



WESTONBIRT PREP

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

This policy applies to the whole school including EYFS and wraparound care

Date of Policy	September 2025
Member of staff responsible	Rebecca Mitchell
Role	Headmistress

Last Review	Significant Changes
September 2025	New policy wording
October 2025	Staff name change

1. Introduction

This Policy applies to:

- the entire setting including the EYFS and wraparound care;
- all staff, volunteers, pupils and visitors to Westonbirt Prep.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy
- Behaviour, Rewards, Discipline and Exclusion Policy
- Child Friendly Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy applies to the whole school including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). It has been written with regard to the DfE guidance “Preventing and Tackling Bullying”, “Cyberbullying: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff”, “Keeping Children Safe in Education”, “The Education Act” and the “Equality Act”.

At Westonbirt Prep, our community is based upon respect, mutual tolerance, good manners and fairness. We are committed to providing a safe and caring environment that is free from disruption, violence and any form of harassment and discrimination so that every pupil can develop their full potential. We believe pupils should care for and support each other.

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies at Westonbirt Prep regarding the issue of bullying. Its aim is to ensure that all pupils, parents/carers and staff understand what bullying is, know what the policy on bullying is and what they should do if bullying arises. It aims to set out a coordinated approach to preventing and tackling bullying at school.

The Senior Leadership Team of Westonbirt Prep seeks to promote a culture throughout the school in which every member of the Westonbirt Prep community takes responsibility for the prevention of bullying. Promoting the well-being of pupils requires us to protect them from harm and neglect, but also requires us to consider their physical and mental health and emotional well-being, their opportunities for education, training and recreation, the contribution made by them to society and their social and economic well-being.

Bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination will not be tolerated under any circumstances. We treat all our pupils and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff and the school. We take a strong stance against bullying of any type, since it indicates a lack of appreciation for the feelings of others. We ensure that bullying at the school is prevented in so far as reasonably practicable.

The school also recognises that it must take note of bullying perpetrated outside school which spills over into the school. The school will do what is reasonably practicable to eliminate any such bullying. Westonbirt Prep aims to promote Emotional Literacy, defined as people being able to ‘recognise, understand handle and appropriately express their emotions’ (Sharp, 2001).

2. Responsibilities

The Head has ultimate responsibility for prevention of bullying and management of any bullying issues.

Westonbirt Prep’s safeguarding team will also be involved, as appropriate.

The Prep Safeguarding Team consists of:

Mrs Fflur Jankowska	Prep DSL
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Mrs Rebecca Mitchell	Head
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Mrs Briony Shepherd	Assistant Head (Pastoral)
Mrs Julie Delahay	SENCO
Mrs Claire Smith	Deputy Nursery manager

- I. **Governance:** Wishford Head Office personnel will liaise with the Head and the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Head over all anti-bullying strategies, and be made aware of individual cases where appropriate.

It is Governance's responsibility to ensure that an effective Anti-Bullying strategy is drawn up and implemented. The Governance of Wishford Schools will discuss, review and endorse agreed strategies and will discuss the Head's report on the working of this policy.

The named directors for safeguarding will liaise with the DSL/Deputy Head and other staff about issues to do with protecting pupils from radicalisation.

- II. **Head:** The Head has a legal duty under the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998, the non-statutory Behaviour and Discipline in schools 2014 and duties under The Equality Act 2010 to draw up procedures to prevent bullying amongst pupils.

In any serious case of bullying the Head will be informed and the school will work with the parents of both the victim and the perpetrator. The school will remain in contact with both sets of parents until the situation is resolved.

In the most serious cases, the sanction might be a fixed term or permanent exclusion.

The Head will:

- Ensure that all staff have an opportunity for discussing strategies and reviewing them regularly.
- Determine the strategies and procedures with the Deputy Head
- Discuss development of the strategies with the SLT
- Ensure that the procedures are brought to the attention of all staff, parents, carers, volunteers and pupils.
- Report to the Wishford Governance personnel.

- III. **Deputy Head**

The Deputy Head will:

- Be responsible for the day-to-day management of the policy and systems
- Ensure that there are positive strategies and procedures in place to help both the bullied victims and the perpetrators
- Keep the Head informed of any incidents
- Refer and liaise with the interagency and safeguarding partners if necessary
- Arrange relevant pupil training
- With the Head, determine how best to involve parents in the solution of individual problems
- Ensure proper record keeping in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's approach and to enable patterns to be identified
- Be responsible for keeping a log of all bullying incidents.
- Ensure copies of all records are on individual pupil files.

- IV. **Form Teachers:**
Form teachers will:

- Be responsible for liaising with the Deputy Head about all incidents involving pupils in their forms.
- Be involved in any agreed strategy to achieve a solution
- Encourage pupils to consider and discuss the school's code of conduct for pupils and how bullying can be prevented, including the need to avoid becoming an active bystander.

