Anti-Bullying Policy 2025

Last Reviewed: December 2025

Next Review Due: December 2027

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Contents

1   Introduction

This policy operates in conjunction with:

- Windlesham's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Windlesham's Behaviour Policy
- Windlesham's Online Policy (IT Curriculum Policy)
- Windlesham's PHSE/RSE Policy
- Windlesham's Equality & Equal Opportunities Policy

2   Legal References

This policy operates within a wider national and local policy framework which includes:

- The Education Act 1996 & 2011
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006 & 2014
- DCSF Guidance 'Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying in schools'
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children and Families Act 2014, SEND Regulations 2014 and SEND Code of Practice 2015
- DfE Advice: Preventing and Tackling Bullying 2014
- DfE Advice: Cyberbullying Advice for Headteachers and School Staff 2014
- DfE Guidance on Anti Bullying 2017
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025
- DfE Working together to safeguard children 2023

3   Policy Statement

- Our community is based upon respect and good manners. We are committed to providing a supportive, safe and caring environment that is free from disruption, violence and any form of harassment so that all our pupils can develop their full potential within a mutually caring environment between all members of the school community.
- We do not tolerate bullying, harassment, victimisation or discrimination of any kind and work hard to prevent these or to tackle them if they occur.
- Bullying is a whole school issue, and we take a whole school approach in response. Any member of the community may bully or be a victim of bullying: we regard all incidences of bullying equally seriously and in turn expect staff, pupils and parents to play their part in preventing and tackling bullying.

- Unkind behaviour may escalate into bullying if allowed to persist. We aim to address small issues immediately to avoid that happening.

- It is important to understand that the school's behaviour expectations, bullying prevention, RHSE teaching, safeguarding procedures and our equalities duties all operate together through a number of connected school policies. These policies are very much aligned and operate within the same whole-school framework to ensure consistency and effectiveness for all concerned.

- Governors of the school have the responsibility to ensure the upholding of these policies. This is done through scrutiny, challenge and quality assurance with the headteacher and relevant leaders across the school. This enables governors to review logs and reports, challenge what they see and ensure they are confident that implementation is effective and lawful.

4   Aims of Policy

This policy aims to:

- Prevent bullying, as far as reasonably practical

- Help staff, pupils and parents deal with bullying when it occurs

We recognise that many children and young people will experience conflict in their relationships with other children and young people and as a school we are committed to developing empathy and the skills to manage relationships in a peaceful way that does not harm others.

5   What do we mean by bullying?

There is no single definition of bullying.

The Department for Education refers to bullying being a behaviour that is repeated, intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally and often aimed at certain groups, for example because of SEN, disability, race, religion, gender or sexual orientation. These are some of the vulnerable groups as identified in KCSIE 2025.

Here at Windlesham our definition of bullying is *"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 online"*

- Bullying can take many forms:
- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, threatening behaviour
- Verbal - name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, use of derogatory language
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Extortion - demanding money/goods with threats
- Online – use of social media, messaging and calls. Misuse of associated technology e.g. photos and videos.
- Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic or biphobic - bullying because of sexuality or perceived sexuality

- Transphobic – because of gender identity or perceived gender identity

What does research tell us about some of the key types of bullying?

- Bullying related to race, religion or culture – recent political and social issues appear to be a factor in bullying and harassment. There is research to support the suggestion that where black and minority ethnic children experience bullying, it is more likely to be severe bullying. Children and young people of different faiths and travellers' children can also experience bullying.

- Bullying related to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and those identified as Able, Gifted and Talented (AGT) – research shows that children and young people with SEND are more at risk than their peers. Windlesham School actively promotes equal opportunities for all people and seeks to eliminate all related harassment.

- Bullying related to gender and gender identity – research shows instances of children and young people being bullied because simply because they are a girl/boy and particularly where there is a large gender imbalance. This often takes the form of harassment of a sexual nature. The same applies to (pre) transgender pupils.

