



Wreake Valley Academy

Anti-Bullying Policy

Date of review	November 2025
Date approved by SLT	November 2025
Date of next review	Summer Term 2026

Statement of Intent:

Wreake Valley Academy recognises that all forms of bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals; it can create a barrier to learning and have serious consequences for mental wellbeing.

By effectively preventing and tackling bullying our school can help to create a safe and disciplined environment, where students are able to learn and fulfil their potential.

This policy is based on DfE guidance “Preventing and Tackling Bullying” July 2017 and supporting documents. It also considers the DfE statutory guidance “Keeping Children Safe in Education” 2019 and ‘Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges’ guidance.

Policy objectives:

- This policy outlines what Wreake Valley Academy will do to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying.
- The policy has been adopted with the involvement of the whole school community
- Wreake Valley Academy is committed to developing an anti-bullying culture where the bullying of adults, children or young people is not tolerated in any form.

Links with other school policies and practices

This policy links with several school policies, practices and action plans including:

- Behaviour policy
- Safeguarding policy
- Online safety and Acceptable Use Policies (AUP)
- Curriculum policies, such as: Personal Development and Computer Science
- Mobile Technology Policy
- Searching, screening and confiscation policy

Links to legislation

There are several pieces of legislation which set out measures and actions for schools in response to bullying, as well as criminal and civil law. These may include (but are not limited to):

- The Education and Inspection Act 2006, 2011
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children Act 1989
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of:

- The Headteacher or appointed persons to communicate this policy to the school community, to ensure that disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, and that a member of the senior leadership team has been identified to take overall responsibility.
- Seniors leaders to take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy.
- All staff, including: senior leadership, teaching and non-teaching staff, to support, uphold and implement this policy accordingly.
- Parents/carers to support their children and work in partnership with the school.
- Students to abide by the policy.

Definition of bullying

We define bullying as *“behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally”*. (DfE “Preventing and Tackling Bullying”, July 2017)

We talk about bullying as physical or verbally aggressive /mean behaviour that occurs **‘Several Times on Purpose’**. The school uses this definition to help students understand the seriousness of bullying compared to other unacceptable behaviours and provides the ‘STOP’ acronym that leads to students knowing they should **‘Start Telling Other People’**. We encourage students to be upstanders against bullying, and are provided with regular education around this.

Bullying is recognised by the school as being a form of child on child abuse. It can be emotionally abusive and can cause severe and adverse effects on children’s emotional development.

Forms and types of bullying covered by this policy

At Wreake Valley Academy we categorise Bullying under 6 main headings:

Type	Examples
Emotional	Being unfriendly, excluding, isolating, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
Physical	Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
Verbal	Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
Sexual	Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
Cyber	Misuse of the internet to intimidate, including by sending offensive, upsetting and inappropriate messages Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities Sexting - sharing sexual, naked or semi-naked images or videos of themselves or others or sends sexually explicit messages.
Indirect	Through third person involvement i.e. another person being encouraged to take part in any of the behaviours above and maybe seen as indirect bullying.

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types and forms of bullying including:

- Bullying related to physical appearance
- Bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances
- Bullying related to physical/mental health conditions
- Prejudicial bullying (against people/students with protected characteristics):
 - Bullying related to race, religion, faith and belief and for those without faith
 - Bullying related to ethnicity, nationality or culture
 - Bullying related to Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND)
 - Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic/biphobic bullying)
 - Gender based bullying, including transphobic bullying
 - Bullying against teenage parents (pregnancy and maternity under the Equality Act)

Our Approach

At Wreake Valley we put into place a number of different methods to educate our students on what bullying is and what actions they should then take, either as a victim themselves or as a witness.

These are based on our two **STOP** messages . The **STOP** message is communicated to students in a number of different methods, including;

- Assemblies

- Tutor Periods
- Transition documents
- Admission booklet
- School website

Methods to report bullying;

- All students are regularly encouraged to report any bullying to a member of staff.
- Although rare, when students do not feel confident in reporting directly to a member of staff we use a **STOP box**. This is where students can report bullying by writing it down and posting it. We provide and publicise the STOP box for students to report issues if they do not feel confident speaking directly to staff. This can be anonymously if they choose. This box is then checked daily and any reports followed up as per this policy.

Anti-bullying awareness and training;

- Staff Professional Learning is delivered to ensure staff are confident in identifying and responding to bullying issues.
- Students are given the opportunity to feedback on their experience through surveys and pupil voice panels.

