



1707

WARMINSTER SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Date of Review: 23 October 2023
Responsible Person(s): Deputy Head

Policy Statement

Warminster School defines bullying as follows:

Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online.

The Head, Staff and Governors of Warminster School are committed to promoting the well-being of all members of the community by ensuring that no form of bullying is tolerated. Therefore, the School has developed an anti-bullying strategy designed to create an environment of good behavior and respect and one which ensures that bullying is prevented as far as is reasonably possible.

Bullying can be direct or indirect. Direct bullying can take the form of physical violence and threats; the destruction of property; extortion; sexual harassment and violence. Indirect bullying can include ignoring and the withdrawal of friendship; excluding; malicious gossip and spreading rumours; abusive or oppressive graffiti, texting, sharing of nudes or semi-nudes and other forms of cyber bullying.

Education about the legal definitions of sexual harassment and sexual violence are required within the statutory RSE curriculum. Young people should be supported to learn to recognise how seemingly harmless attitudes, actions and beliefs serve as gateways to sexual harassment and potentially more extreme forms of sexual violence.

By sexual harassment we mean 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline and both inside and outside of School. (When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child-on-child sexual harassment). Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include:

- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
- sexual "jokes" or taunting;
- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes (schools and colleges should be considering when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence - it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and
- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment

and/or sexual violence.

- It may include:
 - consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and videos.
 - sharing of unwanted explicit content;
 - upskirting;
 - sexualised online bullying;
 - unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media;
 - sexual exploitation; coercion and threats.

It is important that the School considers sexual harassment in broad terms. Sexual harassment (as set out above) creates a culture that, if not challenged, can normalise inappropriate behaviours and provide an environment that may lead to sexual violence.

Warminster School takes all forms of bullying and harassment seriously and recognises that prejudice against particular groups warrants specific action which will be addressed in the process of investigation and post-incident management. These include incidents involving gender, race, culture, country of origin, sexism, disability, giftedness, homophobia, circumstance (e.g. young carers, adopted young people, looked after children), protected characteristics (as defined by The Equality Act 2010) or a minority status within any given context.

The School believes that proactive, prevention is key and as such promotes kindness, empathy, and integrity as cherished virtues in the Warminster community. The information below outlines how we 'live' the virtues that underpin how we think, interact and behave on a daily basis.

Kindness: Practice good manners always, show generosity, gratitude and compassion, notice and encourage others, and help to create a sense of belonging.

Empathy: Celebrate diversity and difference, be open-minded and listen, and provide others with support.

Integrity: Be honest, show humility, treat everyone with respect and set an example for others.

The School reinforces its mission, virtues, and ethos in all areas of School life (from the formal, taught curriculum to informal interactions between all members of the community); the following statements which are particularly pertinent to this policy:

- Through robust and caring practice, we will demonstrate a strong commitment to safeguarding, mental health and the wellbeing of our whole community.
- With a focus on core values that acknowledge and celebrate our Christian foundation, we will develop courageous and empathetic pupils who demonstrate integrity and kindness.

The School is clear that the management of bullying is a whole school responsibility and strategies for prevention and response involve staff working with parents/carers and external professionals/agencies.

The School is also clear that all strategies for prevention and response need to support both the targets of bullying and the perpetrators. This is predicated on the principle that bullying can be a symptom of complex issues for both parties and the School's responses need to reflect that.

Bullying can cause psychological damage to the individual or group and is taken very seriously at Warminster School. It is considered as a form of abuse and a referral may be made to social services if the incident is deemed serious enough. There are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour. The police would be consulted in these cases.

All of our pupils have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. Staff recognise that while both boys and girls can abuse their peers, it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators of such

abuse. Child on Child abuse is not tolerated, passed off as “banter” or seen as “part of growing up”. It is likely to include, but not limited to:

- bullying (including cyber bullying)
- gender based violence/sexual assaults
- sexting or
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

Consequently, child on child abuse is dealt with as a safeguarding concern and not managed through the systems set out in the School’s Behaviour, Rewards, Sanctions and Discipline Policy. All concerns of this nature will be reported to the Deputy Head/DSL who will seek guidance from the local children safeguarding board.