V. Staff:

All staff will:

- Know and follow all relevant policies and procedures
- Keep clear records of any bullying incidents
- Be observant and talk to pupils
- Deal with incidents according to this policy
- Never let any incidents of bullying pass by unreported, whether on-site or during an off-site activity
- Take action to reduce the risk of bullying at all times and in places where it is most likely to happen
- Will discuss from time to time where extra staff are needed
- Staff will be given training to help them understand the issues of radicalization, be able to recognize the signs of vulnerability or radicalisation and know how to refer their concerns
- All volunteers will be provided with: Safeguarding Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Anti-Bullying Policy, Behaviour Policy and Whistleblowing Policy.

3. Background

Bullying can be extremely serious. The DfE defines bullying as: *“Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.”*

The School makes the following clear statements:

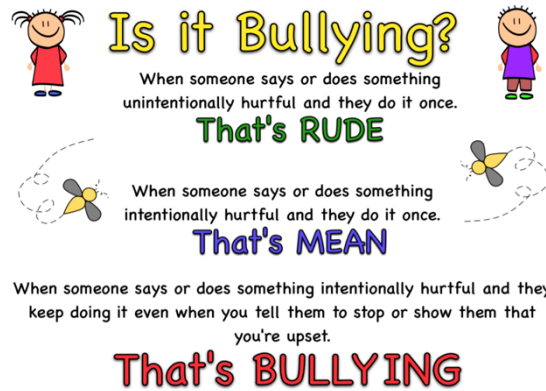
- Westonbirt Prep has a zero-tolerance approach to bullying.
- Westonbirt Prep categorises bullying as a form of physical and/or emotional abuse.
- All staff at Westonbirt Prep treat bullying incidents as seriously as any other safeguarding matter.
- All types and symptoms of emotional and physical (including sexual) abuse should be considered as possible in relation to child-to-child abuse/bullying.
- Westonbirt Prep is committed to reaching a full and lasting resolution to any bullying incident or accusation.

Given Westonbirt Prep's position, there is no need to list all types and symptoms of physical and emotional abuse in this policy and staff (and parents) should refer to the appendix to build awareness of how to identify bullying. In summary, however, bullying typically includes derogatory remarks, deliberate isolation or violent conduct. It can be on the grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, sexual orientation, special educational need and disability or because child is adopted or is a carer, it may occur directly or through cybertechnology (social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs or email).

Staff are trained in the contents of this policy and methods of dealing with conflict during staff meetings and INSET training. Children are taught about Westonbirt's zero-tolerance approach to bullying through the PSHE curriculum, Form Tutor Thinking/Wellbeing Assemblies and through whole-school assemblies led by the Head.

4. What is the Threshold for Bullying?

All children and adults at Westonbirt Prep are taught, via guidance and discussion, the threshold for bullying using the following poster (which is displayed in every classroom):



Through regular assemblies, stories, literature, projects and PSHE lessons, all children are taught the meaning of this poster. Through numerous methods, the words 'intentional' and 'unintentional' are discussed and explained as is the decision to continue to act intentionally hurtful after the first incident rather than to act with remorse and reconciliation. Children and adults are reminded that bullying is an act that happens Several Times On Purpose (STOP).

5. Preventing Bullying

The school aims for no bullying to occur. We are committed to promoting and providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils and staff so we can learn and work together in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Positive behaviour is reinforced throughout the school day, and celebrated daily in classrooms and assemblies. The PSHE scheme is also fully flexible and teachers know they should prioritise kindness and respect as and when they feel their class needs further support and guidance. Each term, or when incidents occur, class teachers will discuss bullying and reinforce strategies to deal with such an incident (refer to appendix to view list of these strategies).

Action staff may take in response to a report of rude or mean behaviour

All staff know to always act on rude or mean behaviour. Our Westonbirt Rights & Responsibilities remind us to be respectful towards others, which includes being kind, thoughtful and respectful towards the feelings of others. We encourage respect for one another and our belongings, to be kind and patient with each other and to play safely. Any hurtful actions or words known to a member of staff will be acted upon by talking to the child responsible, reminding them of our rules and culture of respect. Staff will ask them to explain their actions/words and consider the feelings of the other person with the aim that they apologise to the victim. Staff meetings and department meetings on a Thursday are an opportunity for staff to share any incidents they have dealt with so that any recurring themes can be identified. Any pupil known to be repeatedly acting in a rude or mean way (but not towards the same victim(s)) will receive 1 to 1 coaching from their class teacher or other identified member of staff, and their behaviour and peer relationships will be closely monitored by all staff. This may involve the child losing play time. Parents will usually be informed in such instances. Reasonable adjustments are made as appropriate for children on our SEND list.