As part of our approach:

- We monitor and review our Anti-bullying policy and practice at least annually.
- Support staff to promote positive relationships to help prevent bullying.
- Recognise that some members of our community may be more vulnerable to bullying and its impact than others; this may include children with SEND. Being aware of this will help us to develop effective strategies to prevent bullying from happening and provide appropriate support, if required.
- Will intervene by identifying and tackling bullying behaviour appropriately and promptly.
- Ensures our students are aware that bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively; that everyone should feel safe to learn and abide by the anti-bullying policy.
- Requires all members of the community to work with the school to uphold the anti-bullying policy.
- Recognises the potential impact of bullying on the wider family of those affected so will work in partnership with parents/carers regarding all reported bullying concerns and will seek to keep them informed at all stages.

- Will deal promptly with grievances regarding the school response to bullying in line with our complaints policy
- Seeks to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere.
- Utilises support from the Local Authority and other relevant organisations when appropriate.

Responding to bullying

The following steps may be taken when dealing with all incidents of bullying reported to the school:

As soon as possible:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with as quickly as possible by the member of staff who has been approached or witnessed the concern.
- The DSL will be informed of all bullying issues where there are safeguarding concerns.
- The school will provide appropriate support for the person being bullied – making sure they are not at risk of immediate or further harm
- The most appropriate member of staff will interview all parties involved.
- Sanctions, as identified within the school behaviour policy, and support will be implemented in consultation with all parties concerned.

Follow up actions:

- The school will speak with and inform other staff members, where appropriate.
- The school will ensure parents/carers are kept informed about the concern and action taken, as appropriate and in line with child protection and confidentiality policies.
- If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved, such as the police, if a criminal offence has been committed, or other local services including early help or children's social care, if a child is felt to be at risk of significant harm.
- Where the bullying of or by students takes place off our school site or outside of normal school hours (including cyberbullying), the school will ensure that the concern is fully investigated. If required, we will collaborate with other schools. Appropriate action will be taken, including providing support and implementing sanctions in school in accordance with this policy and the school's behaviour policy.
- Take appropriate, proportionate and reasonable action, in line with existing school policies, for any bullying brought to the schools' attention, which involves

or affects students, even when they are not on school premises; for example, when using school transport or online, etc

- A clear and precise account of bullying incidents will be recorded by the school in accordance with existing procedures. This will include recording appropriate details regarding decisions and action taken.

Cyberbullying

When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the school will:

- Act as soon as possible after an incident has been reported or identified.
- Provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.
- Educate students to keep any evidence (e.g., screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation.
- Take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible. This may include:
 - looking at use of the school systems;
 - identifying and interviewing possible witnesses;
- Work with the individuals and encourage them to contact their online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation. This may include:
 - Confiscating and searching students' electronic devices, such as mobile phones, in accordance with the law and the school searching and confiscation policy.
 - Requesting the deletion of locally-held content and content posted online if they contravene school behavioural policies.
- Ensure that sanctions are applied to the person responsible for the cyberbullying; the school will take steps to change the attitude and behaviour of the 'bully', as well as ensuring access to any additional help that they may need.
- Advise where appropriate for families to inform the police if a criminal offence has been committed.
- Provide information to staff and students regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online (through assemblies, tutor programme etc). This may include:
 - advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply;
 - providing advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists;
 - helping those involved to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain.

Supporting students

Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an opportunity to discuss the experience with their teacher, the designated safeguarding lead, or a member of staff of their choice.
- Reassuring the student and providing continuous pastoral support. This may involve working towards restoring self-esteem and confidence
- Providing ongoing support; this may include: working and speaking with staff, offering formal counselling, engaging with parents and carers.
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this could include support through Early Help or Children Social Work Service, or support through the Children and Young People's Mental Health Service (CYPMHS).

Students who have perpetrated bullying will be helped by:

- Sanctioning, in line with school behaviour/discipline policy; this may include official warnings, detentions, removal of privileges (including online access when encountering cyberbullying concerns), and fixed-term or permanent exclusions.
- Discussing what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change.
- Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child.
- Providing appropriate education and support regarding their behaviour or actions.
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this may include involvement from the Police or referrals to Early Help, Children Social Work Service, or the Children and Young People's Mental Health Service (CYPMHS).

Preventing bullying

The whole school community will (students, parents, staff):

- Create and support an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration and care for others, which will be upheld by all.
- Recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the community, including adults and children
- Recognises the potential for children with SEN and disabilities to be disproportionately impacted by bullying and will implement additional pastoral support as required.

- Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as: children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities, religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality or appearance related difference.
- Challenge practice and language (including ‘banter’) which does not uphold the school’s core values of respect and relationships, community inclusivity and support.
- Be encouraged to use technology, especially mobile phones and social media, positively and responsibly.
- Work with staff, the wider community and outside agencies to prevent and tackle concerns including all forms of prejudice-driven bullying.
- Actively create “safe spaces” for vulnerable children and young people.
- Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos.
- Maintain and develop the anti-bullying ambassadors to engage with the student body, to provide peer support for victims and to raise awareness of bullying issues.