This document is available to all interested parties on our website and on request from the Deputy Head/DSL.

It should be read in conjunction with other relevant School policies, such as the Safeguarding and Child Protection and Behaviour, Rewards, Sanctions and Discipline.

Warminster School is fully committed to ensuring that the application of this policy is non-discriminatory, in line with UK Equality Act (2010).

Scope

This policy applies to incidents of bullying which take place on School premises; on the journey to and from School; on off-site activities organised by the School; and whilst using School equipment.

The School is not legally responsible for bullying which takes place elsewhere and the School owes no duty to supervise their pupils after they have left their charge, since it is not directly in control of them (Bradford Smart v Sussex County Council 2002).

The School will, however, respond positively to information received about bullying outside School as follows:

- Where a pupil is bullying other pupils outside School, including cyberbullying, the School will investigate. The perpetrator’s parents/carers will be notified and, where appropriate, the police will be notified.
- Where a pupil is a target of bullying outside School, then help, support and advice will be made available. The target’s parents/carers will be informed to enable them to take further action, as appropriate.
- More general concerns about pupil safety outside of School will involve the police and advice will be sought about the security of School premises.
- If information is received about a pupil being bullied by a sibling/family member outside School, this will be referred to the DSL who will follow the School’s safeguarding procedures. Children’s Services will be contacted about ongoing concerns.

Monitoring and evaluation

All incidents falling within the Warminster definition of bullying will be recorded in the School’s Bullying Log. Any incidents involving protected characteristics, as identified by The Equality Act 2010, will be identified.

The Head will receive a termly report from the Deputy Head indicating statistics and trends; a termly report is provided to Governing Body. Senior staff and Governors will evaluate the effectiveness of the policy in the light of this information and senior staff will address ongoing concerns.

PROCEDURE TO BE USED IN THE EVENT OF AN ALLEGED BULLYING INCIDENT

1. All cases of suspected/alleged bullying should be reported in the first instance to the Tutor or the relevant Head of House and Housemaster/Housemistress, in the case of boarders.
2. All suspected/alleged incidences of bullying should be recorded using myconcern. The names of both victim(s) and perpetrator(s), details of the incident and any actions taken must be included. Alternatively a bullying form, available in the Staff Room, should be completed and copied as detailed.
3. The Heads of Houses and Assistant Head Wellbeing & Safeguarding must be kept fully informed in order to enable any developing patterns of bullying to be identified.
4. The Deputy Head/Head of Prep will deal with all serious instances of bullying in consultation with the Head.
5. The usual range of sanctions outlined in the Behaviour, Rewards, Sanctions and Discipline policy can be used in dealing with bullying, although in most cases Restorative Practice (RP) approaches will be the most helpful and effective. Counselling/listening sessions for both victims and perpetrators may also be arranged.

In very serious cases exclusion either on a temporary or permanent basis may have to be considered.

Specific action to be taken in response to reports of sexual harassment and sexual violence

The School's Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence Policy and Procedure covers in detail the procedures to be followed in response to reports of between children.

Children making any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment including "upskirting" (The Voyeurism Offences Act 2019) will be taken seriously, kept safe and be well supported. Staff taking the report will inform the DSL or the Deputy DSL immediately. Following a report the DSL will make an immediate risk assessment on a case-by-case basis.

The Heads of House have much experience of working with pupils to try to eradicate any bullying. Tutors work with pupils both through the PSHE programme and also through regular one-to-one meetings with their pupils. These enable Tutors to establish rapport and an effective conduit for pupils to voice any concerns.

Awareness and Training

In order to support this policy it is essential that pupils are fully aware of what is not acceptable. Year assemblies are used to highlight bullying issues and there is an inclusive ethos expected from the pupils. The Head/Deputy Head/Head of Prep also regularly addresses the school to raise awareness of the issues surrounding bullying. Through Drama, current affairs, projects, literature and Religious Education discussions, staff are able to address bullying and prejudice in a variety of ways. Student questionnaires are used to assess the effectiveness of this policy.

