

WOLVERHAMPTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL

701 ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Setting

Wolverhampton Grammar School is an independent selective school. It has students in Years 6 to 13 (aged 10 to 18) of mixed sexes. It has a diverse ethnic mix with approximately one third of students from ethnic cultural and religious minority groups. Within the school there is a specialist unit supporting children with dyslexia and other related learning difficulties.

Policy formulation

This policy was first drafted by the Head of PSHE in 2007. It was circulated for comment to the Senior Management Team, Heads of Wider Learning and all other teachers. Via the Half Term letter home, parents were invited to contribute their comments. The policy was further discussed by members of the school student parliament. Comments and modifications were incorporated before finally being discussed and approved by the Governors' standing committee.

Statement of Intent

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

Objectives of this Policy

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- All members at WGS should appreciate that bullying will not be tolerated.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person, physically or emotionally. Bullying results in fear, pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, touching/ removal of a turban
- Sexual Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic Because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber All areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse.
Mobile threats by text messaging & calls
Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities
- Disability Making fun or being rude about someone's disability e.g. deafness, a physical disability.

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. Bullying is serious and can cause psychological damage and even suicide.

Schools have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying. There are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour.

Signs and Symptoms

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

- 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
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- 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 dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- is self harming
- personality changes
- comes home very hungry (money/lunch has been stolen)
- 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 & jumpy when a cyber message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Procedures

1. It is the duty of everyone who sees an instance of bullying – or potential bullying – to act to stop it. This duty applies to all students, teachers and other members of staff.
2. Parents who are worried about bullying issues are always welcome to contact the Head of Year, Deputy Head (pastoral), Head about their concerns.
3. Any staff member would pass on their concerns to the Head of Year or the Deputy Head (pastoral)
4. Allegations of bullying should be taken to the Head of Year who will investigate these and report their findings to the Head and Deputy Head (pastoral).
5. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
6. In serious cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem, with the Head of Year, Deputy Head or Head.
7. All the incidents of serious bullying will be recorded and stored in the student's files in Mrs Boss's office.
8. The governing body should be informed by the Head or Deputy Head about serious cases of bullying.
9. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour
10. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted

Outcomes

1. The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place, depending on the situation.
2. In serious cases, temporary or even permanent exclusion will be considered
3. If possible, the pupils will be reconciled
4. After the incident/incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored by the Head of Year and the Deputy Head (pastoral) to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

Communication

There is a clear statement about bullying included in the Red Book which is given to all students and teachers at WGS. It states:

WGS anti-bullying statement

1. All bullying is unacceptable. No one at WGS should ever be made to feel unhappy, undervalued or humiliated.
2. Deliberate unkindness or any action that gives hurt, whether verbal, physical or mental and whether intended or not, are bullying and will not be tolerated between students or teachers and students.
3. It is bullying to write notes, make phone calls, send electronic messages or create or post them on websites if they might offend, hurt, annoy or worry anyone, whether it is a student, teacher or someone else. From home, from school, from anywhere, it is still bullying.
4. Students have a right to privacy of property and personal information in school. It is dishonest and can be a form of bullying to go into another person's pocket or bag, read a private document or electronic message or use someone else's computer ID (however, see ICT Policy re staff supervision of student computer access).
5. The WGS Philosophy states that 'WGS is a happy and friendly community in which everyone respects, supports and cares about everyone else.' It is our aim to ensure that is always true.

6. The school will thus take the firmest action against any bullying, teasing, racial or sexual harassment or other form of hurtful or negative behaviour.
7. The school works to promote the positive qualities of altruism and community spirit by means of consistent school-wide consideration of those values in assemblies, tutor groups, PSHE, the Community Service Programme, fund-raising activities, our link with Uganda and, indeed, through our approach in and out of the classroom.
8. The school works hard to create an open atmosphere in which students are able to speak out without fear and to seek justice for themselves and for others. Any student who feels unhappy or threatened should not regard it as a private or personal problem but should seek the help of a friend, senior student, teacher or counsellor (see Care for students: forms of help in the Red Book).
9. It is the duty of everyone who sees an instance of bullying – or potential bullying – to act to stop it. This duty applies to all students, teachers and other members of staff.
10. Parents who are worried about bullying issues are always welcome to contact the Head or any other member of staff about their concerns.

The school supports the aims of the DfES/Anti-Bullying Alliance's *Anti-Bullying Charter*.

Prevention

We will use the following methods for helping children to prevent bullying:

- having discussions about bullying and why it matters
- whole School Assemblies
- year 8 PSHE includes specific anti-bullying lessons
- PSHE includes work and relationships in every year
- The school works to promote the positive qualities of altruism and community spirit by means of consistent school-wide consideration of those values in assemblies, tutor groups, PSHE, the Community Service Programme, fund-raising activities, our link with Uganda and, indeed, through our approach in and out of the classroom.
- The school works hard to create an open atmosphere in which students are able to speak out without fear and to seek justice for themselves and for others. Any student who feels unhappy or threatened should not regard it as a private or personal problem but should seek the help of a friend, senior student, teacher or counsellor.
- Do staff training regularly to discuss the signs and symptoms and the procedures to follow.

Vincent Darby
Head

Reviewed by VEF/NJCA 15/09/09