- Bullying related to sexual orientation – evidence of homophobic or biphobic bullying suggests that pupils who are gay or lesbian or (perceived to be) face a higher risk of victimisation than their peers. Homophobic bullying is perhaps the form of bullying least likely to be self-reported, since disclosure carries risk not associated with other forms of bullying. The pupil may not want to report bullying if it means 'coming out' to teachers and parents before they are ready to do so.

- Bullying because a child is fostered, adopted or a carer – evidence suggests that pupils who are fostered, adopted or are carers face a higher risk of being bullied.

- Online / social media bullying is a method of bullying rather than a type. It includes bullying via text message, instant-messenger services and social network sites, email and images or videos posted on the Internet or spread via mobile phones. It is all about the intentional misuse of technology to cause harm or upset. As technology, such as AI, continues to evolve it can, and often will, include artificial intelligence to 'generate' images or videos that are fake to cause harm or harassment to others.

6   How does bullying differ from unkindness?

Sometimes pupils can feel hurt or upset because they have been ill-treated or have fallen out with a friend. This is not the same as bullying. Bullying:

- Is deliberately intended to hurt or humiliate
- Involves a power imbalance that makes it hard for the victim to defend themselves
- Is usually persistent
- Often involves no remorse or acknowledgment of the victim's feelings

School staff are ready to help and support pupils who have fallen out with friends, but such situations will not be treated in the same way as a case of bullying. However, the strategies we use may well be similar because we acknowledge that over a period of time the impact on the student may be the same and the situation could become bullying if it escalates.

Every pupil has the right to be safe and happy in school and to be protected from feeling vulnerable. Staff and volunteers also have the right to work in an environment free from bullying and to feel able to raise the matter with and seek support from the school.

7   How do we aim to prevent bullying:

We foster a clear understanding that bullying, in any form, is unacceptable. We believe that preventing bullying is the responsibility of our whole school community and when there are incidents of bullying, we will work together to deal with the situation and to learn from what has happened.

In our school we do this by:

- Involving the school community in developing our policy including a child/ pupil friendly version of our policy.

- Using assemblies and PSHE time in class to ensure that pupils understand the differences between relational conflict and bullying.

- Building a positive ethos based on respecting and celebrating all types of difference in our school.

- Creating a safe and happy environment, with consequent positive relationships that have an impact on learning and achievement.

- Having a positive ethos that all pupils, staff and parents understand.

- Work in school which develops empathy, social skills and emotional understanding e.g. PSHE, Citizenship, social and emotional learning programmes, circle time, peer mediation and playground buddies.

- Secure the safety of the target of bullying

- Take actions to stop the bullying from happening again and develop whole school learning - reflection on what we have learnt.

- Think about any safeguarding concern and report concerns to Designated Safeguarding Lead.

- Provide assurances to child that concerns have been listened to, and action will be taken.

- Consider who else is involved and what roles they have taken.

- Send clear message that the bullying must stop.

- Work with both parties to find solutions. Identify the most effective way of preventing re occurrence and any consequences.

- Reflect and learn from bullying episodes –consider what needs to happen next to prevent future bullying e.g. PSHE, training etc.

- Raising awareness of online bullying through regular e-safety lessons, part of our PSHE and computing curriculum.

- Adopting a social model approach to bullying. Diversity is valued and everyone is included in our school.

- Focussed work with individuals and groups of pupils, where required, to support understanding and development of social skills e.g. social skills groups.

- Ensuring that lunch and play staff are actively engaging with the children to encourage and promote/lead positive play.

- Offering training to all school staff around bullying, including specific guidance on those groups who are most likely to be bullied.

- Actively support National Anti-bullying week (Nov) where assemblies and other pupil centred activities are predominant.

- Making pupils aware that bullying is seen as a serious disciplinary offence and strong sanctions such as exclusion or suspension may be necessary in cases of severe and persistent bullying.

