

# **WESTBOURNE SCHOOL**

## **ANTI BULLYING POLICY**

At Westbourne School, our community is based upon respect, good manners and fair play. We are committed to providing a safe and caring environment that is free from disruption, violence and any form of harassment so that every one of our pupils can develop his/her full potential. We expect our pupils to treat members of staff with courtesy and co-operation so that they can learn in a relaxed; but orderly, atmosphere. All pupils should care for and support each other.

Westbourne School prides itself on its respect and mutual tolerance. Parents/guardians have an important role in supporting Westbourne School in maintaining high standards of behaviour. It is essential that school and homes have consistent expectations of behaviour and that they co-operate closely together. Acceptance of this policy forms part of our standard terms and conditions.

Bullying, harassment and victimisation and discrimination will not be tolerated. We treat all our pupils and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff and the school. Any kind of bullying is unacceptable

The aim of Westbourne's anti-bullying policy is to ensure that pupils learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Bullying is antisocial behaviour which affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will pupils be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available here. Westbourne states that it is the happy child who learns, the child with self-respect who will reach his or her potential – bullying will obviously adversely affect this.

The School's Code of Conduct emphasises the importance of respect, tolerance and caring – a copy of the Code is attached and is in each classroom in the junior and senior buildings.

Bullying may be defined as the intentional hurting, harming or humiliating of another person by physical (including sexual), verbal (including chat room and SMS messages - Cyber-bullying (see annex 1)), and emotional means (by excluding, tormenting or spreading malicious rumours). It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It can involve complicity that falls short of direct participation. Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and intimidatory.

Bullying may involve actions or comments that are racist, homophobic, which focus on disabilities or other physical attributes (such as hair colour or body shape). Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time. Bullying may ultimately cause psychological damage and even suicide.

Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting from school.

Westbourne encourages pupils to report bullying incidents at school, whether it relates to them or to others.

## Instructions to Staff

a) slight suspicions or concerns are noted in the School Behaviour/Comments Diaries – this will help to build up a pattern of behaviour. Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is being bullied include:

- Unwillingness to return to school
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually bad work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others
- Books, bags and other belongings suddenly go missing, or are damaged
- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary)
- Diminished levels of self confidence
- Frequent visits to the Medical Centre with symptoms such as stomach pains, headaches
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class
- Choosing the company of adults
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact
- Difficulty in sleeping, experiences nightmares
- Talking of suicide or running away

Although there may be other causes for some of the above symptoms, a repetition of, or a combination of these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents and teachers.

b) If specific incidents of bullying are suspected or reported the incident must be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached. If they consider this to be a serious and definite bullying issue the matter must be referred to a member of the Senior Management team. They will normally take the following action, but will use their judgement to decide the best way forward:-

- The victims and those accused of bullying will be interviewed separately
- Independent witness information will be obtained
- A written record will be made of the incident, investigation and outcome. Parents will be informed.

The aims of the intervention are –

- To prevent further incidents
- To restore the well-being of and rectify any damage to the self esteem of the victim.
- To educate the bully so as to permanently change his or her behaviour.

c) Anti-bullying messages should form part of the PSHE and general curriculum. 2 are illustrations of how the antibullying message is enforced at Westbourne. Think carefully about how you can include this message in the curriculum for your subject/age group.

## d) Sanctions

Punishment will depend on the severity of the situation and the degree of the intent. The school will use its full range of traditional punishments which range from bad house marks, detentions, loss of privileges through to expulsion. A list of sanctions may be found in the SS and JS staff handbooks.

If appropriate a mentor will be appointed to provide counselling for the bully – this will be negotiated with parents.

e) Support for the victim

If considered appropriate and as agreed with parents, a mentor may be appointed to provide 1:1 support for the victim of bullying.

f) Training

Staff training is an essential part of raising awareness and instrumental in reducing the likelihood of bullying at times and places where it is most likely to occur.

Whole class intervention

In practice Westbourne has found over the years that there is not one bully but often groups of pupils who do not get on with each other and can cause upset to one pupil or to another group. Often in these situations class intervention is preferable using a variety of tools –

- One to one mentoring by form teacher
- Anonymous listing of concerns by all pupils which are then dealt with in class discussion.
- Writing of class rules/expectations of each other.
- Involvement of member of senior management team to organise and promote discussion.

This course of action may also be used when a request has been made and it has been agreed to keep the situation confidential.

Action by Parents

Westbourne does take its claim to be a caring school extremely seriously and encourages parents to contact us as soon as they have any concerns about a possible or definite issue of bullying. This will be dealt with as agreed with you and as defined within the policy. You may contact any member of staff or approach the Headteacher directly.

Try to reassure your son or daughter that they are right to tell you and that it is correct for the information to be passed on to the school. Try to obtain as much specific information about the bullying incidents as possible.

In the case of cyberbullying it is recommended that pupils do not have computers in their own rooms, but that these are in a communal area of the home.

Have strict guidelines about the use your child may make of the internet and the time they may spend on it.

Parental control software can limit who your child sends emails to and who he or she receives them from.

Moderated chat rooms are supervised by trained adults. Your ISP will tell you whether they provide moderated chat services.

Further useful information can be found on the website for the Department of Children, Schools and Families.

[www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying)

## Review

The success of any intervention will be reviewed regularly by the Senior Management Team.

Useful websites:-

[www.stoptextbully.com](http://www.stoptextbully.com)

[www.parentlineplus.org.uk](http://www.parentlineplus.org.uk)

[www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/tacklingbullying](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/tacklingbullying)

## ANNEX 1 – CYBERBULLYING

A definition of cyberbullying?

