



Anti-Bullying Policy

Rationale

Wellacre places great emphasis on its core values: honesty, pride, respect, aspiration and resilience. As a result, it is of central importance that we provide a physically and emotionally secure environment in order to meet the needs of all students and ensure that they leave the Academy 'inspired, fulfilled and confident.' Both students and staff will develop their full potential when they feel happy, safe and valued, as part of the school community. At Wellacre we recognise that academic success is intrinsically linked to physical and emotional development along with a sense of wellbeing and high self-esteem. We believe that all students have the right to be educated and all staff have the right to work in an environment which is supportive and fosters wellbeing. This policy applies to every individual within the school community irrespective of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or ability.

Aims

This policy aims to provide guidelines and procedures to be followed in the event of bullying/suspected bullying. It clearly recognises that bullying is a serious matter, and any incident will therefore be acted upon promptly and appropriately. However, it also recognises that what is perceived as bullying can involve a complex chain of events and interpretations of those events so that each particular case needs to be dealt with on an individual basis.

- To clarify for students and staff that bullying is always unacceptable.
- To create an ethos of good behaviour where students treat one another and the staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave.
- To encourage prevention due to values of respect for staff and other students, an understanding of the value of education, and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others and permeate the whole school environment – in the playground, corridors, classrooms, and beyond the school gates. This knowledge along with our Core Values are referred to in lessons and are always reinforced by staff and students setting an excellent example to others.
- To make it easy for students to report bullying so that they are assured that they will be listened to and incidents acted on.
- To create a safe environment where students can openly discuss the cause of their bullying, without fear of further bullying or discrimination.

- To ensure that parents/carers feel confident that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issue in a way that protects the child, and they reinforce the value of good behaviour at home.
- To clarify the steps that will be taken in the event of a complaint.

Definition

Bullying behaviour is often deliberately hurtful, repeated over a period of time and is difficult for victims to defend themselves against. It is the wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone else. Any behaviour which is intended to hurt others and is **SPECIFIC** and **REPEATED** is bullying.

Bullying may include: -

- Physical violence
- Threats
- Name-calling
- Malicious teasing
- Exclusion from social activities
- Extortion
- Damage to belongings
- Spreading rumours
- Humiliation
- Bullying related to race, religion and culture
- Bullying students with disabilities or special educational needs
- Sexist bullying and harassment.
- Bullying students because of their gender, sexuality or perceived sexuality
- Cyber bullying (the use of mobile phones and social media to bully students)

Possible Signs

Staff should watch for early signs of distress in students - deterioration of work, isolation, the desire to remain with adults, erratic illness/attendance patterns. Whilst this behaviour may be symptomatic of other problems, it may be the early signs of bullying.

Encouragement to Tell – we are a ‘telling school’

It is important that we create an atmosphere where students who are being bullied, or others who know about it, feel that they can report it, that they will be listened to and believed and that action will be swift but sensitive to their concerns. Not telling, protects the bully or bullies and gives the message that they can continue and perhaps bully others. Students can tell any member of staff, a prefect, one of our trained Anti-Bullying Ambassadors, Wellbeing Ambassadors or a Peer Mentor. Students can also report a bullying incident by completing a ‘*See it, Report it, Don’t Support it*’ slip and placing it in the Incident Reporting post box.

Procedures

In the event of a student or a parent/carer making a comment or complaint about bullying, the teacher is to deal with it in the first instance; listen carefully and record all incidents. This will then need to be referred to the Achievement Tutor, Assistant Head of House or Head of House and recorded on CPOMS.

The investigating teacher (the member of staff who has agreed to investigate it, this may not be the teacher who first received the complaint) will:

- Offer the victim immediate support and help by putting the procedures into operation to ensure that they feel safe and it is investigated and the perpetrator(s) are dealt with swiftly.
- Inform the student and their parent/carer about the initial response.
- Ensure all students involved are spoken to and that statements are gathered.

The investigating teacher should record their discussions with both parties and inform the Achievement Tutor / Assistant Head of House / Head of House. The incident and actions taken by staff must be logged onto CPOMS. The parent/carer of the students involved should be contacted and informed of all reports, and the reports/statements logged and filed in respective student files. Restorative Justice, mediation and sanctions should be carried out as required.