Education and Training

The school will:

- Train all staff, including: teaching staff, support staff (e.g. administration staff, lunchtime support staff and site support staff) and pastoral staff, to identify all forms of bullying and take appropriate action, following the school’s policy and procedures, including recording and reporting incidents.
- Consider a range of opportunities and approaches for addressing bullying throughout the curriculum and other activities, such as: through displays, assemblies, peer support, the school/student council, anti-bullying ambassadors etc.
- Collaborate with other local educational settings as appropriate, and during key times of the year, for example during transition.
- Ensure anti-bullying has a high profile throughout the year, reinforced through key opportunities such as anti-bullying week.
- Provide systematic opportunities to develop students’ social and emotional skills, including building their resilience and self-esteem.

Involvement of students

We will:

- Involve students in policy writing and decision making, to ensure that they understand the school's approach and are clear about the part they play in preventing bullying.
- Regularly canvas children and young people's views on the extent and nature of bullying.
- Regularly inform students how to express worries and anxieties about bullying.
- Ensure that all students are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying.
- Involve students in anti-bullying campaigns in schools and embedded messages in the wider school curriculum.
- Utilise student voice in providing student led education and support
- Publicise the details of internal support, as well as external helplines and websites.
- Offer support to students who have been bullied and to those who are bullying to address the problems they have.

Involvement and liaison with parents and carers

We will:

- Make sure that key information about bullying (including policies and named points of contact) is available to parents/carers in a variety of formats, including via the school website
- Ensure all parents/carers know to contact their child's form tutor or Head of Year if they are worried about bullying and where to access independent advice.
- Work with all parents/carers and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying.
- Support parents to work with the school to role model positive behaviour for students, both on and offline.
- Ensure all parents/carers have access to our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively, to raise concerns in an appropriate manner.

Monitoring and review: putting policy into practice

- The school will ensure that they regularly monitor and evaluate mechanisms to ensure that the policy is being consistently applied.
- Any issues identified will be incorporated into the school's action planning.
- Bullying incidents will be included in the school's behaviour data and will be analysed accordingly with actions shared accordingly with appropriate staff

including the named Local Advisory Board Safeguarding link member for bullying

Useful links and supporting organisations

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Childline: www.childline.org.uk
- Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk
- Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
- MindEd: www.minded.org.uk
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
- The BIG Award: www.bullyinginterventiongroup.co.uk/index.php
- PSHE Association: www.pshe-association.org.uk
- Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk
- The Diana Award: www.diana-award.org.uk
- Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk
- Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk
- Young Carers: www.youngcarers.net
- The Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk/restorative-practice-schools

SEND

- Changing Faces: www.changingfaces.org.uk
- Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk
- Anti-Bullying Alliance Cyberbullying and children and young people with SEN and disabilities: www.cafamily.org.uk/media/750755/cyberbullying_and_send_-_module_final.pdf
- DfE: SEND code of practice: www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25

Cyberbullying

- Childnet: www.childnet.com
- Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk
- Think U Know: www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk
- The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS)
www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis
- DfE 'Cyberbullying: advice for headteachers and school staff':
www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying

- DfE 'Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying':
www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying

Race, religion and nationality

- Anne Frank Trust: www.annefrank.org.uk
- Kick it Out: www.kickitout.org
- Report it: www.report-it.org.uk
- Stop Hate: www.stophateuk.org
- Tell Mama: www.tellmamauk.org
- Educate against Hate: www.educateagainsthate.com
- Show Racism the Red Card: www.srrc.org/educational

LGBT

- Barnardo's LGBT Hub: www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/lgbtq.htm
- Metro Charity: www.metrocentreonline.org
- EACH: www.eachaction.org.uk
- Proud Trust: www.theproudtrust.org
- Schools Out: www.schools-out.org.uk
- Stonewall: www.stonewall.org.uk

Sexual harassment and sexual bullying

- Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAW)
www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk
 - A Guide for Schools:
www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/data/files/resources/71/EVAW-Coalition-Schools-Guide.pdf
- Disrespect No Body: www.gov.uk/government/publications/disrespect-nobody-campaign-posters
- Anti-bullying Alliance: Preventing and responding to Sexual Bullying: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/sexual-and-gender-related/preventing-and-responding-sexual
- Anti-bullying Alliance: advice for school staff and professionals about developing effective anti-bullying practice in relation to sexual bullying: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/sexual-and-gender-related