In addition staff awareness training takes place to ensure that all are fully aware of this policy and how to take action to reduce the risk of bullying at times and in places where it is most likely to occur.

Pupils are aware of the support network available to either the victim or the bully so that they are suitably supported and given help and guidance.

PUPIL SUPPORT SYSTEMS

In addition to help provided by staff and friends the School Counsellor/Listening Services are available to offer confidential advice and support. The School/House/Boarding Prefects/Captains and Pupil Mentors are also available to support other pupils in the event of bullying.

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND FAMILIES

Parents

Parents and families have an important part to play in helping us deal with bullying.

First, discourage your son/daughter from using bullying behaviour at home or elsewhere. Show him/her how to resolve the difficult situations without using violence or aggression.

Second, ensure you and your son/daughter are conversant with the anti-bullying policy.

Third, watch out for signs that your son/daughter is being bullied, or is bullying others.

Parents and families are often the first to detect that a problem exists. Don't dismiss it. Contact the school immediately if you are worried.

If your child has been bullied:

- calmly talk with your son or daughter about his/her experience
- make a note of what he/she says - particularly who was said to be involved; how often the bullying has occurred; where it happened and what has happened
- reassure him/her that he/she has done the right thing to tell you about the bullying and discuss with him/her how he/she would like the problem to be tackled
- if he/she considers the school should be informed, contact your son's/daughter's Housemistress/Housemaster, Tutor or Head of House.

Talking with staff about bullying

- try to stay calm - bear in mind that the member of staff may have no idea that your son/ daughter is being bullied or may have heard conflicting accounts of an incident
- be as specific as possible about what your son/daughter says has happened - give dates, places and names of other children involved
- make a note of what action the school intends to take
- stay in touch with the school. Let them know if things improve as well as if problems continue

If you are not satisfied

Families who feel that their concerns are not being addressed appropriately by the school might like to consider making an appointment to discuss the matter with the Deputy Head/Head of Prep or the Head.

If your son/daughter is bullying other children

Many children may be involved in bullying other pupils at some time or other. Often parents are not aware that their child is involved in bullying.

Children sometimes bully others because:

- they don't know it is wrong
- they are copying older brothers or sisters or other people in the family whom they admire
- they haven't learnt other, better ways of mixing with their school friends
- their friends encourage them to bully
- they are going through a difficult time and are acting out aggressive feelings

To stop your son/daughter from bullying others

- talk with your son/daughter, explain that what he/she is doing is unacceptable and makes other pupils unhappy
- discourage other members of your family from bullying behaviour or from using aggression or force to get what they want
- show your son/daughter how she can join in with other pupils without bullying.
- make an appointment to see your son/daughter's Housemistress/Housemaster/Tutor/Head of House or explain the problems your child is experiencing; discuss how you and the School can stop him/her bullying others
- regularly check with your son/daughter how things are going at school

Cyberbullying Policy

Definition

Cyberbullying can be defined as the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else.

The advent of cyberbullying has added a worrying dimension to the problem of bullying – there's no safe haven for the person being bullied. Unlike other forms of bullying, cyberbullying can follow children and young people into their private spaces and outside school hours.

Cyberbullies can communicate their messages to a wide audience with remarkable speed, and can often remain unidentifiable and unseen.

