



WELLSWAY
SCHOOL

Anti-Bullying Policy

For review by the Assistant Headteacher (Behaviour and Attitudes)
Approved by the Academy Governance Committee

Date of last review: February 2024

Date of next review: February 2025

Context

The Wellsway School Anti-Bullying Policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant policies.

- Wellsway School Behaviour Policy
- Wellsway Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Wellsway Online Safety Policy

1. What does the law say?

This policy has been constructed whilst being mindful of the following acts:

- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Education Act 2011
- Safeguarding Children and Young People
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023
- Preventing and tackling bullying 2017
- Approaches to preventing and tackling bullying: case studies 2018
- Searching, screening and confiscation 2018

2. Rationale

The Wellsway School Anti-Bullying Policy is an integral part of the Child Protection and Safeguarding processes at Wellsway School. It outlines clear guidance in relation to how the school will respond to incidents of bullying as well as offering advice to students and parents. All staff understand that bullying and its many forms is a classification of peer on peer abuse.

Bullying is a form of anti-social behaviour that has no place in this school or any community. Bullying can be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. It can take many forms, including:

- physical – hitting, kicking
- verbal – name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks
- misuse of new technologies – sending messages on mobile phones or via social media
- indirect – spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusions from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours.

Bullying:

- ... goes on for a while and happens regularly
- ... is deliberate, the bully wants to hurt, humiliate or harm the person being bullied
- ... different incidents towards the same person

Bullying is not:

- ... a one off incident or argument
- ... a friend sometimes being nasty

3. How does Wellsway School promote a safe and respectful school where bullying isn't tolerated?

The message that any form of bullying or unpleasant behaviour is neither welcome nor tolerated at Wellsway School is shared with all students through assemblies, tutor group and house activities, and throughout our curriculum.

The pastoral structure at Wellsway combines horizontal tutor groups (organised by year group) with a vertical house system (Key stages 3-5 inclusive) which creates opportunities for students to discuss issues relating to bullying, including how to prevent and respond to bullying, particularly through the delivery of carefully planned PSHE activities.

Wellsway School has an ethos whereby all members of the school community are expected to treat one another with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave. The school values reinforce respect for others and this fundamental aspect of school life permeates all areas of the school curriculum.

Wellsway School supports local and national anti-bullying events, such as National Anti-Bullying Week and National Safer Internet Day. Listening to the student voice is considered to be important at Wellsway School and opportunities for student-led approaches to anti-bullying are created via the student council, anti-bullying ambassadors and community action weeks which are underpinned by the themes of kindness, respect and living without harm.

