



Ready, Respectful, Safe

Anti-Bullying Policy

v. November 2023

This policy is to be formally adopted by governors in January 2024.

Date of next review: January 2025

Introduction and aims:

At William Rhodes we believe that all children should feel happy and safe in school so that they achieve to their full potential within their learning. Bullying is detrimental to children's social, emotional and mental health. Bullying is not welcome in our school and will not be tolerated. Any allegations of bullying will be taken seriously and fully investigated.

What is bullying?

The Anti-Bullying Alliance define bullying as:

The **repetitive, intentional hurting** of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an **imbalance of power**. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological.

Bullying is different to being unkind, aggressive and friendship fallouts because:

- it involves a deliberate attempt to hurt or humiliate
- there is a power imbalance, making it hard for the victim to defend themselves
- it is usually persistent

We use the acronym STOP to help children remember.



Several **T**imes **O**n **P**urpose

Occasionally an incident may be deemed to be bullying even if the behaviour has not been repeated or persistent - if it fulfils all other descriptions of bullying. This possibility should be considered, particularly in cases of sexual, sexist, racist or homophobic bullying and when children with disabilities are involved. If the victim might be in danger then intervention is urgently required.

What does bullying look like?

Bullying can take many forms which can include behaviours such as:

- name calling
- taunting
- mocking
- making offensive comments
- physical assault
- taking or damaging belongings
- online bullying - inappropriate text messaging and e mailing; sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet
- producing offensive graffiti
- gossiping and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours
- excluding people from groups.

Children may also target aspects about people they feel are 'different' – this could include disability, race, faith, gender, sex, sexuality, poverty, talent, skin conditions, allergies, or situation at home. Children are influenced by the home, community, and society they grow up in, by the things they see, read, and hear, and the people around them.

No forms of bullying will be tolerated within our school and all types of bullying will be taken seriously.

How will I know if my child is being bullied and what should I do next?

As parents, you know your child best. Look out for any changes in their behaviour, for example:

- becoming quieter or withdrawn or acting out and getting in trouble
- being reluctant to go to school or take part in their usual activities
- becoming upset after using their phones or devices
- complaining of frequent unexplained illnesses like tummy upsets or headaches
- sleep may be disturbed
- showing signs of sadness or anxiety.
- telling you that other people are unkind to them or have said or done things to hurt them.

Always listen and take them seriously, consider the facts, and work with them on next steps. Children are developing physically, emotionally, and socially and need our help to understand how to behave towards others and when they have crossed a line. For example, children need to learn when teasing or 'banter' can become bullying behaviour (e.g. when it's offensive and/or causes hurt).

If your child is displaying any behaviours which seem out of character or that are causing you to worry, please call the school office (01246 234626) and ask to book a meeting with your child's class teacher who will be happy to talk through your worries and will be able to investigate further. It is crucial that parents and school staff work in partnership to secure the best outcomes for our children.

What will happen if my child is being bullied?

Children are encouraged to talk to adults in school if there is anything worrying them or if they feel that they are being bullied. School staff will always listen to the child and take their concerns seriously. The following actions may then be carried out, as appropriate:

- A bullying concerns form will be completed and passed to the Anti-Bullying Leaders (Mrs Wilkes and Mrs Parker)
- Staff will observe the child/ren at playtimes and lunchtimes
- Staff will have conversations with the children and any witnesses and record their investigation in writing
- Check-ins will be carried out by key staff after unstructured times
- Parents of children involved will be invited in to discuss findings and next steps
- Pupils may be timetabled some pastoral support in order to unpick their feelings and/ or behaviours and have a safe space to talk

If the investigation is completed and the outcome is that the situation is not bullying, parents will be invited for a discussion and the case will be closed. If any behaviour was to arise following a closure, it would be re-opened and investigated fully again.

If the investigation is completed and the outcome is that bullying is taking place, measures will be taken to ensure the safety of the victim. Parents of both the victim and perpetrator will be consulted and the actions and next steps will be discussed.

At any point, parents are encouraged to call the school office and request a meeting with the Anti-Bullying Leader, if they are worried, concerned or unhappy.

What will happen if my child is bullying others?

In school, we support children who have bullied others to understand the reasons for their behaviour, the impact it has had on others and develop positive coping strategies which they can use to move forwards to avoid repeating the bullying behaviour. Children may be offered support from the pastoral team or outside agencies.

We are all capable of bullying behaviour. What is important is that we recognise it and endeavour to stop it, and where we have hurt others, learn to take action to put things right. If you have been told by others that your child is showing bullying behaviour, it's important to stay calm and ask for examples of the things they have said or done and the impact this has had on others. Please contact one of the Anti-Bullying Leaders to have a discussion around what has been happening and how we can work together to support the child.

Children are influenced by the home, community, and society they grow up in, by the things they see, read, and hear, and the people around them. We all have a role to play in creating communities where children feel safe and valued, where we stand up to prejudice and are united against bullying. As parents and carers, modelling the types of behaviour that you would like to see from your children is crucial, this includes calling out unkind behaviour appropriately and taking positive action to stop bullying.

How is bullying explored through the curriculum?

Keeping children safe is at the heart of all that we do at William Rhodes. There are a range of ways in which we ensure that treating others with respect and promoting kindness, empathy and understanding underpins our learning here:

- Our behaviour policy is based upon a restorative approach, which means we talk through all incidents with children and help them to reflect upon the impact that their actions have on others.
- Our curriculum is devised around Oxfam's Global themes and intends to learn about people with similarities and differences to us and learn about how others have struggled with injustice.
- Our assemblies are based around British Values and Protected Characteristics and the children are taught explicitly about equality and diversity and that we value individuality.
- Our PSHE curriculum, assemblies and workshops in school promote healthy relationships both in person and online and teach children about how to handle conflict, outline boundaries and learn about consent.
- We celebrate Anti-Bullying week annually, in November.
- We have ambassadors, who help leaders in school to hear the pupil's voice and share important messages with others.
- We have links with the PCSO and other agencies who work with the children around bullying and online safety.

Where can I find further help and support?

- Speak to our Anti-Bullying Leaders in school by contacting the school office and requesting a call back or a meeting.
- Download a copy of the Anti-Bullying Alliance parent pack from the school website, or ask the office for a copy.
- Speak to our Family Liaison Worker (Joe Mark).
- Attend one of our information sessions held in school.

The following links are to useful websites which may provide further information or useful support:

- Family Lives www.familylives.org.uk
- Parent Zone (digital family life) www.parentzone.org.uk/home
- Red Balloon Learner Centres www.redballoonlearner.org
- YoungMinds (for support with mental health) www.youngminds.org.uk
- Papyrus UK (suicide prevention support) www.papyrus-uk.org
- Report Harmful Content (for cyberbullying and online harms) www.reportharmfulcontent.com
- Childnet International (for cyberbullying and online harms) www.childnet.com
- Internet Matters (for cyberbullying and online harms) www.internetmatters.org/issues/cyberbullying