




THE WISDOM ACADEMY

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

<i>Policy to be reviewed</i>	Jan 2026
<i>Date policy approved</i>	Jan 2025
<i>Head Teacher and Proprietor</i>	

Statement of Intent - Aims

The Wisdom Academy School's ethos is based upon respect, good manners and care for others. Everyone has a right to be safe and happy in school and all have an obligation not to discriminate against, harass or be unkind to others, so that every one of our pupils can develop their full potential. Bullying, in whatever manifestation, is directly contrary to The Wisdom Academy's ethos and is not tolerated. We expect our pupils to treat each other and members of staff with courtesy and co-operation so that they can learn in a relaxed but orderly, atmosphere.

We recognise the seriousness of bullying and its ability to cause psychological damage and even suicide. If bullying does occur, the victim should feel confident about asking for help within the school community. Pupils should understand that withholding information protects the bully and allows them to continue the practice. Bullies only prosper where there is silence and fear. We want people to tell us if they are bullied and we want them to tell us if they witness or hear of any bullying taking place. We encourage everyone to make it known to bullies that they disapprove of their actions.

We aim to deal with all incidents sensitively, consistently and efficiently. Our prime concerns are firstly to prevent any continuation of the bullying, and secondly to improve the behaviour of the person doing the bullying.

Definition of bullying

The Government defines bullying as "behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally" (DfE, 2014). Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, culture, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Bullying can take many forms. It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It can involve complicity that falls short of direct participation. Bullying may occur directly or through cyber-technology (cyber bullying) such as social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs or email.

Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups or by actual or perceived differences between people. For example, bullying may involve actions or comments that:

- are aimed at a person's race, religion, belief or culture;
- are homophobic, sexist or sexual;
- focus on disabilities or other physical attributes (such as hair colour or body shape) learning difficulties or special educational needs;
- are aimed at the individual because of their situation

Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time. We always treat it very seriously. It conflicts sharply with the school's policy on equal opportunities, as well as with its social and moral principles.

Signs of bullying

Bullying can cause serious psychological damage and even suicide. Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour.

A pupil who is being bullied may:

- become frightened of coming to school, attending specific lessons or entering specific areas of the school;
- change their usual routine;
- become more withdrawn or anxious than previously;
- threaten to run away or run away;
- threaten suicide;
- begin to perform poorly at school;
- frequently have missing or damaged possessions;
- repeatedly ask for extra money or never have money;
- have unexplained injuries;
- become aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable;
- begin to bully others;
- stop eating or attending meals;
- be afraid to use the internet or a mobile phone;
- become nervous when a cyber-message is received;
- choose the company of adults over fellow pupils;
- be frequently absent from school or regularly arrive late to class;
- be reluctant to discuss reasons for any of the above.

Prevention

All staff involved in the education and/or supervision of children will be made aware of the issue of bullying and the need to apply the schools policy of zero-tolerance consistently when episodes of bullying are witnessed or reported. Staff will constantly reinforce the message to children that bullying is unacceptable and will take positive action to prevent and control it.

In addition, the issue of bullying will be raised with pupils at a number of levels including:

- The induction programme;
- Citizenship/PSHE/SMSC lessons;
- The Student Council;
- Displays around school;

- Whole school assemblies;
- Pastoral programmes;
- Effective parenting sessions;
- Multi-agency working including drawing on the expertise of anti-bullying organisations or specialised expertise in dealing with certain types of bullying;
- All staff will be made aware that they must be vigilant for any signs of bullying and that it is every member of staff's responsibility to report any perceived cases.
- We will take action to reduce the risk of bullying at times and in places where it is most likely.
- There will be a staff presence when pupils are not in class and patrol the school site, particularly areas where bullying might occur.

Cyberbullying – Definition

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber bullying is a form of bullying that can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click.

Mr Bill Belsey, the creator of the website: <http://www.cyberbullying.org/> defined this unpleasant phenomenon in the following terms:

"Cyberbullying involves the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others."

Cyber bullying can involve social websites, emails, 'phone calls, text messages and photographs.