4. How does Wellsway School respond to an incident of bullying?

INVESTIGATION STAGE
Stage 1
A member of staff is made aware of a concern in relation to bullying or online bullying and/or prejudiced or discriminatory behaviour or bullying.
Stage 2
The member of staff receiving such a complaint must respond by completing the following actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Log the incident on CPOMS (school email account holders) or complete a Serious Misconduct Form (non-school email account holders) detailing all known information. If the incident warrants it then statements from students involved should be taken using a Student Incident Form.
Stage 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Head of House of the aggressor will take responsibility for ensuring the issue is investigated and the appropriate actions are taken. They will work in conjunction with Head of House (Victim), Learning Mentors (Aggressor and Victim) and Tutor (Aggressor and Victim). If appropriate teachers and Curriculum Directors may be involved as directed by the Head of House. The Head of House of the aggressor will then upload details of the actions taken to CPOMS.
INTERVENTION/CONSEQUENCE STAGE – AGGRESSOR
<u>Bullying and Online Bullying</u>
Actions taken for the aggressor when it is confirmed that bullying or online bullying (2 or more incidents) of any other student has taken place:
<u>Level 1</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal letter from Head of House to parents/carers is sent home to include details of consequence The teachers of the bully and victim are informed by their Heads of House so that they can monitor closely for any inappropriate behaviour/bullying in lessons.
Bullying is classified as Serious Misconduct and appropriate consequences will be applied. These could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aggressor to receive a Community detention, time in the Withdrawal Room, Immersion at another school or possible Fixed Term Suspension.
<u>Level 2 - If bullying continues:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A conference with parents/carers of the aggressor will be held by the Head of House and a formal letter from Head of House to parents/carers is sent home to include details of consequence The Head of House may move the bully to a different Tutor Group and/or Learning Group. A behaviour contract will be created to support both students (which could address behaviour both in and out of school) Safe spaces can be created for the victim, but would not restrict their movement around school If deemed appropriate by the Head of House the bully will attend mentoring sessions to find solutions to the issues which are arising.
Bullying is classified as Serious Misconduct and appropriate consequences will be applied. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aggressor to complete Withdrawal Room, Immersion at another school or possible Fixed Term Suspension.
<u>Level 3 - If bullying continues:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At this stage a conference with parents, Assistant Headteacher (Behaviour and Attitudes) AND bully present and a formal letter from Head of House to parents/carers is sent home to include details of consequence The aggressor will be placed by the Head of House on Step 2 or 3 of the school's behaviour management system. A Pastoral Support Plan may be created by the Head of House. Police are available to perform 'restorative justice' activities between the students concerned. Parent/carer permission does not need to be sought for this though it would be expected by the school in most circumstances.
Bullying is classified as Serious Misconduct and appropriate consequences will be applied. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aggressor to complete Withdrawal Room sanction Fixed Term Suspension.
<u>Sexting, Prejudiced or Discriminatory Behaviour or Bullying</u>
Actions taken for the aggressor when it is confirmed that prejudiced based or discriminatory behaviour/bullying has taken place
Sexting, Prejudiced or discriminatory behaviour should be referred by all staff to the Assistant Headteacher (Behaviour and Attitudes) using CPOMS.
Students who demonstrate sexting, prejudiced or discriminatory behaviour will receive the following interventions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1st Offence – A Level 3 consequence will be applied by Head of House (Aggressor) and Assistant Headteacher (Behaviour and Attitudes). 2nd Offence – The student will be placed by the Head of House on Level 3 of the school's anti-bullying interventions as detailed above.
Level 4
If the bullying, online bullying and/or prejudiced or discriminatory behaviour still persist then further Fixed Term Suspension or Permanent Exclusion may follow at the discretion of the Headteacher.
INTERVENTION STAGE – VICTIM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A member of the victim's House team or the tutor will contact parents/carers to explain what is happening with identification of the bully not given - no 'naming and shaming'. Two and four week follow up checks must be diarised and carried out by the Head of House of the victim. The HoH may offer the victim a series of sessions with an internal or external mentor to support their emotional stability. Discussion with student and parent / carer over referral to external support agency. School and parent to use external support directory that is sent to parents annually and is available on the safeguarding page of the school website.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Further information on victim support is available to staff, students and parent / carers through our safeguarding, self harm and mental health policy, found on the school website. |
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Staff investigating should consider the following:

- Listen to and don't judge the victim or bully until you have heard both sides of the story and feel educated enough to make an informed decision.
- Tell the victim what you are doing to make sure that they feel comfortable with every step taken.
- Be there for the victim OR bully to talk to if they feel it necessary.
- Be aware of the possibility of a long and complex history behind the story.
- Be ready for the possibility of the victim becoming the bully.
- The bully/bullies may be unaware of the unhappiness they are causing. Be constructive. It might be desirable to involve the whole class and/or the tutor/teacher to plan an activity for the tutor group that could support the bully and victim that could focus on relationships.
- Keep an eye on the victim. Check formally whether the bullying is continuing or has ceased. Be aware that victims are sometimes reluctant to admit that bullying is continuing because they feel that 'telling' has not worked and has made things worse. Advise the victim on his or her comportment and behaviour if necessary but do not blame the complainant whose self-esteem may already be low as a result of the bullying.
- Be aware that the victim may have had previous instances of bullying from a different bully and may need additional support around this.

Factors to consider when determining the appropriate sanctions consider:

- Our policy should be followed consistently but we must consider the Special Educational Needs of all parties involved.
- The impact on the victim: was the bully acting anonymously? was any material/social media widely circulated and humiliating? how difficult was controlling the spread of the material?
- The motivation of the bully: was the incident unintentional or retaliation to bullying behaviour from others?
- Technology-specific sanctions for students engaged in cyber bullying behaviour could include limiting internet access for a period of time or removing the right to bring a mobile telephone into school.

Anti-Bullying Follow-Up Procedure

Following an incident of bullying it is necessary to ensure that the matter has been resolved and the victim of bullying is no longer being treated unfairly or unpleasantly by previous perpetrator or her/his friends or any other party. A member of the House team directed by the Head of House will complete a 2 and 4 week check to ensure the matter has been resolved. The Head of House is responsible for ensuring the checks are completed and that further interventions take place if the issue has not been resolved. The outcomes of the 2 and 4 week check should be uploaded onto CPOMS by the person who has completed the checks.

We work with all stakeholders to support, guide and advise what to do – this advice and guidance can be found in Appendices A – F.

Appendix A

All students are provided with clear guidance on how to respond to instances of bullying.

