

# Wemms Education Unlimited

(Inspirational Support for all Students)

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

“Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools”

“Preventing and Tackling Bullying”

*Wemms Education Unlimited is a special independent school offering an alternative model for those disenfranchised by the common UK education model, focusing on one to one and small group education, bespoke to the child's individual needs.*

### BULLYING – WHOSE PROBLEM IS IT?

**Wemms Education Unlimited** recognise that whenever a group of people come together bullying often can and does occur. **Wemms Education Unlimited** will not tolerate bullying in any shape, form, or position.

Bullying is everyone's problem. Bullying in schools is a worldwide problem which can and does have negative consequences for the general school climate and for the right of all students to learn in a safe environment without fear. Bullying can also have negative lifelong consequences – both for students who bully and for their victims. Bullying involves physical and emotional behaviours which are intentional, controlling and hurtful. Bullying is a serious problem which creates a climate of harassment and fear. Victims can experience intense feelings of anxiety, depression, feelings of isolation as well as a loss of self-confidence and in extreme cases, may talk of suicide. Those who bully face rejection, school failure and anti-social behaviour patterns which can continue well into adulthood.

**Wemms Education Unlimited's** school community is based upon respect, good manners and fair play. It is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and believes that all students, regardless of age, special needs or disability, racial/cultural heritage, religious belief, gender or sexual orientation have the right to be protected from all types of harm and abuse. **Wemms Education Unlimited** firmly believe that every child/student has the right to learn in an atmosphere free from fear and intimidation. We do not tolerate any forms of bullying. Students are expected to behave well, which means doing nothing that is inconsiderate of others.



## **DEFINITION OF BULLYING**

Bullying is the wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten, control or frighten someone. It can also be described as a 'deliberate act committed to cause distress solely in order to give a feeling of power, status or other gratification to the bully'. It can be either physical or emotional in nature and can range from ostracising, name calling, teasing, threats and extortion, through to physical assault to a person and/or their property. It can be a single incident or a series of incidents.

## **DEFINITION/EXAMPLES OF BULLYING**

- **PHYSICAL BULLYING:**

Physical bullying is the most obvious form of bullying. It occurs when others use physical actions to gain power and control over their targets. Physical bullies tend to be bigger, stronger and more aggressive than their peers. Fighting, punching/hitting, kicking, shoving, poking, jabbing, blocking, tripping, chasing and cornering, unwanted touching, stealing, graffiti, and vandalizing are all examples of physical bullying.

- **VERBAL BULLYING:**

The definition of verbal bullying is when an individual uses verbal language (e.g., insults, teasing, etc) to gain power over his or her peers. Words alone do have power. While the effects of physical bullying may be more obvious at first, verbal bullying is more insidious and can over long periods of time work to destroy a child's self-image and self-esteem. This can lead to depression, anxiety and other serious emotional problems.

- **GESTURE BULLYING:**

There are many different forms of non-verbal threatening gestures which can convey an intimidating or a frightening message. These include shaking a fist at someone or using threatening facial expressions. For example a look or stance which accompanies bullying behaviour.

- **SEXUAL BULLYING:**

This consists of repeated, harmful and humiliating actions that target a person sexually. Examples include sexual name-calling, crude comments, vulgar gestures, uninvited touching, sexual propositioning and pornographic materials. For instance, a bully might make a crude comment about a girl's appearance, attractiveness, sexual development or sexual activity.

- **EXTORTION BULLYING:**

Demands for money, possessions or equipment, lunch vouchers or food may be made, often accompanied by threats. Children may also be dared or forced to steal or do something they know to be wrong, often leaving them at the mercy of the bully and open to further intimidation.

- **EXCLUSION BULLYING:**



Excluding someone from a group. This form of bullying can be particularly hurtful as it isolates the child from his/her peer group, making them feel alone. Exclusion bullying can also be very hard for the child to combat as it directly attacks their self-confidence/self-image.

- **E-BULLYING/CYBER BULLYING:**

In an ever more technologically advanced world, a new strain of bullying has emerged, which utilises social networking sites, web pages, emails and text messaging to abuse, intimidate and attack others, either directly or indirectly. An example of e-bullying/cyber bullying is to use social networking sites to facilitate rumour mongering. This is a developing area which needs to be vigilantly monitored.