- **text message bullying** involves sending unwelcome texts that are threatening or cause discomfort
- **picture/video-clip bullying via mobile phone cameras** is used to make the person being bullied feel threatened or embarrassed, with images usually sent to other people. 'Happy slapping' involves filming and sharing physical attacks
- **sexting is not allowed.** If this should happen students need to be aware that the police may be involved. All images would need to be removed from all devices at the earliest opportunity, whether it is the school devices or a personal device. The student involved may well have their phone confiscated and searched if appropriate. Parents would always be informed.
- **phone call bullying via mobile phone** uses silent calls or abusive messages. Sometimes the bullied person's phone is stolen and used to harass others, who then think the phone owner is responsible. As with all mobile phone bullying, the perpetrators often disguise their numbers, sometimes using someone else's phone to avoid being identified

- **email bullying** uses email to send bullying or threatening messages, often using a pseudonym for anonymity or using someone else's name to pin the blame on them
- **chat room bullying** involves sending menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in a web-based chat room
- **bullying through instant messaging such as Whatsapp and Snapchat** is an Internet-based form of bullying where children and young people are sent unpleasant messages as they conduct real-time conversations online

Bullying via websites includes the use of defamatory blogs (web logs), personal websites and online personal polling sites. There has also been a significant increase in social networking sites for young people, which can provide new opportunities for cyberbullying.

Cyberbullying facts and statistics

The 2022 Ofcom children and parents media use report shows that:

- Four in ten children aged 8-17 (39%) who use social media, or any messaging apps and sites, agreed that people are mean or unkind to each other on these platforms either most (23%) or all (16%) of the time.
- 84% of 8-17s say they have been bullied on social media, through text message and on other online platforms, compared to 61% face-to-face.
- Of those bullied via technology, the most common way was via text or messaging apps (56%), followed by 43% who said it had happened over social media.

Who is most vulnerable?

Because of the anonymity that new communications technologies offer, anyone with a mobile phone or Internet connection can be a target for cyberbullying. What's more, bullies can reach much larger numbers within a peer group than they can with conventional bullying. Vindictive comments posted on a website, for instance, can be seen by a large audience, as can video clips sent by mobile phone.

Most cyberbullying is done by students in the same class or year group. Although it leaves no visible scars, cyberbullying of all types can be extremely destructive.

Specific Action to be taken in the case of cyber-bullying:

If a bullying incident makes use of technology either inside or outside school time the following action should be taken:

1. Advise the recipient not to respond
2. Secure and preserve any evidence – for example by taking a screen shots
3. Investigate and make records of the incident as outlined above
4. Notify parents/carers of those involved if incident is discovered at school
5. Apply appropriate sanctions
6. Consider informing the police depending on the severity or repetitious nature of the offence.

If malicious or threatening comments are posted on an Internet site about a student or member of staff:

1. Secure and preserve any evidence – for example by taking a screen shot of the posting(s)
2. Investigate and make records of the incident as outlined above
3. Insist that the comments on the site be removed
4. Contact parents/carers

5. Apply appropriate sanctions
6. Consider informing the police depending on the severity or repetitious nature of the offence.

What can you do about it?

While other forms of bullying remain prevalent, cyberbullying is already a significant issue for many young people. School staff, parents and young people need to work together to prevent this and to tackle it whenever it occurs.

Schools have a duty to ensure that:

- bullying via mobile phone or the Internet is included in their mandatory anti-bullying policies, that these policies are regularly updated, and that teachers have sufficient knowledge to deal with cyberbullying in school
- the curriculum teaches pupils about the risks of new communications technologies, the consequences of their misuse, and how to use them safely
- all e communication using the school servers either on or off site are monitored
- clear policies are set about the use of mobile phones at school and at other times when young people are under the school's authority
- internet blocking technologies are continually updated and harmful sites blocked
- they work with pupils and parents to make sure new communications technologies are used safely, taking account of local and national guidance and good practice
- security systems are in place to prevent images and information about pupils and staff being accessed improperly from outside school
- they work with police and other partners on managing cyberbullying

Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying

The link below provides advice for parents and carers about cyberbullying. It provides advice and information about how they can protect their child from cyberbullying and how to tackle it if it happens:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444865/Advice_for_parents_on_cyberbullying.pdf

The link below provides access to information for parents from Internet Matters that outlines how bullying has changed as the digital world encourages more children to take to social media and anonymous messaging apps to share their experiences and manage relationships.

https://www.internetmatters.org/issues/cyberbullying/learn-about-it/?gad=1&gclid=EAlaIQobChMI9bn4zPiLgQMVloBQBh37MQ5eEAAYASAAEgLZCPD_BwE