The unacceptable nature of the behaviour, and the consequences of any repetition, will be made clear to the bully and to their family. It is also important to make it clear to the victim that revenge is not appropriate. Support will be maintained for both parties, even when sanctions have been applied.

The Wellacre Behaviour for Learning Policy outlines the full range of sanctions that are available at the discretion of the investigating teacher. The consequences must reflect the seriousness of the incident so that all students see that bullying is unacceptable.

Sanctions

Isolated incidents

These will be dealt with through the normal discipline system (detentions at the appropriate level, time within the Isolation room, phone calls home, report cards etc).

Repeated or extreme bullying incidents

If a situation persists or it is extremely serious, the involvement of the Leadership Team, Governors, parents/carers, will be required. In cases where a person has been physically assaulted, the police may also be involved. In such cases, or where bullying is persistent, the instigator is liable to face the full range of sanctions which may include a fixed term exclusion from school or even a permanent exclusion.

Where does this policy apply?

This policy applies to all students and staff of Wellacre, in the classrooms, on the corridors, yards and fields. It applies also to all staff and students on visits, residential trips and journeys to and from school.

Bullying outside the Academy premises

The Principal has a specific statutory power to discipline students for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives the Principal the power to regulate students' conduct when they are not on premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of staff.

This can relate to any bullying incident occurring anywhere off the premises, such as on public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre. Where bullying outside school is reported, it will be investigated and acted on. The Principal will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or PCSO's in the local authority of the actions taken against a student. If the misbehaviour is deemed as criminal, or poses a serious threat to a student or member of the public, the police will always be informed.

Whenever an incident involves a student or students from another school, staff will liaise with appropriate colleagues from the relevant school to ensure that sanctions and support are put in place for that student, in order to prevent further bullying incidents.

Staff Responsibilities

Staff should be vigilant at all times with the awareness that bullying can take the many forms as identified above, and often occurs covertly in unstructured situations. When in doubt, staff should consult their line manager, but to facilitate clear lines of communication it is essential that staff inform Pastoral Assistants/Learning Directors who will monitor incidents and collect information from staff and students involved. Professional judgement must be applied at all levels, when assessing the severity of any incident.

Staff Duty Teams need to be particularly watchful of behaviours in and around the school site, before school, at break times and lunchtimes.

Staff can report and record incidents of bullying on CPOMS (Child Protection Online Monitoring System) which notifies pastoral staff and appropriate action can then be taken.

Student Responsibilities

All students have a responsibility to report any incidence of bullying within the school community. This responsibility extends to supporting victims who are afraid to report any form of bullying. They should be encouraged to report all incidents of bullying or suspected bullying to members of staff and not to be 'bystanders.' Students can report incidents of bullying by using the post box.

Support and Intervention

Victims of bullying behaviour will be given support which might involve:-

- Peer Support
- Individual time with a member of staff
- Confidence building activities with Achievement Tutors, Assistant Head of House or Head of House
- Involvement with outside agencies (Education Welfare/Healthy Young Minds – CAMHS/School Mentor/School Nurse/Youth Service/42nd Street)

We also recognise that victims of bullying may need to learn specific skills and strategies in order to enable them to become less passive and more assertive, thus avoiding them self of becoming a repeated victim of bullying.

Instigators of Bullying Behaviour

Students who use bullying behaviour will be encouraged to empathise with their victims and to repair the damage that they have caused in a Restorative Justice session. Strategies and skills will be given to address aggression and to enable them to build positive relationships with their peers. They will also be assisted to identify their strengths and positive qualities and encouraged to use these for the benefit of themselves and the school community.

Prevention

The school aims to prevent bullying behaviour through use of our CCTV system, Student Voice, Questionnaires, Assemblies, the use of Anti-Bullying Ambassadors, participation in National Hate Crime Awareness Week in October and National Anti-Bullying Week in November, the Wellacre Anti-bullying Charter (*see Appendix A*), promoting LGBT+ Inclusion through the Rainbow Flag (*see Appendix B*) and the content and delivery of the RESPECT Curriculum, along with the day-to-day responsibilities of the whole staff team.