You have a right to feel comfortable and safe at school, as well as on your journey to and from school. If you are being bullied then **YOU MUST TELL.**

Who should you tell?

Your tutor, a subject teacher, Head of House, Learning Mentor or another member of staff with whom you feel comfortable - you choose.

What should you do if you are frightened to tell a teacher?

Tell a friend; tell your parents. They can tell the teacher for you.

What should you do if the bully or bullies threaten they will hurt you more if you tell?

Still tell - **AND** tell the teacher about these threats.

If you don't tell, the bullying will go on. You must **TELL EVERY TIME.**

The BULLY IS WRONG, NOT YOU.

YOU WILL WIN - as long as you TELL EVERY TIME.

Advice if you are the bully.

- Are you being unkind or cruel to someone you know?
- Do you know how it makes them feel?
- Do you know that calling someone a name is just as bad as hitting them?
- Do you have to be a bully because it makes you feel big?
- Don't you know any other ways to feel strong?
- Do you know that your friends are probably only your friends because they're afraid of you?

Stop bullying

The next time you're tempted to react in your usual bullying way, stop for a moment and think. If someone treated you like this just think about how you would feel if they behaved differently and smiled or chatted to you instead? So why don't you smile instead? Try to understand the other person's point of view.

Different isn't worse - it's just different.

People who are different in some way to you are just the same inside. Take a look around. Everyone is different - so what? You are no better than anyone else. We all have feelings - we are all human.

What do you get when you bully others?

You might think you're winning lots of friends. Maybe you think that everyone looks up to you because you're strong? But you're wrong. Behind your back people dislike you and think you're a coward because you attack others. They may act in a friendly way, but inside they are probably afraid of you. Is that the kind of friendship you want?

How can you change?

Why are you a bully? Is something bothering you? Are you unhappy for some reason, perhaps there's a problem at home? Then that's what you need to focus on. Get help for whatever is making you the kind of person who torments others.

Remember if you respect others, they will really like and respect you.

Appendix B – Guidance for students in relation to Online Bullying

- Always respect others – be careful what you say online and what images you send to others and publish on websites.
- Think before you send or publish – whatever you send can be made public very quickly and could stay online forever.
- Treat your password like your toothbrush – keep it to yourself. Only give your mobile number or personal website address to trusted friends.
- Block the bully – learn how to block or report someone who is behaving badly.
- Don't retaliate or reply!
- Save the evidence – learn how to keep records of offending messages, pictures, video/films or online conversations.
- **Make sure you tell** an adult you trust, or call a helpline like ChildLine on 0800 1111 in confidence. You could also speak to the provider of the service to see where to report incidents;
- At our school – speak to any member of staff. Your tutor will usually be the best person to start with.

Finally, don't just stand there – if you see online bullying going on, support the victim by reporting the bullying. How would you feel if no one stood up for you?

Appendix C – Guidance for staff if a student reports being bullied

All staff employed in the school are expected to adhere to a common set of guidelines in responding to instances of bullying. The term **staff** includes teachers and support staff. We all have a duty to implement the school policy on bullying. Every complaint of bullying must be taken seriously. Guidelines for staff should a student complain of being bullied can be found in the section 'How does Wellsway School respond to an incident of bullying?'

Appendix D – Guidance for staff in relation to Online Bullying

The use of the internet (Online bullying) and mobile telephones to bully is a very serious matter and can constitute a criminal offence. In the United Kingdom there are criminal laws that relate to harassment or threatening and menacing communications. These laws are applicable to students of secondary school age.

The wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 and the Department for Education (2018) document titled 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation.' gives teachers stronger powers to tackle online bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones.

Where the member of staff conducting the search finds an electronic device they may examine the device for inappropriate content if they think there is a good reason to do so. Following an examination, the member of staff

may decide to return the device to the owner, or to retain or dispose of it. They may erase any content if they think there is a good reason to do so.

The staff member must reasonably suspect that the content on the device in question has been, or could be, used to cause harm, to disrupt teaching or break the school rules.

All school staff are aware that behaviours linked to sexting put a child in danger. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should be notified if it is suspected that sexting has taken place. They will make any subsequent decision in relation to the viewing of content on an electronic device. Further guidance in relation to sexting is included within this section of the policy.

Wellsway School parents/carers are exceptionally supportive and working closely with them will usually provide the most effective way of punishing a child found to have engaged in Online Bullying activity. The ultimate outcome is to reform the views of the student engaging in the bullying activities and for the student bullied to feel reassured and clear that justice has been done.