- Working to prevent incidents of bullying by maintaining a disciplined atmosphere and remaining alert to the importance of friendships and the development of social and emotional competencies.

- Ensuring a bullying incident will be treated as a child protection and safeguarding concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a pupil is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm at home. The issue will then be reported to the police/Front door Safeguarding Hub in Brighton in these instances.

- Promoting an environment in which Equality, Diversity and Inclusion are celebrated. As well as ensuring compliance with the relevant legislation and codes of practice, we are committed to protecting children (and staff) from bullying based on race or colour, nationality or national or ethnic origins, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, age, and disability (together known as "Protected Characteristics").

8 Antibullying in our curriculum

This policy, along with the Equal Opportunities Policy, recognises the need for a behavioural approach to reinforce a culture where prejudice, harassment and online abuse, including sexual abuse are not tolerated. We need to ensure that the curriculum is used to teach and support the messages of antibullying, and it is designed to equip the children with the skills they need to be positive members of the local community.

As part of this process Windlesham School will ensure that within the curriculum provision appropriate to their setting and age, children receive appropriate teaching in order that they develop a clear understanding of:

- healthy and respectful relationships.
- what respectful behaviour looks like
- self-discipline
- Fundamental British Values
- consent
- stereotyping, equality
- body confidence and self-esteem
- prejudiced behaviour
- that sexual violence and sexual harassment is always wrong
- addressing cultures of sexual harassment

9 Role of Staff and Volunteers

Everyone in the Windlesham community takes all forms of bullying seriously and will intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. All staff should have an awareness that bullying, which may be a safeguarding issue, can manifest themselves via child-on-child abuse. All staff should be clear as to the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures with regards to child-on-child abuse laid out in the school Safeguarding Policy, which is updated annually.

10 Role of Windlesham School Senior Leadership and Governors

- To develop school policies that are in line with current regulations

- To promote a school climate where bullying and violence are not tolerated and cannot flourish

- To ensure a regular review of all school policies and, as a result, the policy and procedures are updated as necessary

- To provide curriculum opportunities to address bullying

- To ensure pupil support systems are in place to prevent and respond to bullying

- To have a filtering and monitoring system and a policy in place to help detect signs of cyberbullying within school

- To be responsible for preventing and responding to bullying

- To be aware of the importance of modelling positive relationships

- To work in partnership with parents, other schools and with children's services and community partners to promote safe communities

- To ensure that issues of negative behaviour are being effectively reported on Engage so that they can be monitored for patterns and frequency

- To respond to incidents of bullying and to take appropriate action at the time to prevent and deal with bullying.

11 Role of parents

- The school is highly proactive in communicating with parents. Parents are clear that the school does not tolerate bullying and will follow the anti-bullying policy.

- Parents have a responsibility to support the School's policies and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school.

- Parents are encouraged to express and share any concerns about bullying by approaching the class/form teacher, whether that be as a parent of a pupil or a bystander in a situation.

- They are aware of procedures to use if they are concerned their child is being bullied or does not feel safe to learn, including the school's complaints procedure.

- They have confidence that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously and investigate/resolve as necessary, and that the school systems will deal with the bullying in a way that protects their child.

12 Signs and Symptoms

A pupil may indicate that they are being bullied if he or she:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school

- Does not want to go on the school/public bus

- Changes their usual routine

- Is unwilling to come to school (school phobic)