Monitoring and Evaluation

All incidents will be monitored and evaluated on a half-termly basis by Assistant Heads of House and Heads of House via CPOMS and details of recorded incidents in the post box. The Assistant Head of House with responsibility for Safeguarding/Anti-Bullying and the Vice Principal, will co-ordinate the process.

Conclusion

This Policy is fundamental to the healthy life and wellbeing of a successful community. All members of the school community are responsible for implementing this policy.

Anti-Bullying Charter for Wellacre

'Bullying is behaviour by an individual or a group which is usually repeated over time, where an imbalance of power is used to intentionally hurt another, either physically or emotionally.'

We believe that all students have the right to be educated and staff to work in an environment where there is mutual respect and co-operation. Bullying is contrary to this approach and our school community will do everything possible to discourage it.

We are a **'TELLING' SCHOOL** - If you think you or someone you know is being bullied, **TELL SOMEONE.**

Our School community will:

- Take seriously every incident where a person feels they have been bullied, in order to establish a safe and respectful community.
- Work to create a school community where bullying is not tolerated.
- Promote positive relationships and tackle bullying appropriately.
- Ensure that all bullying concerns are dealt with sensitively and effectively.
- Ensure **all** forms of bullying (such as HBT, race and cyber bullying) are addressed promptly.
- Investigate incidents of bullying and take action where necessary, supporting individuals when this takes place.
- Abide by our Anti-Bullying Policy and review it on a regular basis.

Appendix B - The Rainbow Flag Award

*The Proud Trust has been successful in a funding bid from the Government Equalities Office via the Department for Education. The grant is to fund initiatives that will enable schools to effectively combat and prevent **Homophobic, Biphobic and Transphobic (HBT)** bullying. With the funding The Proud Trust announced the launch of The Rainbow Flag Award. The Rainbow Flag Award encourages a whole school approach to tackling HBT bullying and promoting LGBT+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans) inclusion. Wellacre has been accepted onto this pioneering new project and we will work with the Proud Trust to meet both our legal and moral requirement, promoting LGBT+ inclusion in school by supporting the needs of LGBT young people, given the wealth of evidence showing that LGBT young people are still disproportionately affected by mental health issues and teen suicide.*

What is HBT bullying?

Homophobic, Biphobic and Transphobic (HBT) bullying is the targeted abuse of an individual who identifies as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or someone who is questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity (LGTB+).

Types of HBT bullying

As with most kinds of bullying, there are five main types of HBT bullying that can occur. A series of incidents can involve all five types, or the sustained use of just one type.

Physical – hitting, kicking, pinching, punching, pushing, scratching, spitting or any other form of physical / sexual violence. Damaging or taking things that belong to another person can also be classed as physical bullying.

Verbal – bullying that is spoken or said. This can include using words such as ‘gay’, ‘faggot’ or ‘tranny’. Statements that threaten or tease others are classified as verbal bullying.

Indirect – bullying that does not directly involve the person being targeted. This can include spreading rumours about someone, or purposefully excluding them from an activity because of their sexuality or gender identity.

Mental – bullying that involves threatening or actually ‘outing’ someone to another individual or a group of people; public humiliation, sabotaging friendships and academic achievements.

Cyber – bullying that is carried out using electronic means. This includes sending texts, calling people to verbally abuse them, sending videos or picture messages, sending emails, using social media or instant messaging apps, or writing malicious posts on online forums or blogs. This can also include sending threatening messages or death threats.

Bullying of any kind is always serious and should be reported. It can make young people feel humiliated, vulnerable and embarrassed. If bullying is not challenged, it can result in substance misuse, self-harm and even suicide attempts.

Tackling HBT bullying

We adopt a zero tolerance approach to HBT bullying, providing a clear Anti-Bullying policy so that all staff and students can consistently challenge HBT bullying.

Wellacre incorporates lessons around gender identity and sexuality into the RESPECT curriculum, developing understanding and awareness. By allowing a safe space for open discussions students can explore and challenge each other’s attitudes safely.

As part of the Rainbow Flag Award staff and students at Wellacre are striving to embed LGBT+ inclusion within the school curriculum to encourage and promote tolerance, acceptance and diversity.