At Wellsway School we will deal with reported cases of online bullying in the following way:

Supporting the student being bullied

- Give reassurance that the student has done the right thing by telling someone.
- Make sure the student reporting the issue knows not to retaliate or return the message and will ask the victim to think about what information might be available on the internet.
- Help the student to keep relevant evidence for any investigation (e.g. by not deleting messages/files they've received and by taking screen capture shots and noting web addresses of online cyber bullying instances). Check the student understands simple ways to prevent it from happening again, e.g. by changing contact details, blocking contacts or leaving a chat room. Please ask for advice if you require help with technical aspects.

Take action to contain the incident when content has been circulated:

If you know who the student responsible is, ask them to remove the content after you have had the opportunity to capture screen shots and witness content where possible;

- Contact the host (e.g. the social networking site) to make a report to get the content taken down.
- The Head of House may confiscate phones that are being used to cyber bully. Also ask the student to tell you who they have sent messages on to.
- In cases of illegal content, contact the police, who can determine what needs to be kept for evidential purposes.

How will Wellsway School respond to an incident of Sexting?

The UK Council for Child Internet safety (UKCCIS) have produced guidance for schools on how to respond to the following incidents:

- Person under 18 creates a sexual image of themselves and shares it with another person under 18.
- A person under 18 shares an image of another under 18 with another person under 18 or an adult.
- A person under 18 is in possession of sexual imagery created by another person under 18.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead at Wellsway School will oversee any incidents which meet the criteria outlined above and all actions taken will be taken in line with the UKCCIS guidance. The guidance states that 'schools may want to invoke their own disciplinary measures to discourage young people from sharing, creating or receiving images...'

Wellsway School will put in place consequence for serious misconduct for any student who is found to have demonstrated behaviour which meets the above criteria. Persistent offenders will receive consequences in line with our anti-bullying policy. Further guidance in relation to sexting can be found in the Futura Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Appendix E – Guidance for parents and carers of the student being bullied

Bullying:

- ... goes on for a while and happens regularly
- ... Is deliberate. the other person wants to hurt, humiliate or harm the target

Bullying is not:

- a one off fight or argument
- a friend sometimes being nasty

The school is committed to working in partnership with parents to resolve bullying issues quickly and decisively. The following guidelines offer support and advice to parents.

- If your son or daughter tells you they are being bullied, keep calm! Getting angry and threatening to visit the school or the parent of the other student may not help.
- Praise them for telling you and reassure them that they have done the right thing in letting you know what is happening.
- Try to find out the facts.
- Use your best listening skills. Accept your son or daughter's feelings, encourage him/her to talk about any worries by listening.
- Help your son or daughter to think about what s/he would like to happen, and ask how you can help.
- Encourage your son or daughter to talk to his/her Head of House or Learning Mentor. If s/he does not want to then it is advisable for you, preferably with your son/daughter's support, to make the Head of House or Learning Mentor aware that this is how s/he is feeling. Arrangements can be made for you to speak to a member of staff without making other students aware that this is being done. The sooner we know about a problem the quicker we are able to put in place appropriate intervention for all students involved and prevent bullying happening.
- Bullying can destroy confidence and your son or daughter will be feeling vulnerable. Make him/her feel loved, valued and important.
- Talk to him/her about why people bully to reinforce the point that your son/daughter is not the problem.
- When you talk to the school, stay calm and give specific details. Remember that we are partners with you and we both want the best for your son or daughter.
- If after you have made a plan with the school and followed it up, you are still not happy with the situation, then please do contact the Head of House again, who will review the action taken to date and offer guidance and support for future interventions.
- If the bullying problem persists you have the right to follow the school complaints procedure.

Appendix F – Guidance for parents and carers in relation to Online bullying

- Be alert to your child seeming upset after using the internet or their mobile phone. This might involve subtle comments or changes in relationships with friends. They might be unwilling to talk or be secretive about their online activities and mobile phone use.
- Monitor internet use closely – your child may be suffering in silence.
- Talk with your children and understand the ways in which they are using the internet and their mobile phone. Look also at the key messages for Wellsway Students on Online Bullying.
- Use the tools available on your computer. Find out how to turn on in-built internet safety features.
- Remind your child not to retaliate to messages.
- Keep the evidence of offending emails, text messages, files/videos or online conversations.
- Be aware, your child could be a cyber-bully as well as be a target of cyber bullying.

Report Online bullying:

- Contact your child's Head of House or Tutor if you think it may involve another student so that we can take appropriate action.
- Contact the service provider (Facebook, X (Twitter), Instagram).
- If the online bullying is serious and a potential criminal offence has been committed, you should consider contacting the police. The school will support parents/carers in this.