Cyberbullying – Prevention

In addition to the preventative measures described above, we:

- expect all pupils to adhere to the Pupils' Use of E-Safety Policy for the safe use of the internet; certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and our ICT Department will monitor the pupils' internet use;
- may impose sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse of the internet;
- offer guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and cyber bullying in ICT lessons;
- offer guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details safe;
- do not allow the use of cameras in school without prior staff permission.

Parental involvement

The Wisdom Academy is firmly committed to working in partnership with parents and believes that the best outcomes emerge when professionals and parents/carers are able to work together when bullying occurs.

The Wisdom Academy recognises the important influence which parents/carers have on their children and would wish to enlist their support when their child is involved in bullying - either as victim or a perpetrator.

Procedures

The Wisdom Academy is committed to creating a bully-free environment and will ensure that its zero-tolerance policy is applied rigorously. All staff involved in the teaching and/or supervision of children will take responsibility for addressing incidents which fall with the school's definition of bullying and ensure that the victim receives what support is required; the bully is informed of the unacceptability of his/her behaviour and a record is made of the incident.

All children at The Wisdom Academy will be reassured that any incidents or concerns of bullying that are reported, action will be taken by the senior staff members.

The Wisdom Academy will take firm and decisive action to deal with any incident of bullying which is witnessed by or reported to any member of staff. The investigation will ensure that all parties have the opportunity to speak openly.

- the incident will be recorded in a central record;
- the Senior Leader responsible for pastoral support and student wellbeing will oversee the procedure;
- the parents/carers of the victim will be informed;
- the parents/carers of the perpetrator will be informed.

The purpose of keeping a record of the incident is a key part of the process as it enables the School to spot trends and patterns of behaviour.

Post incident responses for the victim

When a member of staff receives information, either directly or indirectly, that a child may have been the victim of a bullying incident, this report will be taken seriously and investigated.

The Wisdom Academy will offer a proactive, sympathetic and supportive response to children who are the victims of bullying. The exact nature of the response will be determined by the particular child's individual needs and may include:

- immediate action to stop the incident and secure the child's safety;
- positive reinforcement that reporting the incident was the correct thing to do;
- reassurance that the victim is not responsible for the behaviour of the bully;
- strategies to prevent further incidents;
- sympathy and empathy;
- counselling befriending;
- assertiveness training;
- extra supervision/monitoring;
- creation of a support group;
- peer mediation/peer mentoring;

- informing/involving parents;
- adult mediation between the perpetrator and the victim (provided this does not increase the victim's vulnerability);
- arrangements to review progress.

For the alleged bully

The Wisdom Academy takes bullying behaviour very seriously and will adopt a supportive, pragmatic, problem-solving approach to enable bullies to behave in a more acceptable way. The Wisdom Academy does not believe that the use of punishment is helpful in managing this problem but is of the view that the positive use of sanctions can be useful in demonstrating to bullies that their behaviour is unacceptable and in promoting change.

The Wisdom Academy will respond to incidents of bullying behaviour in a proportionate way - the more serious the cause for concern the more serious the response. When sanctions are felt to be necessary they will be applied consistently and fairly. The following options will be considered:

- immediate action to stop an incident of bullying in progress;
- engagement with the bully to reinforce the message that their behaviour is a breach of school rules and is unacceptable;
- loss of lunch/break time privileges;
- detention;
- report – daily or weekly;
- withholding participation in sports or out of school activity (if not essential part of curriculum);
- parents informed;
- counselling/instruction in alternative ways of behaving;
- adult mediation between the perpetrator and the victim (provided this is safe for the victim);
- fixed periods of exclusion;
- permanent exclusion (in extreme cases);
- rewards/positive reinforcement for children in order to promote change and bring unacceptable behaviour under control.

Monitoring and evaluating

Each incident of bullying falling within the school definition will be recorded.

An annual report will be made to the management committee indicating the extent of the problem and any trends which may emerge. This information will be shared with parents/carers and pupils. Senior staff will evaluate the effectiveness of the policy and agree adjustments that may be necessary to address any ongoing concerns. These will be shared with staff, parents/carers and pupils.

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually to assess its effectiveness and update it as necessary. This policy was reviewed by members of the SLT and trustees of the school.

Next review date: January 2026