There is no set blueprint for bullying. Bullying can and does involve both groups as well as individuals. However one thing that is certain is that the victims are normally more vulnerable than the bullies and as a consequence less able to stand up for themselves. Children who are victims of bullying are typically anxious, insecure, cautious and suffer from low self-esteem, rarely defend themselves or retaliate when confronted by others who bully them. They often lack social skills and friends and are often socially isolated. The major defining physical characteristic of victims of bullying is that they tend to be physically weaker than their peers.

Bullying appears in a number of different environments for many different reasons. Pupils are bullied for a variety of reasons and for no reason. Specific types of bullying include:

- bullying related to race, religion or culture;
- bullying related to special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities;
- bullying related to appearance or health conditions;
- bullying related to sexual orientation;
- bullying of young carers or looked-after children or otherwise related to home circumstances;
- sexist or sexual bullying.

It is important to understand that bullying is not necessarily only going to be displayed face-to-face. In recent years cyber bullying using mobile phones and social networking sites has increased nationally.

### **SIGNS OF BULLYING**

Changes in behaviour that may indicate 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 spoiled 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 etc
- 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, experiencing nightmares etc
- 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.

At **Wemms Education Unlimited** all staff, students and parents work together to create a happy and caring learning environment. Bullying, physical, verbal, or indirect, will not be tolerated nor ignored. It is everyone's responsibility to aim to prevent occurrences of bullying and to deal with any incidents quickly and effectively.

### **ANTI-BULLYING RULES**

- We do not tolerate any kind of physical abuse of others.
- We do not tolerate any threats whatsoever being made against others.
- We do not tolerate pupils interfering with others belongings or school property.
- We do not tolerate any name-calling whatsoever.
- We do not tolerate larger pupils using their weight and strength against others.
- We do not tolerate exclusion from groups.
- We do not tolerate pupils making any sounds or other gestures such as facial expressions or hand signals which would be hurtful to others.
- We do not tolerate pupils making threatening text messages or any kind of social media, networking or internet bullying whatsoever.

### **PROCEDURES**

All staff watch for early signs of pupils being distressed or unhappy. Should a teacher witness a bullying incident or has a bullying incident reported to them, they will immediately investigate by speaking with all parties involved. The individual teacher may choose to deal with the incident himself/herself, or may pass it on.

Bullying can be brought to the attention of the staff either by the victims, their friends, their parents or other people interested. A pupil may report a bullying incident to any adult they trust and feel safe with.

### **INFORMING THE DESIGNATED TEACHER – CHILD PROTECTION**

Even if the teacher involved with the incident/s has resolved the situation, the Designated Teacher must still be informed.

### **COMPLAINTS SYSTEM**

There will be an immediate response to reported or observed incidents of bullying; no child will be expected to ignore bullying. When a pupil or parent makes a complaint, it may be dealt with in the following ways:-



- React to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way. All pupils concerned will be interviewed. Any additional parties who witnessed the incident will also be interviewed.
- Safeguard the pupil who has experienced bullying and to trigger sources of support for the pupil.
- Whatever the outcome of the investigations, all parties will be left in no doubt whatsoever as to the effects of bullying and the school's policy.
- In the event of a complaint being upheld, the bully/bullies will be dealt with. Please note that sanctions can help to deter bullying but there are other methods of dealing with it.
- Parents of the bully/victim may become involved depending on the severity/history of the bullying.
- Events will be recorded in writing by all parties involved and copies of these reports may be placed in respective pupil's files for a specific period of time.
- Close monitoring of the situation will be employed by staff and each case will be followed up to prevent, de-escalate and/or stop any continuation of harmful behaviour.
- Attempts will be made whenever possible to reconcile those involved.

### **IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

As part of **Wemms Education Unlimited's** approach to countering bullying behaviour by pupils, other strategies adopted include:-

- Use of curriculum opportunities in particular, PSHE and Citizenship classes can be used to discuss issues around diversity and draw out anti-bullying messages. Together with a whole-school and whole-curriculum approach to developing social and emotional skills in areas such as empathy and the management of feelings.
- Use of opportunities throughout the school calendar and at certain times of the school day to raise awareness of the negative consequences of bullying (e.g. Anti-Bullying Week in November of each year).
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of strategies, i.e analysis of questionnaires, number of complaints reported by pupils or parents and feedback from teachers and the school counselling service.
- Being aware that some bullying behaviour by pupils maybe linked to deeper issues. As should be the case when responding to those who are bullied, understanding the emotional health and wellbeing of these pupils is key to selecting the right strategies and to engaging the right external support where this is needed (for example, in relation to issues of domestic violence or other safeguarding issues).



