
- Report using the online SHARP system accessed via the school website – useful if the threat or danger is not immediate and if you wish to remain anonymous.

Whilst there are a number of ways in which students can report bullying, it is recommended that a member of the relevant POD staff is alerted as soon as possible so that the matter can be investigated and dealt with at the earliest opportunity.

### Advice for Parents/Carers:

Where a Parent/Carer becomes aware of an incident(s) of bullying involving another student(s) of the Academy, they are advised to contact their child's Year Manager in the first instance.

If a Parent/Carer believes that their child is a victim of bullying by a member of staff, they should make contact with the Principal to outline their concerns. The Principal will then determine whether an investigation needs to take place. If so, this will be conducted in line with Academy procedures.

### Advice for Academy staff:

If a member of staff becomes aware of an incident of bullying either by observation or by disclosure as outlined above, then that member of staff must report that incident to the student's Year Manager or

Student Support Manager, as soon as possible. If either the Year Manager or the Student Support Manager is unavailable, the matter should be referred to the relevant Assistant Principal: Student Engagement & Behaviour. If the member of staff believes that the student concerned is at significant risk of harm this should be disclosed to the DSP Mrs S Stamford, or in her absence, the Principal. The Assistant Principal KS3 will be responsible for regular monitoring of SHARP and dissemination of information to the relevant POD.

## **7. Procedure for the investigation of alleged bullying**

- a) All reports of bullying are to be treated seriously. The bullied student should record their version of events in writing. The alleged bully should do likewise;
- b) Initially the situation will be investigated and controlled by a member of staff from the relevant POD in a calm, collected manner. Where there is a serious safeguarding concern relevant members of the SLT will be notified as outlined in section 6 above;
- c) At the outset the bullied student is asked for their desired outcome. They must feel that they are controlling events to some degree and that reporting the matter will not lead to repercussions. Both the bullied student(s) and the bullying student(s) are to be involved in creating a constructive solution;
- d) In most instances, it will be possible to resolve the issue via a Restorative Justice (RJ) meeting. This is particularly relevant when the bullied student feels that they wish to discuss their feelings with the perpetrator. When a group of students are involved, similar work will be done with individuals, starting with the perceived leader. If no further action is to be taken after the RJ, clear outcomes and expectations are to be shared with clear consequences for the bully(ies), if this action is repeated;
- e) Parents of all students involved will be notified of any incidents of bullying as soon as practically possible;
- f) Dependant on the severity of the incident, and if deemed appropriate, Parents/Carers of the perpetrator(s) will be informed and will be asked to attend a meeting to discuss the problem with the relevant Assistant Principal: Student Engagement & Behaviour, Vice Principal: Safeguarding and Child Protection, or the Principal as deemed necessary. In such cases, sanctions in line with the Behaviour for Learning Policy will be applied. The Principal will determine the appropriate sanction(s). If necessary and/or appropriate, outside agencies and the Police will be consulted to offer support and guidance.
- g) When bullying persists or involves more than one person being bullied, the results of the above procedures are discussed and the agreed consequences implemented in line with the Behaviour for Learning Policy. Support for serial offenders will be offered at the appropriate stage in the disciplinary procedures.
- h) ALL witness statements will be collated and an Incident Log will be generated. A brief outline will be recorded on SIMS under the Confidential Bullying tab on all involved student profiles. The log number will also be recorded and the paperwork will be stored in the relevant POD in the incident files.
- i) Where necessary, relevant staff will be informed.

## **8. Sanctions that may be applied for bullying**

At St Wilfrid's we expect all members of the Academy community to operate in a culture of mutual respect, hence often the issue can be resolved at the RJ stage.

However, further sanctions that may be used are:

- parental meeting;
- Key Stage (POD) detention;
- removal of the bully from the group or class;
- removal of the bully from a school bus;
- removal of internet access or other appropriate punishment;
- withholding participation in any school activity (e.g. trip, residential or sports event) which is not an essential part of the curriculum;
- referral to Reflect;
- referral to another school's behaviour/isolation unit for a maximum period of 5 school days at any one time;
- exclusion (fixed term);
- exclusion (permanent).

Additionally, referrals to relevant outside agencies and the Police may be deemed appropriate. Where a Parent wishes to report the matter to the Police, the Academy will cooperate fully.

The strongest sanction, exclusion, may be necessary in cases of severe and persistent bullying. All sanctions will be implemented in line with the Behaviour for Learning policy.

## **9. Preventative measures taken by the Academy**

At St Wilfrid's we have a clear Anti-Bullying Strategy that aims to create an environment where all members of the Academy community feel safe and free from both physical and emotional harm. This is achieved by promoting a culture of acceptance of individuals irrespective of gender, sexual orientation, religious belief, race, disability, special need or position in the Academy. The full Strategy can be found in Appendix 1 of this policy.

## **10. Implementation of the Policy**

It is the responsibility of the Principal to ensure that the anti-bullying policy is implemented correctly in school and all staff follow the procedures set out in it.

The relevant POD staff will record all incidents of a bullying nature and ensure thorough record keeping which will be overseen by the appropriate Assistant Principal within the POD. POD staff will ensure that the Vice Principal: Safeguarding and Child Protection is notified as appropriate, where a safeguarding concern arises and the Principal will also be notified where there is a serious incident, particularly those of a sexual or violent nature.

All staff have a responsibility to ensure any disclosures of bullying by any pupil or parent are passed on to the appropriate staff. All new staff will receive anti-bullying training as part of the Induction CPD and all staff will have regular anti-bullying training/updates.

## **11. Monitoring of the anti-bullying process**

The Vice Principal: Safeguarding and Child Protection, supported by the Assistant Principal: KS3, 4 and 5, will ensure pastoral staff are keeping well-detailed accounts of bullying incidents and that reporting procedures are being consistently applied.

The Student Council will, from time to time, discuss anti-bullying strategies, preventative measures and reporting of anti-bullying incidents. Details from such meetings will be fed back to SLT and discussed as appropriate. Further discussion at POD Meetings may be undertaken as appropriate.

## **12. Evaluating the policy**

The Anti-Bullying Policy and the Anti-Bullying Strategy will be reviewed annually in line with best practice by the Link Governor and the Vice Principal, Safeguarding and Child Protection as well as the Assistant Principals KS3 and KS4. A regular update of incidents will be provided for review by the governing body where responses to incidents will be evaluated.

## **13. Procedures for dealing with complaints**

The Academy endeavours to bring all incidents of bullying to a satisfactory conclusion. However, if a Parent/Carer feels that Academy has not achieved this, they can, in the first instance, contact the Principal to discuss the matter. If, after this, they still feel there are concerns and Parents feel that the response from the Academy is not adequate, the Principal will give details of the appropriate complaints procedure and Parents can contact the Clerk to the Governors, Mrs K Nightingale who will refer the matter to the Chair of the Governing Body.