How we help children recognise and report 'rude', 'mean' or 'bullying' behaviour

All children are encouraged to take responsibility in highlighting rude or mean behaviour.

Children are encouraged to express their feelings with their words (never to react physically) and to explain to the other child that their rude or mean behaviour has caused them hurt and upset. All children know (through regular verbal reminders and the posters throughout the school) that they can and should speak to another pupil (particularly Year 6), or a safe adult - a teacher, a family member, or an external agency (NSPCC/Childline) - if they have been hurt by bullying or cyberbullying either inside or outside the school. Children are also reminded of the 'Listening Ear' service available to them at break, lunch and form time, if they would prefer to talk about any concerns in a quiet environment away from other pupils. This information is recorded and shared with form teachers and staff as appropriate and a record of concern may be recorded and given to the DSL if necessary, following the safeguarding policy.

By asking children to take responsibility for expressing their feelings and confronting those who have acted in a hurtful way towards them we aim to empower them to deal with conflict at an early stage and thereby reduce the likelihood of behaviour turning into bullying. These proactive responses from both staff and children aim to both minimise rude and mean behaviour as well as stop any escalation of such behaviour towards bullying.

Resilience and Character Training

Alongside our proactive work in identifying and supporting potential bullies we also work to identify potential victims and then give them resilience and character training to lessen the risk of them becoming victims of bullying. PSHEE themes include how to make friends; anger management (how to walk away/calm down); keeping perspective (accepting that different points of view are allowed or knowing that your troubles are often not as bad as you think); dealing with conflict; humility and self-deprecation. Children with a broad understanding of these traits are less likely to become victims of bullying.

During playtimes, children may find that they feel lonely from time to time and are unsure where to find a friend to play with. To support these less confident children we have invested in a Buddy Bench, where the children can go and sit if they feel lonely or would like some quiet time. All children are asked to be mindful of people sitting here and are encouraged to invite these children to join their game or sit and have a chat with them; School Council Representatives are asked to take responsibility for helping children who have chosen to sit on the bench. Duty staff are also mindful of children sitting on the bench and will support them and encourage other children to help as appropriate.

Organisation and Vigilance

Whilst aiming to give children enough freedom to disagree, problem solve and resolve conflict, we also aim to reduce the likelihood of major incidents by being both organised and vigilant. We organise play times to maximise positive peer relationships, duty rotas to maximise effective supervision and (when appropriate) seating plans/team selections to minimise negative fallout. Equally, whilst on duty and around the school, the teaching staff are constantly committed to being vigilant for behaviour that needs intervention.

E-Safety

A detailed E-Safety Policy sets out the acceptable use of the internet.

The ICT and PSHE curriculums ensure that all children from Year 1 to Year 6 are taught a unit on Digital Citizenship. This includes e-safety matters relating to developing an awareness of how self-image is portrayed online and safe communication online. EYFS children are closely monitored by class teachers when working online and know to turn the screen off and tell a safe adult if they see anything that makes them feel uncomfortable. Parents are educated through the medium of E-Safety updates which are shared through our newsletter; the School also runs E-Safety information evenings for parents from time to time.

Through assemblies, all children are taught the importance of e-safety and this is usually followed up during a PSHEE lesson or a Form Time Lesson. Children are reminded that they may share any concerns they have about e-safety (at school or away from school) with a safe adult, and this may need to be recorded and passed on to the DSL (see Safeguarding Policy).

Children know that online behaviour will have the same impact on others as behaviour in 'the real world'.

6. Dealing with bullying (including online/off-site)

The clarity and repetition of the message of 'talking to someone' creates a culture where the reporting of bullying (by the victim or someone else) is highly likely. Children and parents know it is their responsibility to report concerns or allegations to a member of staff immediately whether it be on or off the school premises. Staff know that they should treat and act upon concerns/disclosures/allegations of bullying in exactly the same way as an allegation of abuse, in line with the safeguarding policy.

The ideal outcome is always to reach reconciliation between the bully and the victim and to ensure that the bullying stops immediately and does not reoccur. Therefore, although sanctions may often be needed, we do not enter into a resolution with the intention to 'punish' the bully as this might often be to the detriment of the ideal outcome listed above. Unless the DSL and the teachers involved decide a more bespoke approach is needed, most bullying incidents will warrant the following approach:

Step 1: The form tutors of any children alleged to have been involved in any incident of bullying (whether as victim or aggressor) will be informed.

