Witchford Village College

Anti-Bullying Policy

September 2026

Approved by Local Governing Body	
Review cycle	Annually
In consultation with	Senior Leadership Team

Document Control

New Version Number	Key changes from previous version	Date of ratification

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Introduction

1.1. This policy applies to all students of compulsory school age at Witchford Village College. The policy is based on guidance from the Department of Education (DfE) found within "Preventing and Tackling Bullying" July 2017 and supporting documents. It also considers the DfE statutory guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023".

1.2. Witchford Village College endeavor to provide a safe learning environment in which students can enjoy and achieve. We recognise that bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals; it can create a barrier to education and have profound consequences on mental health and wellbeing. By effectively preventing and tackling bullying, we can help to create a safe and disciplined environment, where students are able to learn and fulfil their potential.

1.3. Witchford Village College aim to:

- Monitor and review our anti-bullying policy and practices on a regular basis.
- 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; being aware of this will help us to develop effective strategies to prevent bullying from happening and provide appropriate support, if required.
- Intervene by identifying and tackling bullying behaviour appropriately and promptly.
- Ensure 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.
- Ensure that all members of the school community work to uphold the anti-bullying policy.
- Report back to parents/carers regarding concerns about bullying, dealing promptly with complaints.
- Learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere.
- Utilise support from the Local Authority and other relevant organisations when appropriate.

2. Definition and types of bullying

2.1. Bullying is defined as "behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally." (DfE Preventing and Tackling Bullying, July 2017). It includes persistent, deliberate attempts to hurt or humiliate someone. One-off incidents, whilst they may be very serious and must always be dealt with, do not fall within the definition of bullying. Bullying is repetitive, meaning either that an individual conducts the same pattern of bullying behaviour towards different children or that one or more children are targeted to bear the brunt of repeated bullying behaviour from an individual or a group. Bullying can be carried out physically, verbally, emotionally or through the use of technologies.

2.2. Types of bullying:

- Emotional - Excluding and tormenting others.
- Physical - Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
- Racist - Racial taunts, offensive graffiti, gestures.
- Sexual - Sexual harassment in any form is bullying e.g. unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive comments.
- Homophobic - Because of, or focussing on, the issue of sexual orientation.
- Verbal - Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, mocking, teasing, making offensive comments
- Cyber - All types of communication technologies, such as e-mail, texting, messaging, gaming sites, apps and social networking.
- Prejudice – relating to individual differences such as race, religion, nationality, culture, disability or SEN, socioeconomic background or home circumstances.

2.3. Bullying in any form is unacceptable. It can occur in any school institution, even the most caring, and is always unacceptable and will be dealt with. The school is strongly committed to ensuring that bullying does not take place. Where issues of bullying take place outside of school (including cyberbullying), and the school is made aware of this, it will be necessary to act on the information received to ensure the positive welfare of our students. It may be that parents/carers (or other agencies, such as the police) are contacted to pass on information that has been given to the school. It may also be necessary to take some action in school, using our school behaviour policy and serious incident protocol, in order to resolve the matter.

2.4. The school e-safety guidance also sets out how students can keep safe when online or using electronic media, and how the school may respond in instances involving inappropriate use of such media.

3. Reporting bullying

3.1. It is important to remember that it is not the victims fault and they should not feel ashamed about being bullied. They must tell someone. It is important that all incidents of bullying are reported to the school with as much detail as possible and to include:

- Name(s) of the bully(ies) and victim(s)
- What form the bullying took
- When the bullying took place and over what time scale
- Where the bullying took place
- Name(s) of any other witness(es)
- Details of what has been happening

3.2. We appreciate that it can be difficult for victims of bullying to feel confident enough to report the issues that they face and so we have several mechanisms for pupils, parents and staff to report instances of bullying:

- Speak to any member of staff at school
- Email the form tutor, Head of Year or any member of staff at school using their first initial and surname followed by @wvc.tela.org.uk.
- Use the 'Sharp System' online reporting form found on our school website

3.3. We encourage all students to act responsibly and not be a "passive bystander." If they see any bullying taking place, they have a responsibility to report it to a member of staff so that appropriate action can be taken. All students, staff and parents are encouraged to report all instances of bullying and suspected bullying. We appreciate that it can be quite daunting to report bullying and we will always work with the victim and the bully to make it stop.

4. Responding to bullying

4.1. Where bullying is suspected or reported to have occurred it must always be dealt with. When staff are aware of this they must always follow it up, either directly or through liaising with the pastoral team or Senior Leadership Team. It is usually the case that issues of bullying or suspected bullying would be highlighted to the relevant Head of Year or to the Senior Deputy Headteacher with responsibility for Behaviour and our bullying protocol (see Appendix A) is followed. Appropriate sanctions will be used for any form of bullying. All bullying incidents will be logged on MyConcern and Edulink. The aims must always be:

- To stop the bullying;
- To support the victim;
- To change the behaviour of the person bullying;
- To bring some form of reconciliation between the offender and victim.

