



Anti- Bullying

1 The aim of this policy is:

- To try to prevent bullying, as far as possible and
- To help staff, pupils and parents to deal with bullying when it occurs

Westonbirt is committed to providing a safe and caring environment that is free from violence and harassment so that all the pupils can develop their potential.

This policy is available on the website for all staff and parents including parents of boarders and is made known to the boarders including junior pupils through their Housemistresses. New staff are aware of this policy through the induction programme.

2 What do we mean by Bullying?

This policy uses the definition used by the DfE: bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. In essence, bullying is an abuse of power.

This definition includes:

- Hurting, harming or humiliation of another person by physical (including sexual and sexist) means
- Verbal bullying (including electronic media like chat room and SMS messages)
- Emotional bullying (by excluding someone, tormenting them or spreading malicious rumours about them)
- Initiation ceremonies intended to cause hurt or humiliation
- Manipulating other people to tease or torment someone
- Complicity that falls short of direct participation in bullying

Bullying may involve actions or comments that are racist, homophobic, religious or cultural and which focus on disabilities or physical attributes (such as their appearance, hair colour or body shape), or a person's sexuality. Bullying may also involve damage to property and isolation.

Using ICT in these ways is also bullying – we call it 'cyber-bullying'. It can involve using mobile phones, social or networking sites, like Bebo, Facebook and Myspace, emails, text and SMS messages, voicemails and the posting of photographs, video clips and other electronic media on the internet.

Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time – even in the very best schools with highly effective systems of pastoral care. Sometimes it is overt and intimidatory but it is often hidden and subtle. Whatever its nature, bullying is treated seriously at Westonbirt School because

- It is against our ethos and values
- It is hurtful to others and to the school community
- It can cause great distress, unhappiness and psychological damage. At its worse, persistent and severe bullying can even lead to suicide which is why it is taken so seriously
- It can also be a criminal offence, for example if the behaviour amounts to harassment or to threatening behaviour

3. What do we do about it?

- 3.1 The issue of bullying is included in Westonbirt's Life Skills programme. Pupils discuss various aspects of the problem with the aim of: (1) providing suitable support to the bullied, and (2) providing help and guidance to the bully(ies)
- 3.2 Using lessons such as Drama, English and History to highlight the issue of bullying, by teaching moral values that show bullying to be unacceptable.
- 3.3 Westonbirt's School Nurses and Counsellor are an important part of the pastoral support service providing specialist skills of counselling. They are able to give confidential advice to pupils who can refer themselves to them when they have a social, emotional or behavioural concern
- 3.4 Staff are always on duty at times when pupils are not in class and supervise non-teaching time, particularly in areas where bullying might occur. They are trained to be alert to possible bullying signs and situations.
- 3.5 We can only act to prevent or stop bullying if we are kept informed. Pupils who feel they are being bullied should inform a member of staff they feel they can talk to.
- 3.6 Pupils who think someone else is being bullied should inform a member of staff. Stamping out bullying is everybody's responsibility.
- 3.7 Staff will act promptly according to the schools Anti-bullying procedure.
- 3.8 Pupils are encouraged to tell a member of staff at once if they know that bullying is taking place.
- 3.9 Both sides of the story will be listened to before a judgment is made and anybody who is involved in the incident will be asked to write an immediate account of the event.
- 3.10 The anti-bullying policy dovetails with the School's Behaviour Policy so that everyone understands what sanctions are for bullying and how the School supports and encourages good behaviour.

4. Anti-Bullying Procedure

- 4.1 Pupils are encouraged to tell an adult if they feel they are being bullied.