- Being aware that the way a school deals with bullying will also have an impact on the confidence of pupils to report bullying – it is important to demonstrate that bullying is a whole-school issue and that the bullying of any member of the school community will be taken seriously and dealt with effectively.
- Being aware that there may be more complex issues in play, i.e. pupils not directly involved in bullying can be unsure of what to do.

Different roles within bullying have been identified: The ring-leader; assistants/associates, who actively join in the bullying (sometimes because they are afraid of the ring-leader). Reinforcers, who give positive feedback to the bully, perhaps by smiling or laughing. Outsiders/bystanders, who stay back or stay silent and thereby appear to condone or collude with the bullying behaviour. Defenders, who try and intervene to stop the bullying or comfort pupils who experience bullying. It should be noted, however, that the same pupil can adopt different roles at different times, or indeed at the same time (a bullied pupil might be bullying another child at the same time, or a seeming “reinforcer” might become a “defender” when the ring-leader is not around).

### **GENERAL ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL**

- All staff take part in relevant professional development and are clear about their roles and responsibilities in preventing and responding to bullying; as well as being fully aware of the importance of modelling positive relationships
- A review of the school anti-bullying policy is carried out every two years and, as a result, the policy and procedures are updated as necessary
- Be aware that it is important to work with parents to help them to understand the stance of the school as regards bullying and to engage promptly with them when an issue of bullying comes to light, whether their child is the pupil being bullied or the one doing the bullying. Parents should be made aware of how to work with the school on bullying and how they can seek help if a problem is not resolved
- Feedback from the community

**All incidents of bullying will be recorded in the student’s file. In the event of a bullying incident which has taken place off ‘off-site’ being reported to school staff, parents/carers will be notified. In the case of physical aggression, the victim will be advised to contact the police.**

### **ANTI-BULLYING BEHAVIOUR**

It is well known that a school’s values are transmitted through the hidden curriculum as well as through the lessons on the timetable. All adults in the school have a vital role as role-models. They need to practise what they preach in terms of anti-bullying and this includes behaviours towards each other as well as to pupils; and ensure they:-



**ANTI-BULLYING ROLE MODELS:**

- Show respect for child as an individual
- Are aware of vulnerable children
- Criticise the behaviour rather than the child
- Avoid favouritism
- Are seen to be fair at all times
- Avoid labelling
- Have high expectations of pupils
- Avoid reference to other members of the family (i.e.'....just like your brother')
- Never give pupils ammunition to use against each other

**REFERENCES**

Education and Inspections Act 2006

Education Act 2005

Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 Chapter 31

The Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2003

The Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2007

The Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008

The Education (Special Educational Needs) (Approval of Independent Schools) Regulations 1994

The Education (SEN) (Approval of Independent Schools) (Amendment) Regulations 1998

The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010 S.I. 2010 No. 1997  
as in force from 1 January 2013

Safe to Learn: Embedding Anti-Bullying Work in Schools

Sex Discrimination Act 1975

Race Relations Act 1976

Code of Practice for Schools, Disability Discrimination Act 1995 Part 4

The Disability Discrimination Act (as amended by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001)



## PUPIL'S ANTI-BULLYING INFORMATION

Bullying is hurting someone emotionally, physically or both, with a group of people, or one more powerful person against another.

### HOW CAN WE HELP?

#### **Someone who is being bullied**

- Tell a teacher or parent
- Ignore the bully if possible
- Walk Away
- Tell the bully's parents
- Stay with safe friends

#### **The Bully**

- Is there anything you do to others that it hurtful or upsetting?
- Think of what you are doing to the victim (or victims)
- Think better of it
- Stop it
- How would you feel if someone bullied you?

#### **Observers**

- Don't watch the fight (or argument) or you will encourage the bully more
- Don't take the bully's side
- Tell someone (friends, teacher, parents)
- Don't encourage the bully
- Don't let the bully hang around with you