“Cyberbullying is an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual, using electronic forms of contact, repeatedly over time against a victim who cannot easily defend him or herself.” Mobile, internet and wireless technologies have increased the pace of communication and brought benefits to users worldwide. Unfortunately, however, their popularity provides opportunity for misuse through ‘cyberbullying’.

Research by Goldsmiths College has identified seven categories of cyberbullying:

- Text message bullying
- Picture/video bullying via mobile phone cameras
- Phone call bullying via mobile phone
- Email bullying
- Chat room bullying
- Bullying through instant messaging
- Bullying via websites.

Unlike other forms of bullying, cyberbullying can follow children and young people outside of school hours and into their own homes, which have previously been a refuge for those being bullied. Cyberbullies can remain unseen and unidentifiable.

Westbourne does not allow mobile phones to be used during the working hours.

Chat rooms are filtered and cannot be used on the school’s network.

Lessons are given to all pupils on the dangers of cyberbullying and the necessity to inform parents/teachers of any incidents.

## ANNEX 2 EDUCATIONAL INPUT TO PREVENT BULLYING

### SENIOR SCHOOL

Westbourne’s school ethos is about the right to be an individual – the school believes that it is the happy child who will learn, the one with self respect who will best meet his or her potential. The school’s key words are caring, respect and tolerance.

Message delivered by J6 in an assembly spring term 2008

*Everyone has a right to be free,  
Where there is no freedom for others,  
There is no freedom for me.*

*Everyone has a right to be different,  
Where there is no respect for difference,  
There can be no respect for me.*

*There is hope for a safer future if I protect liberty,  
If I respect others,  
Others will respect me.*

The School's Code of Conduct promoting these values are displayed around the school.

Bullying would damage the school's ethos and aims and this message is constantly reinforced throughout the school in posters, messages and slogans.

Assemblies regularly focus upon appropriate behaviour to peers, emphasising again the school's aims.

## JUNIOR SCHOOL

The Junior School Code of Conduct is displayed around school and highlighted in the Information Booklet to parents. At the start of their junior years Westbourne Junior School aims to uphold these golden rules of conduct in everyday life at school.

- Do be gentle
- Do be kind and helpful
- Do work hard
- Do look after property
- Do listen to people
- Do be honest
- Do not hurt anybody
- Do not hurt people's feelings
- Do not waste yours or other people's time
- Do not waste or damage things
- Do not interrupt
- Do not hide the truth

## **Golden Standards**

### **Commitment**

We will always aim to:

1. be punctual.
2. arrive with everything we need for the lesson.
3. listen and watch carefully in each lesson.
4. use what we have learned to improve our work.
5. try our best.
6. hand work in on time.
7. have our homework diary available, keep it up to date and show it to a parent daily (J5/J6).

### **Behaviour**

We will always aim to:

1. respect people, their property and their privacy.
2. walk along stairs and corridors sensibly, keep left where possible.
3. play quietly in the 'Quiet Area'.
4. take care of other's safety and comfort in the yard.
5. be kind and helpful to others.
6. be honest.

### **Dress and Appearance**

We will always aim to:

1. have our collar fastened.
2. have our tie fastened.
3. have our shirt tucked in.
4. have our shoelaces fastened.
5. wear our trainers, if appropriate, outdoors.
6. girls must have long hair tied back neatly.
7. wear the correct uniform and look smart.
8. read and adhere to the dress code on page 40.

### **Manners**

We will always aim to:

1. say 'Please' and 'Thank you' when appropriate.
2. say 'Excuse me' when appropriate.

3. say 'I am sorry' when appropriate.
4. say 'Pardon' when appropriate.
5. say nothing when appropriate.
6. stand aside to allow adults to pass or where it is helpful to others whatever their age.
7. stand up when adults enter the room.
8. hold doors open for people who are following us closely or coming the other way.
9. address adults correctly by saying 'Miss', 'Mrs' or 'Sir' as appropriate.

On many occasions assemblies are centred around showing respect for others. In PSHE lessons at every age level, there is a topic which teaches the children not to undermine the actions of others; show sensitivity towards peers; value the opinions of others; share problems with others and the meaning of bullying in every form. Throughout the curriculum pupils work at times in pairs and in groups. They learn to respect each other's opinions as they work, to share ideas and to help one another.

If there is a recurrent problem with a child or group of children – this is referred to the Head of Department and, if appropriate, the Headteacher. Incidents are recorded in the pupil records and, if necessary, parents are advised of the situation and work with the school to ensure our high standards of behaviour are achieved by all.

## SENIOR SCHOOL

The anti-bullying message is reinforced across the curriculum – for example :-

PSHE is regularly timetabled into the curriculum + will be dealt with in lessons as need arises.

### **Senior School Code of Conduct**

Show respect for yourself

Show respect for members of staff

Show respect for people in the Community

Show respect for school buildings and equipment

Be polite

Be tolerant

Be caring

Be considerate

Be punctual, smart and organised

Always work to the best of your ability

## **The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils**

New guidance was issued by the DCSF in October 2007 to take into account provisions in the Education and Inspections Act 2006. The law says that school staff can use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a pupil from:

- Committing an offence;
- Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of any person, including the person himself;
- Prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school.

Staff to which this power applies include:

- Any teacher who works at the school, and
- Any other person whom the head has authorised to have control or charge of the pupils. This includes: support staff whose job normally includes supervising pupils, such as learning mentors; lunchtime supervisors; people with temporary authorisation from the head, whose jobs does not normally entail supervising pupils, e.g. volunteers. Prefects are excluded.

To be lawful, the force used would need to be in proportion to the consequences it is intended to prevent. It is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.

## **Searching Young People for Weapons**

The Head teacher, and delegated members of staff, are empowered (since 1<sup>st</sup> May 2008) to carry out searches on pupils if they believe they are in possession of knives or other weapons.