- 4.2 Bullied pupils can be extremely scared of telling an adult about the bullying, expecting that any intervention by adults will just make matters worse. Giving a pupil reassurance is therefore the vital first step.
- 4.3 A pupil's wish to speak in confidence should be respected, with the clear proviso that if the adult is told something which is a cause for grave concern about the pupil's safety or well-being the adult will have an obligation to discuss the matter with someone in authority.
- 4.4 When speaking with a pupil who is suffering from bullying:
- reassure her that confidentiality will be kept;
 - identify clearly what is upsetting her;
 - encourage her sense of self worth;
 - remind her that no-one deserves to be treated unkindly;
 - look at assertive ways to respond to unkindness;
 - encourage her to help herself by identifying moments which may have triggered unkindness and looking at ways to handle such situations;
 - reassure her that more help and support will be forthcoming.
- 4.5 When speaking with a pupil who is known to have been bullying:
- clearly identify what is unacceptable in her behaviour;
 - ask the pupil for her point of view;
 - try to get her to see the other person's point of view;
 - try to get her to appreciate the other's feelings;
 - look at other ways to handle irritation or dislike;
 - make a clear statement that this behaviour must stop.
- 4.6 If the bullying behaviour continues, the Tutor or adult who has been handling the situation until this moment should consult the Deputy Head and Housemistress as it may be that a more assertive intervention is necessary. A senior member of staff will see the bullying pupil, tell her clearly which aspects of her behaviour must change immediately and that the consequences of continuing to act unkindly will be severe.
- 4.7 It may be appropriate at this point for the bully's parents to be informed and their help enlisted.
- 4.8 The peer group/s should be made aware, by their Housemistress or a Senior Member of Staff, of their collective responsibility to support the bullied pupil and to help the bully to affect a change by expressing their liking of her but their disapproval of her behaviour.
- 4.9 If these steps are ineffective, the school reserves the right to express its abhorrence of bullying by suspension or even exclusion.
- 4.10 If a pupil reports an incident of bullying then it should be recorded in writing immediately noting the following key points.
- Date
 - Time
 - Place
 - Summary of what took place

- Alleged victim
- Alleged perpetrator

This report should then be referred to the Head or Deputy Head.

- 4.10 It is important that records are in place so that any emerging patterns may be identified.

5. Advice to Staff

- 5.1 Learning to live alongside people with whom they may not feel an immediate liking, and to be tolerant of others' tastes and opinions, is an important part of a boarding school education for all our pupils. Handling moments when relationships are going badly wrong is difficult, requiring greater tact and sensitivity; all staff should feel freely able to discuss concerns with colleagues who may be more experienced.
- 5.2 The Head will raise awareness of this anti-bullying policy with staff by INSET training, and discussions in Housemistresses and Middle Management Team meetings in order to reduce the risk of bullying.

This policy should be ready in conjunction with the following related policies:

- Behaviour
- Equal Opportunities
- Safeguarding
- Safe Use of ICT

6. Cyberbullying

- 6.1 Any form of behaviour constituting bullying as defined by this policy via the internet will be subject to sanctions as outlined in the Acceptable Use Policy document which all girls sign before being allowed to use the school network. A copy of this policy can be found below.

7. Acceptable Use Policy



Westonbirt School
ICT Department

Acceptable Use Policy for Pupils

The aim of this policy is to maximize your access to network resources, whilst protecting you and the network. In short, the purpose of the school network is to help you with your studies. Any action which has the potential to cause harm to the network or other users is unacceptable. Please note that the school reserves the right to examine or delete any files or e-mails that are found on its computer system and will keep a record of all Internet sites visited and e-mails sent and received.

Acceptable Use of the Network

1. Do use your own user name and password to access the network, your email and the Internet.
2. Do change your password frequently and do not disclose your password to other users.
3. Do keep a copy of all your files in your assigned network area. Do not rely on memory sticks.
4. Do not generate, install, bring into school, or download material that could cause offence to others, be detrimental to the well being of others, or bring the school into disrepute. In line with this, bullying via the school network is totally unacceptable.
5. Do not use the school IT systems for any activity which contravenes UK Law or the copyright of any person or organisation.
6. Take reasonable steps to ensure that your portable media and your network area are free from viruses.
7. Do not install software on the school's network (including local hard drives and your personal network area) without the express permission of the Network Manager.
8. Do not use, or attempt to use, the IT systems in such a way as to compromise their performance.
9. Do not tamper with, move or disconnect any IT systems, equipment or associated peripherals.

Acceptable Use of the Internet

1. Do not disclose any personal details over the Internet.
2. Only access sites that are appropriate to work in school. If you regularly access inappropriate sites your right to access the network may be withdrawn. If you are in doubt about the suitability of any site you should discuss it with the Network Manager.
3. There will be times when you will need to use the Internet to find out other information, e.g. news, train or flight times etc. This is acceptable.
4. We strongly advise you against using social networking sites and, as such, we block access to both Facebook and Bebo, etc.
5. Do not attempt to download anything from the Internet. Downloads can cause harm to the network. If there is something that you need to download, talk to the Network Manager.
6. Do not print directly from a web page as this often uses too much paper. You should copy and paste to another file.

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Please **sign** and **return** to your **tutor**

I have read and understand the terms of the **Acceptable Use Policy** and agree to abide by the policy.

Name

(CAPITALS)

Tutor

Group: