ANTI-BULLYING & CYBER-BULLYING POLICY

**This is the policy of Westbourne House School, which incorporates the
Prep School, Pre-Prep, Early Years Foundation Stage as well as provision for boarding**

Policy Statement

Bullying is an action taken by one or more children with the deliberate intention of hurting another child or group, either physically or emotionally and where there can be a relationship that involves an imbalance of power. It may be repetitive or persistent, although it is recognised that some one-off attacks can have a continuing harmful effect on the victim. This includes being unkind to any individual in a racial, religious, cultural, sexual/sexist, gender, homophobic, special educational needs, disability, home life (adopted, single family or acting as a carer) or cyber context (social media, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email). The school recognises that this behaviour has no place in the Westbourne House community and takes steps to ensure that bullying at the school is prevented in so far as is reasonably practicable. This policy also addresses all forms of bullying and the need to eradicate as far as is possible the phenomenon of cyberbullying.

The School takes due notice of the DfE Guidance on the prevention of bullying as contained in Preventing and Tackling Bullying (July 2017) and Cyber-bullying: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff (2014). In due regard to cyber-bullying, this policy also takes account of Advice for Parents and Carers on Cyberbullying (2014); please also refer to the school's E-Safety Policy.

The school recognises that a bullying incident should be treated as a child protection concern where there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. Please also refer to the school's Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy and its Appendix 8 – Managing allegations against other pupils (Peer on peer Abuse).

The school recognises that 'bullying' in whichever form (see below: Signs of Bullying) it manifests is often understood to be unacceptable behaviours 'repeated over time', but the school will respond to any single incident and make an appropriate record thus assisting the school to spot patterns and to ensure the single incident does not become the first of a series.

The school will adopt a zero-tolerance approach to any cyber-bullying issues, that all staff will challenge any abusive behaviour between peers that comes to their notice and will report on to the DSL immediately any issues of this nature. Please also refer to the school's Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy for further details about dealing with child-on-child abuse.

Aims

Bullying is wrong and damages individual children, either physically or psychologically, and could even result in suicide. Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour. We therefore do all we can to prevent it, by developing a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable. We aim, as a school, to produce a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety.

The safety of the children is paramount in all situations (further detail of procedures for dealing with any safeguarding issues can be found in the school's Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy and the Behaviour & Discipline Policy).

This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur including a recognised procedure to follow indicating who to tell and how to record bullying to enable patterns to be identified.

We aim to make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying and make clear each person's responsibility to eradicate bullying in our school. This is done by raising awareness of staff through training, taking action to reduce the risk of bullying at times and in places where it is most likely; and by using educational elements such as personal, social and health education (PSHE), 'Girls on Board'/'Boys on Board', assemblies, projects, drama, stories, literature, historical events, current affairs, outside speakers, pastoral focus weeks and so on. We also make parents aware of our procedures by informing them through an Anti-Bullying presentation. With heightened awareness of identity-based, that is, prejudice based bullying because of a protected characteristic-bullying, the whole school approach considers all of the equality strands:

- Race or ethnicity
- Gypsy/Roma/Travellers
- Asylum seekers or refugees
- Religion or belief
- Learning disability/difficulty (including sport)
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Gender
- Gender identity

Signs of Bullying (changes in behaviour) include, but are not limited to:

- Unwillingness to return to school
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually bad work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others
- Books, bags and other belongings suddenly go missing, or are damaged

- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary)
- Psychological damage and diminished levels of self confidence
- Frequent visits to the Medical/Matron with symptoms such as stomach pains, headaches
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class
- Choosing the company of adults
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact
- Difficulty in sleeping, experiences nightmares
- Talking of suicide or running away from home or School

Although there may be other causes for some of the above symptoms, a repetition of, or a combination of these possible signs of bullying will be investigated by the school and reported/ recorded, as appropriate, in accordance with this policy. Parents would be informed.

The threshold for dealing with an issue of pupil behaviour or bullying under the Safeguarding Policy is when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

Preventative Measures
We take the following preventative measures which are in line with ISSR paragraph 10 Prevention of Bullying:

- We use appropriate assemblies (Headmaster's and Year Heads) to explain the school's position on bullying - we routinely refer to the Westbourne Way as the 'pillars' upon which our community flourishes;
- Our Learning4Life programme is structured to give pupils an awareness of their social and moral responsibilities as they progress through the school. The programme is structured to enforce the message about community involvement and taking care of each other. It specifically tells pupils whom they should inform if they are being bullied, or if they are worried that another pupil is being bullied;
- Other lessons, particularly TPR, ICT, English and Drama highlight the issue of bullying and Cyber-bullying and reinforce this message by teaching moral and spiritual values that show bullying to be unacceptable and by developing the necessary social skills to help prevent bullying or to be proactive in addressing it - see next point;
- All our pupils are encouraged to tell a member of the teaching or pastoral staff at once if they know that bullying is taking place. We continually remind pupils that whoever reports bullying in good faith will be supported and reassured. Every member of staff is trained on how to respond to such allegations as part of their induction training as well as at scheduled INSET.

- All reported incidents are recorded and investigated upon being received. Logs are kept using the School Management System (ISAMs) and, where necessary, the Unkindness Register (Anti-Bullying Record).
- We have a strong and experienced pastoral team of Form Tutors, Link Tutors, Heads of Year, House parents, Medical/Matron Team and an Emotional and Behavioural Coach who supports the Head of Pastoral care and the Deputy Headmaster - all of whom are trained in handling any incidents as an immediate priority, and are alert to possible signs of bullying.
- Our pastoral team (or Pastoral Committee) gives support and guidance to other staff on handling and reporting incidents, and on the follow-up work with both victims and perpetrators.
- The Headmaster leads the weekly Staff Meeting for all staff to discuss pastoral issues as they pertain to individual children.
- Our Emotional and Behavioural Coach is an important part of our overarching pastoral care providing specialist skills of listening and emotional support. She is available to give support to pupils who are referred to her by the IN Department when they have social, emotional or behavioural concerns. The Head of Pastoral Care may also refer a pupil to her in conjunction with the IN Department.
- Staff are always on duty at times when pupils are not in class and patrol the School site, particularly areas where bullying might occur. They are trained to be alert to inappropriate language or behaviour.
- The Westbourne House boarding & onsite team is a strong team supporting the children in loco parentis. The informal environments created in the Main House and outhouses are important in reinforcing Westbourne's cultural, moral and spiritual expectations (the Westbourne Way) as well as providing the opportunity for friendly, informal discussion of matters of concern to the individual pupils outside their formal classroom. We encourage and foster close contacts between the House Parents and parents/guardians and would always initiate contact if we were worried about a pupil's well-being.
- Westbourne ensures that all staff understand the principles of this policy, the school's legal responsibilities and the actions to be taken to resolve and prevent incidents of bullying from arising or escalating as well as ensuring details of the sources of further support are available.
- As above, we recognise that certain children may be more at risk of bullying than others, and may require additional support when dealing with an incident of bullying, for example children with SEND and LGBT pupils. The School will ensure that staff receive appropriate training to be able to understand the specific needs of our pupils, and to enable all staff to provide an inclusive environment for all pupils
- All reported incidents are recorded on iSAMS via the pupil profile and, along with other major incidents, are recorded by the Head of Pastoral Care, the Heads of Year, the Head of Boarding or the Deputy Head on our 'Anti-Bullying (Child-on-Child) Register'. All instances are investigated at once. We always record and monitor reported incidents to enable the school to identify patterns of behaviour.

- We display advice on where pupils can seek help, including details of confidential helplines and websites connecting to external specialists, such as Childline, the NSPCC, The Children's Commissioner and many others.
- In addition we have an anonymous platform called 'Safe Space' which recognises that pupils can find it difficult to 'name' individuals. This platform allows children to report behaviour so that the pastoral team can be made aware and investigate appropriately. In Juniors, this takes the form of a physical box (Our Safe Space Box) in which comments/notes/concerns can be placed.
- All pupils have access to a telephone helpline, enabling them to call for support in private.
  - We reserve the right to investigate incidents that take place outside School hours, on School visits and trips and that occur in the vicinity of the school involving our pupils.
- Staff will always consider the motive behind bullying behaviour and whether it raises any concerns for the welfare of the perpetrator. If staff reasonably suspect that a pupil may be suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, they should follow the procedures set out in the School's Safeguarding Policy and discuss their concerns with the School's DSL without delay.
- If parents know or suspect that their child, or another pupil, is being bullied, they should contact the school without delay. All concerns will be taken seriously. We welcome feedback from parents and guardians on the effectiveness of our preventative measures

Practice and Procedure

Children are made aware of the issues surrounding bullying and know the importance of reporting any bullying incident to a member of staff, parent or a 'Friend' (Y8 Peer Counselling Group). Older pupils are always encouraged to set a positive example but all pupils should understand that being a bystander carries obligations to do something to improve the situation, like seeking help from a teacher.

In any instance of bullying, appropriate support is offered to the victim and the bully. The Policy is published on the School website and is referred to in the Year Group Information Meetings at the start of each academic year. This policy is dovetailed with the school's Behaviour and Discipline Policy making it clear what the sanctions are for bullying and the support offered to both the victim and the bully. The school aims to make sanctions relevant to the misdemeanour so as to have a deterring effect; these may well include temporary or permanent exclusion.

Whenever possible, relevant cross-curricular opportunities are taken to highlight, enhance and reinforce anti bullying issues. In terms of cyber-bullying all pupils are made aware of the school's Acceptable Use of School Devices policy and what to do if they have any ICT safeguarding concerns through the ICT curriculum. Each child has read a copy of the Acceptable Use of School Devices Agreement.

Anti-bullying guidelines are reinforced and there is significant coverage of all cyber-bullying issues in the ICT curriculum and the PSHE/Learning4Life programme; such as age-appropriate information about grooming, internet sites containing adult or violent content, sharing personal information/photographs, use of technology to tease, bully or threaten.

Parents are also informed about cyber-bullying in information meetings which are organised on an ad-hoc basis or as and when the school sees a need.

A bullying incident at Westbourne would normally see the following steps taken:

- The member of staff to whom it was reported or who first discovers the situation, will control the situation, reassure and support the pupils involved without promising absolute confidentiality.
- He/she will inform an appropriate member of staff as soon as possible (Form Tutor, Link Tutor, Personal Tutor, Head of Year, Head of Juniors, Head of Pastoral Care, Head of Boarding or Deputy Head - see The Role of Heads of Year below).
- The victim will be interviewed on his/her own (with support if required) and an account of events will be taken.
- The perpetrator, together with all others who were involved, will be interviewed individually and an immediate account of events will be written down.
- In order that patterns may be identified, the incident will be recorded on iSAMS and the Head of Pastoral Care will also keep a record of the major incidents on the 'Anti-Bullying (Child-on-Child) register -these would normally be shared with the Deputy Headmaster.
- All relevant members of staff should be informed (those listed above)
- The victim will be interviewed at a later stage by the Head of Year, Head of Pastoral Care, Deputy Head separately from the alleged perpetrator. He/she will be offered support to develop a strategy to help him or herself.
- The alleged perpetrator will be interviewed at a later stage by the Head of Year, Head of Pastoral Care, or Deputy Head, separately from the victim, and it will be made clear why his/her behaviour was inappropriate and why it caused distress. He/she will be offered guidance on modifying his or her behaviour, together with any appropriate disciplinary sanctions.
- The parents/guardians of all parties will be informed and, if necessary, invited into school to discuss the matter. Their support would be sought.
- A way forward, including disciplinary sanctions and, where appropriate, counselling/or appropriate referral, should be agreed. This should recognise that suitable support is needed both for victim and perpetrator, as well as dealing with appropriate disciplinary measures.
- A meeting involving all the parties, with close staff supervision, could be helpful in developing a strategy for all concerned to close the episode - mediation.
- A monitoring and review strategy will be put in place. In very serious and persistent cases, and only after the Headmaster 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 school

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.

- In an instance when the School becomes aware that cyber bullying is happening outside of school, the same procedures will apply as if the cyber bullying happened at school.

Cyber Bullying:

Cyber Bullying is an unpleasant phenomenon and is defined in the following way: "Cyber bullying involves the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others."

The School acknowledges that cyber-bullying may take place inside School, outside of School and at any time of the day. Cyber-bullying could involve communications by various electronic media, including for example:

- Texts, instant messages or calls on mobile phones;
- The use of mobile phone camera images to cause distress, fear or humiliation;
- Posting threatening, abusive, sexual, discriminatory, offensive or humiliating material or comments on websites (including blogs, personal websites and social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or YouTube);
- Using e-mail to message others in a threatening or abusive manner;
- Hijacking/cloning e-mail accounts.

The School acknowledges that cyber-bullying may take many different forms including: cyberstalking, exclusion or peer rejection, impersonation, unauthorised publication of private information or images, encouraging derogatory comments on online platforms, sharing nudes/semi-nudes, upskirting and sexting.

The School has a role to play in teaching pupils about the underpinning knowledge and behaviours that can help them to navigate the online world safely and confidently regardless of the device, platform or app. In taking this forward, the School has regard to the DfE's non-statutory guidance on Teaching Online Safety in School ([Teaching online safety in schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk) (2023).

Preventing Cyber-bullying - E-Safety Procedures:

- Employ appropriate sanctions for the misuse or abuse of the school's rules on internet safety and bullying (of which cyber-bullying is part);
- Children are not allowed to bring mobile phones to school;
- Similarly, pupils are not allowed smart/internet enabled watches in school.
- An overseas boarder who has a mobile phone (or internet connected device) must ensure that it is handed to Mr and Mrs Fisher for safe keeping during term time.
- Pupils only have supervised access to ICT devices during the school day and within boarding time. (The devices for boarders only being permitted under the supervision

of staff and, again, at designated times. Boarders can, of course, phone home whenever they wish.)

- Only school email addresses are used within school time.
- All devices used in school have appropriate filtering systems enabled with the monitoring of internet usage using designated Wi-Fi access for pupils and boarders who bring their own devices (please refer to the Acceptable Use of School Devices Policy) employed.
- The school offers guidance and education on the safe use of social networking sites and cyber bullying in Learning 4 Life lessons, designated ICT lessons, assemblies and our Anti-Bullying Week which covers safety more broadly when online, blocking and removing contacts, reporting concerns and the legacy of digital footprints

With due regard to boarding:
- this policy is provided to all involved in boarding including all boarders' parents;
- all the boarding handbooks detail the policies and procedures of the school with regard to anti-bullying.

Electronic devices, Procedures for dealing with cyber-bullying:
Westbourne House will follow the procedures set out in this policy and the Safeguarding Policy where relevant for incidents of cyber-bullying, taking such disciplinary action that is considered reasonable in the circumstances, with a view to regulating pupil conduct and protecting the reputation of the school, and ensuring the welfare of its pupils. Although cyber-bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws that may apply to communications of a harassing or threatening manner or the unauthorised publication of private images, upskirting, sharing nudes/semi-nudes and sexting. This procedure is not limited to just pupils, but includes staff, visitors and parents.

Where the school considers that a reported incident of cyberbullying may amount to a criminal offence, it will inform the Police or appropriate external agency.

Cyber-Bullying: Search & Confiscation:
In the event of an allegation of cyber-bullying, certain staff (with the authority of the Headmaster) would be permitted to conduct a search for electronic devices, such as a mobile phone owned by a pupil; whilst unlikely, as the pupils, except for boarders, are not permitted to have devices/phones in school. If appropriate, this search would also be relevant if such an allegation is made involving a member of staff, visitor or parent.

As per the principles of Search & Confiscation set out in the school's Search and Confiscation Policy, staff do not require the consent of the pupil, or their parents to undertake a search, provided they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that the pupil is in possession of a prohibited item, and provided they have the Headmaster's prior consent to undertake a search.

The search will be conducted in accordance with the procedure set out in the Search and Confiscation Policy. Where a search finds an electronic device that is prohibited by the school rules, or where the member of staff undertaking the search reasonably suspects that the electronic device has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence or cause personal injury or damage to property, the school may examine any data or files on the device, where there is good reason to do so, for example, where there has been an allegation of cyber-bullying. Parental consent to search through electronic devices is not required.

The school may also erase any data or files from the device if the School considers there to be good reason to do so, unless there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the device may contain evidence in relation to a criminal offence, where the files should not be deleted and the device must be given to the Police without delay. If, following a search, the member of staff determines that the device does not contain any evidence in relation to an offence, or are advised by the Police following a report to them that they will not take any further action to investigate an alleged offence, the school can decide whether it is 7 appropriate to delete any files or data from the device, and may retain the device as evidence of a breach of this Policy, the Search and Confiscation Policy and Behaviour and Discipline Policy.

The school may then take steps to punish the pupil in accordance with the Behaviour and Discipline Policy, where appropriate. In the event that the search highlights a safeguarding concern in respect of any pupil, the school will follow the procedures set out in the Safeguarding Policy. The School will keep a record of all searches carried out, including the results of any search, and the actions taken following that search.

The role of Parents
Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's form teacher/personal tutor immediately.

Parents have a responsibility to support the school's Anti-bullying Policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school.

The role of the Tutor/Teacher
Teachers are expected to be positive role models who set a good example and take all forms of bullying seriously and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. All incidents of bullying are referred immediately to the appropriate Head of Year.

If, as teachers, we become aware of any bullying taking place between members of a class, we deal with the issue immediately. This may involve counselling and support for the victim of the bullying. The incident is immediately referred to the Head of Year who may then involve the Deputy Head and Headmaster, depending on the severity of the situation.

Teachers attempt to support all children in their class and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. By praising, rewarding and celebrating the success of all children, we aim to prevent incidents of bullying.

In the Pre-Prep, the teachers under the guidance of the Head of Pre-Prep use age-appropriate support for victims and bullies.

The Role of Heads of Years (including the Head of Pre-Prep, who oversees all EYFS and KS1 pastoral matters and the Head of Boarding):

The Heads of Years/Boarding/Pre-Prep ensure that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. The Heads of Years draw the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments.

For example, if an incident occurs, the Heads of Years may decide to use assembly as a forum in which to discuss with other children why this behaviour was wrong, and why a pupil is being punished.

The Heads of Years will also use the PSHE/Learning4Life programme/year group assemblies/Anti-bullying Focus Week as a vehicle for ensuring that the school ethos of anti-bullying is laid out and reinforced.

The Heads of Years in the Prep School keep records of all incidences of bullying:
- In Years 3&4, the Head of Junior Department, keeps records of all incidences of bullying, on iSAMS, and deals with them in accordance with the incremental stage of sanctions set out in the Junior Department Behaviour & Rewards Procedures (see Appendix 2 of the Behaviour & Discipline Policy)
- In Years 5-8, the Heads of Years deal with the incidents of bullying in accordance with the incremental stage of sanctions set out in the Years 5-8 Behaviour & Rewards Procedures (see Appendix 3 of the Behaviour & Discipline Policy).
- In addition to the sanctions set out in the Behaviour & Discipline Policy; any pupils found bullying, in Years Pre-Prep - Year 8, will also be placed on the Anti-Bullying (Child-on-Child) Register, which is also logged on iSAMS.
- In much the same way, the Head of Boarding will address/record instances of bullying using the systems above.

The role of the Headmaster
It is the responsibility of the Headmaster to implement the school anti-bullying strategy and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy and know how to deal with incidents of bullying. The Headmaster reports to the Governing Body about the effectiveness of the Anti-bullying Policy on request.

The Headmaster sets the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, thus making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

The Headmaster ensures that all staff receive sufficient training to be equipped to appropriately deal with all incidents of bullying, to raise awareness, to understand the principles of the school policy, to know legal responsibilities and sources of support that are available.

The role of Governors
The Governing Body supports the Headmaster in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. This policy statement makes it very clear that the governing body does not allow bullying to take place in our school, and that any incidents of bullying that do occur are taken very seriously and dealt with appropriately.

The Governors require the Headmaster to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying and to report to the Governors on request about the effectiveness of school anti-bullying strategies. The Head of Pastoral Care reports to the governors on all things pastoral once a term.

The Governing Body responds within ten days to any request from a parent to investigate incidents of bullying. In all cases, the governing body notifies the Headmaster and asks him/her to conduct an investigation into the case and to report back to a representative of the governing body.

Differentiation/Inclusion
All pupils are involved in the implementation of this policy and it features as an agenda Item at the regular Student Council Meetings.

The involvement of the Individual Needs (IN) Department may be invited at any point, when it is deemed appropriate.

Assessment and Record Keeping
The Heads of Year/Head of Boarding/Head of Pre-Prep keep appropriate logs and records in individual cases, for both perpetrator and victim to enable patterns to be identified and to evaluate the effectiveness of the approach adopted. These logs are entered on to ISAMS and on the Anti-Bullying Register. The Deputy Headmaster will also be informed and keep his own logs as necessary.

Staff Training
The Senior Management Team is responsible for ensuring all staff are fully aware of the Anti-Bullying Policy, practice and procedures, along with e-safety. Tutor and Staff meetings ensure regular communication, evaluation and review. Staff attend INSET as appropriate.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is also trained in e-safety and is aware of the potential for serious child protection/safeguarding issues to arise from:

- Sharing of personal data
- Access to illegal/inappropriate materials
- Inappropriate on-line contact with adults/strangers
- Potential or actual incidents of grooming
- Cyber-Bullying

All staff receive e-safety training and understand their responsibilities, as outlined in this policy. Training is offered as follows:

- A planned programme of formal e-safety training which is regularly updated and reinforced; along with a regular audit of the e-safety training needs of all staff. It is expected that some staff will identify e-safety as a training need within the performance management process.
- All new staff receive e-safety training as part of their induction programme
- The Head of ICT receives regular updates through attendance at external training events and by reviewing guidance documents released by relevant organisations.
- E-Safety policy and its updates will be presented to and discussed by staff in staff meetings/INSET days.
- The Head of ICT will provide advice/guidance/training to individuals as required.
- Support of National Internet Safety Day

Supporting Policies:

- E-Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy
- Behaviour & Disciplinary Policy

Monitoring and review
In response to Government recommendations, incidents of identity-based bullying are monitored, considering all the equality strands (protected characteristics) mentioned above and are recorded in the Anti-Bullying & Unkindness Register.

Monitoring of any bullying activity and the education of the school community in combatting this is carried out. A self-assessment of how the school deals with bullying is undertaken every year via Anti-Bullying questionnaires. Pupils take part in the Every Child Matters audit which covers their perception of how effective anti-bullying measures are in school.

The School will review and monitor the effectiveness and compliance of this policy (and appendices – if appropriate). This policy will be kept up-to-date and amended to take account of legislative and regulatory changes.

Last Review Date	Next Review Date	Reviewer(s)
October 2024	September 2025	Deputy Head Head of ICT Head of Years 3-8 Head of Juniors Head of Pastoral care DSL