4.2. Where bullying is suspected or reported we will talk to the suspected victim, the suspected bully and any witnesses. If any degree of bullying is identified, we support the victims in the following way:

- By offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about their experience with an appropriate member of staff;
- By informing the victims' parents;
- By offering continuing support when they feel they need it, including signposting or referring students to external agencies;
- By taking steps described below to prevent more bullying.

4.3. Whilst we do use our behaviour policy, we also try to help the person bullying in the following ways:

- By talking about what happened, to discover why they became involved;
- By informing their parents of the offending behaviour;
- By continuing to work with the offending student in order to correct their bullying behaviours and attitudes;
- By taking disciplinary steps described below to prevent more bullying;
- By working with students to achieve restorative justice.

4.4. In addition to the points above, where cyberbullying is suspected or reported we will:

- Encourage the victim to keep any evidence of the bullying to assist any investigation;
- We may confiscate and/or ask to search a students' electronic devices (mobile phone and/or iPad) in accordance with schools search protocol;
- Support the victim and their parents/carers in reporting the incident to the police and any service providers;
- Work with the victim and online service providers to assist in any offensive material being removed;
- Provide information to students, parents/carers and staff regarding steps that can be taken to protect themselves online.

4.5. Appropriate disciplinary steps will be taken for all forms of bullying. The severity of the sanctions will be dependent on the individual circumstances of each case and may include:

- Supervised break and/or lunchtimes
- Internal exclusion
- Suspension for a fixed period of time and PSP (Pastoral support programme)

As with any persistent poor behaviour, an escalating scale of support and sanctions will be used such as a managed move, alternative provision or, in very serious cases, permanent exclusion.

5. Preventing bullying

5.1. In effectively preventing and tackling bullying, we can help to create a safe and disciplined environment, where students are able to learn and fulfil their potential. In order to achieve this we will:

- Create and support an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration, and care for others, which will be upheld by all.
- Openly discuss individual differences that could motivate bullying, such as: religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality, or appearance related differences. Also, children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities.
- Challenge language and behaviour which does not uphold the values of tolerance, anti-discrimination, and respect towards others.
- Encourage responsible use of all technologies.
- Work with staff, the wider community and outside agencies to prevent and tackle concerns.
- Celebrate successes and achievements to promote and build a positive culture.

5.2. It is our job to educate our students on the damaging and harmful effects bullying can have on an individual. We will:

- Regularly canvas students' views on the extent and nature of bullying and proactively address any issues which arise;
- Ensure that all students know 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, taking place in school;
- Publicise the internal support available to students, as well as external support, helplines and websites;
- Offer support to student who have been bullied and to those who are bullying to address the problems they have.

5.3. The Anti-Bullying Policy is supported throughout the curriculum and there are a range of opportunities and approaches used to educate students and address the issue of bullying, including:

- Tutor time activities
- PSHE topics and activities
- Assemblies
- Subject specific schemes of work
- Cross-curricular collaboration
- Work with external agencies (such as The Kite Trust – a local support and educational organisation supporting the wellbeing and creativity of LGBTQ+ young people in Cambridgeshire)

Appendix A: Bullying Protocol

	Perpetrator	Victim
Unkind Words	• Logged on EduLink & bullying log	• Tutor and HOH support available
Bullying 1	• Logged on EduLink & bullying log • Detention • HOH intervention • HOH Parent/Carer phone call	• HOH contact home • HOH student meeting – potential restorative/signposting/external agencies
Bullying 2	• Logged on EduLink & bullying log • Detention • HOH intervention • HOH Parent/Carer meeting	• HOH contact home • HOH student meeting – potential restorative/signposting/external agencies
Bullying 3	• Logged on EduLink & bullying log • Internal Exclusion • HOH Report • HOH Parent/Carer meeting	• HOH contact home • HOH student meeting – potential restorative/signposting/external agencies
Bullying 4	• Logged on EduLink & bullying log • Suspension • Pastoral Support Plan • HOH and DH Parent/Carer meeting	• HOH contact home • HOH student meeting – potential restorative/signposting/external agencies

	Perpetrator	Victim
Discriminatory Unkind Words	• Logged on EduLink & bullying log • Detention • Diversity lead intervention • Diversity lead phone call home	• Tutor and HOH support available
Discriminatory Bullying 1	• Logged on EduLink & bullying log • Detention • Diversity lead intervention • Diversity lead phone call home • DSL follow up in writing	• HOH contact home • HOH student meeting – potential restorative/signposting/external agencies
Discriminatory Bullying 2	• Logged on EduLink & bullying log • Detention • Diversity lead intervention • Diversity lead and Head of House meeting with student & parents/carers • DSL follow up in writing	• HOH contact home • HOH student meeting – potential restorative/signposting/external agencies
Discriminatory Bullying 3	• Logged on EduLink & bullying log • Internal Exclusion and HOH Report • Diversity lead intervention • Diversity lead and Head of House meeting with student & parents/carers • DSL follow up in writing	• HOH contact home • HOH student meeting – potential restorative/signposting/external agencies
Discriminatory Bullying 4	• Logged on EduLink & bullying log • Suspension and Pastoral Support Plan • Diversity lead intervention • Diversity lead and Head of House meeting with student & parents/carers • DSL follow up in writing	• HOH contact home • HOH student meeting – potential restorative/signposting/external agencies