



Anti-Bullying Policy

2011

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Introduction

Win Academy (hereafter the academy or the school) expects all members of the school community to treat each other with courtesy and respect. Everyone has the right to be safe and secure at school, and to be protected when vulnerable, so that all may flourish without fear of unfair treatment or harassment.

It is a Government requirement that all schools have an anti-bullying policy. In 2003 Ofsted published *Bullying: effective action in secondary schools*. This was followed by DfE guidance for schools under two headings: *Don't Suffer in Silence* and *Bullying – A Charter for Action*. More recently, the DfE has published new guidance in *Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for School Leaders and Governing Bodies*. Our policy reflects the contents of these documents and the DfE's guidance, and is intended to help pupils and their families if they are concerned about bullying, ensuring a consistent response to any bullying incident.

What is bullying?

Bullying is hurtful behaviour that usually occurs over a period of time. It is behaviour that a reasonable bystander would say was calculated or intended to hurt or upset the victim. It is behaviour that harasses, humiliates or intimidates others. It may take the form of teasing, verbal criticism and harassment on the grounds of sex, race, religion or disability. Sometimes the perpetrator is just being thoughtless. Sometimes it can be hurtful to be different or to be made to feel different. Bullying causes fear and distress for the victims and may distract them from their school work. It may also affect other pupils who witness it and it can damage the atmosphere in a class or even in the entire school.

Examples of bullying behaviour

- Physical bullying may include: fighting; damaging or hiding someone else's belongings or clothes; setting up someone else to get the blame for a breach of school rules; initiation ceremonies.
- Emotional or psychological bullying may include: excluding someone from a group, activity or place; spreading rumours; being deliberately unfriendly; unpleasant e-mails or telephone calls or unpleasant material placed on websites; racism, negative remarks about appearance, nationality, religion, disability, gender or sexuality (e.g. homophobia).
- Verbal bullying may include: aggressive name calling, teasing, mockery, insults.
- Sexual harassment includes making inappropriate comments about appearance and attractiveness, uninvited propositions, uninvited touching and using innuendo or inappropriate imagery.
- Cyber-bullying is the use of information and communications technology particularly mobile phones, e-mail, social websites, text messages, cameras and the Internet, deliberately to upset someone else.

What are the signs of bullying?

It is not always easy or even possible to tell whether someone is upset. Young people who feel under emotional pressure may find it hard to talk. There may be changes in behaviour, such as shyness and nervousness, demands for attention, feigned or real illness. Work and sleep patterns may change. There may be lack of concentration or withdrawal, and a pupil who is being bullied or feels vulnerable may be unwilling to attend school.

Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go on the school / public bus
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has money continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the Internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received
- stops eating

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Procedures for Dealing with Reported Bullying

If an incident of bullying is reported, the following procedures are adopted at Win:

- The teacher to whom it was reported or who first discovers the situation, will control the situation, reassure and support the pupils involved.
- Any pupil involved in bullying is reported to the Head. The Head will investigate the incident with the Director of Win Academy and the parents will be informed.
- The Head and Director will explain the range of disciplinary measures that are potentially involved to those suspected of bullying.
- The bully, together with all others who were involved, will be interviewed individually and asked to write an immediate account of events.
- The victim will be interviewed on his/her own and asked to write an account of events.
- A clear and factual record of the incident is recorded.
- The Head will invite the parents of the children involved into school to discuss the situation. Their support will be sought.
- Every effort is made to resolve the situation through counselling of both parties, and to modify the behaviour of the pupil who is bullying.
- A way forward, including disciplinary sanctions and counselling, will be agreed. This will recognise that suitable support is needed both for children who are being bullied and for pupils who bully others, as well as dealing with appropriate disciplinary measures.
- The victim will be interviewed at a later stage by the Head and the Director, separately from the alleged perpetrator. It will be made clear to him/her why revenge is inappropriate. He/she will be offered support to develop a strategy to help him or herself.
- The alleged bully will be interviewed at a later stage by the Head and the Director, separately from the victim, and it will be made clear why his/her behaviour was inappropriate and caused distress. He/she will be offered guidance on modifying his or her behaviour, together with any appropriate disciplinary sanctions.
- A monitoring and review strategy will be put in place.
- If bullying persists, the Head and the Director will implement an appropriate punishment for the child who has carried out the bullying. This could involve the writing of a genuine letter of apology, restitution of property, detention, Saturday detention, or in serious cases temporary or permanent exclusion.
- In very serious cases, and only after the Head has been involved, it may be necessary to make a report to the Police or to the Social Services. However, it is the policy of The Win Academy to attempt to resolve such issues internally under the school's own disciplinary procedures, unless the matter is of such gravity that a criminal prosecution is likely.