- Begins to truant

- Becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence

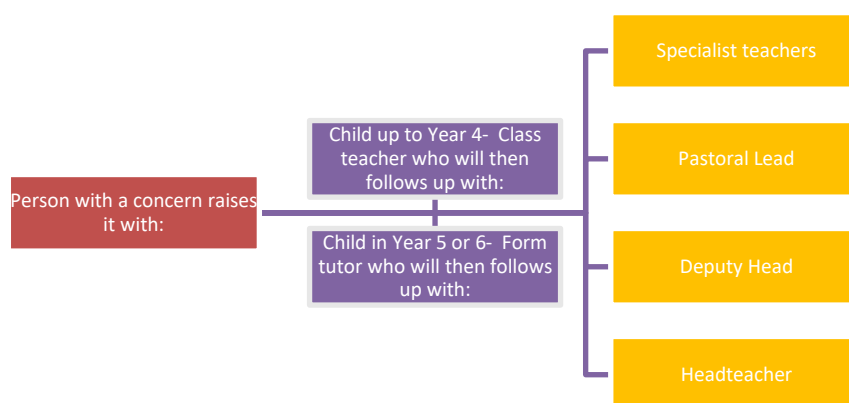- Becomes isolated from their peers during the school day

- Starts stammering

- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away

- Feels ill in the morning

- Begins to produce schoolwork that is of low quality compared to normal

- Has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"

- Starts stealing money

- Has monies continually "lost"

- Has unexplained cuts or bruises

- 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 when a cyber-message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, and this list is not exhaustive, but bullying should be considered a possibility and must be investigated.

At Windlesham, since the bullying situation can be multi-layered and complex, a variety of approaches to solve the problem (including short term strategies) may be adopted to help the pupils involved.

13   Reporting Bullying

Any member of the Windlesham community who has witnessed or has been informed of an incident of bullying must alert the following:

14   Pupils Reporting Bullying

In our school pupils are encouraged to talk to staff when they are unhappy or have concerns. Pupils in our school understand that they have a right to feel and be safe and a responsibility to support others to feel and be safe.

Pupils are encouraged to report bullying to:

- A trusted adult
- Their class teacher/TA
- Peer mentors or buddies

Each class has a 'worry box' where children can report their concerns if they do not feel confident speaking to an adult. Children are taught that it is important to talk to a trusted adult if bullying is taking place outside of school. Parents are also encouraged to report concerns and bullying to named individuals. This is normally the class teacher / tutor. When pupils report their concerns, our staff are trained to LISTEN and to BELIEVE. We involve children as far as possible in finding solutions.

15   Parental Reporting

If a parent has any concerns about their child, they should speak to the class teacher/form tutor immediately. In the first instance the form tutor/class teacher will normally try to resolve any issues. If this is a bigger issue, more complex, or if the parent thinks this is bullying, then the matter will be referred to the headteacher for consultation. The headteacher is always informed of any bullying concerns here at Windlesham and will oversee all cases, supporting the pastoral lead in dealing with such incidents.

•If a parent feels unable to talk to the class teacher, they can make an appointment to speak directly with the Headteacher.

•The school will work with both the child and the parents to ensure that any bullying is stopped, and that support is given where needed.

•Parents should not confront the bully or their parents. This can complicate the situation and distress the pupil.

•The school will deal directly with all children involved and their parents directly. Parents will be kept informed of any actions the school is taking.

•If parents feel that their concern has not been dealt with appropriately, they should follow the school's complaints policy.

All members of the school community, including pupils, staff, parents and governors, are expected to always treat everyone with dignity respect. This includes both face-to-face contact and online.

16   Responding to Bullying

Dealing with an incident

The steps we take in dealing with incidents are:

- Listen very carefully to the pupil who feels bullied.
- Find out the facts and how the pupil is affected by what is happening.
- Speak to all parties before any decision is made.
- Record the facts including date, time of incidents and witnesses written account on ENGAGE.
- Decide Who to tell with relevant parties as indicated above - decide who needs to know including parents of both parties.
- Decide on any sanctions and follow up actions.

Supporting those affected by the bullying

We want every child to feel safe and confident in school. School should be a place of security and as a result we will respond to incidents of bullying, or suspected bullying, promptly.

If we have a child who is being bullied, then we will help them to:

- Know that the school is dealing with the incident and be confident that action will be taken to improve the situation.

- Take steps to feel safe again

- Rebuild confidence and resilience

- Utilise and build up stronger friendship bonds and wider support networks

- Feel stronger and not feel a victim

- Feel listened to and valued

Pupils acting as a bully – we will help them to:

- Realise that their behaviour is having a harmful and hurtful effect on another, also the potential consequences of their behaviour to themselves

- Acknowledge that they themselves have a problem and know that their behaviour is not tolerated in school

- Overcome their problem by talking through situations which have led them to behave in this way with others

- Know that sanctions hold them to account for their behaviour and help them to face up to the harm they have caused

- Learn to behave in ways that do not cause harm in future because they have developed their emotional skills and knowledge

- Learn how they can take steps to repair the harm they have caused

- Change future bullying behaviours

We monitor and review all bullying incidents to determine any patterns or trends that may require further action. On a regular basis we give pupils the opportunity to feedback on how safe and happy they feel at school, we do this through pupil questionnaires and/or School Council meetings. All staff are required to complete an Engage Behaviour Incident Report form when dealing with incidents of bullying. This should be completed as soon as possible, and this will then be reviewed by the Pastoral lead and the headteacher as soon as possible. This is where follow-up actions and next steps for dealing this will be decided upon. These forms are also used as part of the monitoring process.

Following up the report

We believe that it works best when the child who has been affected by the bullying has a say in how the incident is dealt with, after all it is them who has been impacted by this. So, we allow the pupil to have a voice in how they want to proceed in the matter.

It is important that each case is dealt with on a case-by-case basis as each case will be unique and so the way that it is dealt with will vary. Some examples of how this could be dealt with are:

- The pupil being bullied may decide that talking to their class teacher, tutor or peer supporter and gaining a feeling of support is enough and no further action is taken or needed at that time.

- The pupil being bullied may decide that they want staff to take the matter further. Sometimes staff will feel that it is in the pupil's best interests for the incident to be taken further. This will involve collecting information from a range of people so that the wider picture is understood. Different approaches may be used. It may be that the situation is best dealt with as a disciplinary issue with the bully being confronted and questioned.

- An alternative approach is to call together a group of pupils, (Restorative Justice) which include the bully/bullies and members of the peer group who have the respect of others. This group will discuss how the bullying behaviour causes distress, explore ways of improving the situation and making the pupil being bullied feel happier and ultimately be sure that the bullying behaviour stops.

- In cases which involve physical harm or serious mental pain then the pupil will need protecting and the decisions about action passed to all relevant staff and parents.

- Bullying is not necessarily a disciplinary issue. If a pupil who is found to be acting as a bully acknowledges the distress caused by their actions and accepts responsibility for setting the matter right, then in some cases disciplinary action may not be deemed necessary. If this is not the case, then the matter is dealt with using an appropriate sanction. Refer to the School's Behaviour Policy.

- Whether a disciplinary line or a pastoral supportive line is appropriate, bullying is always serious and should be dealt with promptly. Strong sanctions, such as exclusion, may be necessary in cases of severe and persistent bullying. The headteacher and SLT will be aware and will discuss all cases of bullying in school as they arise.

- It may be helpful for the bullied person or bully to access a councillor; to discuss any underlying problems or difficulties further, this may be arranged through the school or the family's own GP.

- When the problem has been resolved then staff should check that, after a suitable interval, it has not re-occurred.

17 Further points

- Windlesham School regularly evaluates and updates the bullying procedure to take account of advancements in technology.

- Bullying is an issue, which attracts considerable focus. Helping pupils, parents and staff to develop a balanced view of a situation is crucial.

- Action will be taken for any bullying incidents that occur outside of the school day as appropriate.

Other useful websites and documents include:

- Education and Inspection Act 2006 Section 89
- The Equality Act 2010
- Anti-bullying Alliance (ABA)
- Childline
- Childnet
- CEOP

Linked Policy

Windlesham School Safeguarding Policy September 2025