Step 2: The form tutors and relevant heads of department will:

- meet with each child to establish the facts;
- make a record of the meetings, which will be passed to the Head with a copy placed on the file of the alleged victim and the alleged perpetrator.
- in conjunction with the Head, decide if the incidents/s constitute bullying.
- report back to the parents or child who raised the concern with their findings.
- any allegation of bullying, whether found to be bullying or not, is noted in the school's 'Bullying Log', along with the outcome of any investigation undertaken by staff.

If no bullying has been identified the school will continue to monitor the situation but close the investigation. If bullying is identified then the school will progress to step three.

Step 3:

- offer whatever support is required to the victim of the bullying;
- seek to understand the cause of the bullying;
- make a detailed record, which will be passed to the Head with a copy placed on the file of each child involved in the incident;
- inform the parents of any pupils involved of the situation and discuss the action to be taken;
- where appropriate, inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead or their Deputy, who will determine whether a referral to Social Services is necessary.
- Sanctions imposed upon the aggressor are at the discretion of the Head and may range from reconciliation action to permanent exclusion.

Step 4: If appropriate, the next best step is to bring victim and bully together for a reconciliation meeting. This is a chance for the victim to express how the bully's actions/words have made them feel and for the bully to express remorse. Collectively, an appropriate sanction will be agreed as well as clarity over their future conduct around one another. Again, this meeting and its conclusions will be recorded in the Bullying Log.

Step 5: Colleagues will be informed of the actions taken through the weekly staff meeting and ensure that all children involved are closely monitored to avoid further incidents. It is then vital that class teachers and other staff continue to be vigilant and observe the bully and victim carefully. Positive reinforcement and management skills will continue to be used to avoid the situation escalating again.

The keeping of a Bullying Log allows the school to evaluate the effectiveness of different approaches and to enable patterns to be identified.

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 and so recording and procedures for a safeguarding concern should be followed.

In extreme cases (the threshold of which is determined on a case-by-case basis by the Head), the Head reserves the right to suspend or exclude any pupil for bullying another child at the school as well as informing local children's services and potentially the police.

APPENDIX

1. Identifying bullying:

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically, emotionally or psychologically. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can take various different forms, including:

- Racial/Religious/Cultural – where someone is made to feel inferior because of their background, culture or religion.
- Sexual/sexist - bullying based on something specifically linked to gender.
- Homophobic - bullying based on sexual orientation.
- Disability - exploitation of a particular aspect of a child's disability and/or special educational needs.
- Cyber-bullying via technology. For example, internet/mobile phones, email, social networks, text messages, photographs.

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 and so recording and procedures for a safeguarding concern should be followed.

What Causes Bullying?

People bully for different reasons, including:

- to feel powerful or in control;
- jealousy;
- to feel good about themselves;
- to feel popular or show off in front of others;
- because of peer pressure; and
- because they are being bullied themselves.

Signs That a Child Could be Being Bullied

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- 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 schoolwork
- 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 any monies continually "lost"
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- 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 & jumpy when a cyber message is received

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

2. Prevention Strategies

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Westonbirt Prep uses multiple strategies to prevent bullying, including:

- Implementing an effective anti-bullying policy and practice. The school will then become a safer and happier environment, with consequent improvements in attitudes, behaviour, and relationships and with a positive impact on learning and achievement.
- Ensuring that staff are fully trained to prevent and deal with bullying.
- Regular praise of positive and supportive behaviour by all staff.
- Use of the curriculum to develop empathy and emotional intelligence.
- Good behaviour and attitudes are rewarded with Star of the Week, House Points or appropriate certificates.
- The provision of a range of suitable play equipment to meaningfully occupy the pupils during their free time.
- Making bullying a regular item on the agenda for School Council Meetings so that all child representatives have the opportunity to raise any concerns or relevant issues. It should also be a regular item for discussion in the Circle Time sessions which take place in PSHE lessons.
- Dealing with any incidents quickly and effectively to ensure pupils are aware that bullying is never acceptable.

During PSHE sessions, staff will remind pupils that the issue of bullying is treated seriously and outline the following key points:

- Remember that your silence is the bully's greatest weapon.
- Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied and that it is wrong.
- Be proud of who you are. It is good to be individual.
- Try not to show that you are upset. It is hard, but a bully thrives on someone's fear.
- Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
- Be assertive – shout "No!" Walk confidently away. Go straight to a teacher or member of staff.
- Fighting back may make things worse.
- Generally it is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. You will get immediate support.
- Teachers will take you seriously and will deal with the bullies in a way which will end the bullying and will not make things worse for you.

3. Support from outside agencies

There are many agencies that are available to help both children and parents when there are incidents of bullying. Below are listed some helpful organisations.

- Kidscape www.kidscape.org.uk
- Youth Access www.youthaccess.org.uk
- Parent Plus www.familylives.org.uk
- Children's legal centre www.childrenslegalcentre.com
- Childline www.childline.org.uk