As a Member of Staff

Make sure you're familiar with your role and responsibilities in:

- teaching children safe Internet etiquette
- applying School policy in monitoring electronic messages and images
- taking action if a pupil is being cyberbullied or is bullying someone else
- teaching pupils the value of e-communications and the risks and consequences of improper use, including the legal implications

Useful Advice for Staff/Tutors

If you discover a pupil is being bullied by phone or the Internet:

- remind them that bullying is never their fault. It can be stopped and it can usually be traced
- don't ignore the bullying. Encourage pupils to tell someone they trust, such as a teacher or parent, or call an advice line
- encourage pupils to try to keep calm. If they are frightened, encourage them to try to show it as little as possible. Don't get angry, it will only make the person bullying you more likely to continue

Please ensure that your concerns are passed immediately to the relevant Head of House or the Deputy Head.

There's plenty of online advice on how to react to cyberbullying. For example, the [National Bullying Helpline](#) has some useful tips:

Text/video messaging/phone calls/emails/web bullying/chat rooms and instant messaging – advice for pupils and information for Staff

You can easily stop receiving text messages for a while by turning off incoming messages for a couple of days. This might stop the person texting you by making them believe you've changed your phone number.

If the bullying persists, you can change your phone number. Ask your mobile service provider.

Don't reply to abusive or worrying text or video messages. Your mobile service provider will have a number for you to ring or text to report phone bullying. Visit their website for details.

Don't delete messages from cyberbullies. You don't have to read them, but you should keep them as evidence.

Text harassment is a crime. If the calls are simply annoying, tell a teacher, parent or carer. If they are threatening or malicious and they persist, report them to the police, taking with you all the messages you've received.

Phone calls

- If you get an abusive or silent phone call, don't hang up immediately. Instead, put the phone down and walk away for a few minutes. Then hang up or turn your phone off. Once they realise they can't get you rattled, callers usually get bored and stop bothering you
- Always tell someone else: a teacher, youth worker, mum or dad, or carer. Get them to support you and monitor what's going on
- Don't give out personal details such as your phone number to just anyone. And never leave your phone lying around. When you answer your phone, just say 'hello', not your name. If they ask you to confirm your phone number, ask what number they want and then tell them if they've got the right number or not
- You can use your voicemail to vet your calls. A lot of mobiles display the caller's number. See if you recognise it. If you don't, let it divert to voicemail instead of answering it. And don't leave your name on your voicemail greeting. You could get an adult to record your greeting. Their voice might stop the caller ringing again.
- Almost all calls nowadays can be traced
- If the problem continues, think about changing your phone number
- If you receive calls that scare or trouble you, make a note of the times and dates and report them to the police. If your mobile can record calls, take the recording too

Emails

- Never reply to unpleasant or unwanted emails ('flames') — the sender wants a response, so don't give them that satisfaction
- Keep the emails as evidence. And tell an adult about them
- Ask an adult to contact the sender's Internet Service Provider (ISP)
- Never reply to someone you don't know, even if there's an option to 'unsubscribe'. Replying simply confirms your email address as a real one

Web bullying

If the bullying is on a school website, tell a teacher or parent, just as you would if the bullying were face-to-face.

If you don't know the owner of the website, follow one of the online safety links below to find out how to get more information about the owner.

Chat rooms and instant messaging

- Never give out your name, address, phone number, school name or password online. It's a good idea to use a nickname. And don't give out photos of yourself
- Don't accept emails or open files from people you don't know
- Remember it might not just be people your own age in a chat room
- Stick to public areas in chat rooms and get out if you feel uncomfortable
- Tell your parents or carers if you feel uncomfortable or worried about anything that happens in a chat room
- Think carefully about what you write; don't leave yourself open to bullying

Four steps to stay out of harm's way

1. Respect other people - online and off. Don't spread rumours about people or share their secrets, including their phone numbers and passwords.
2. Respect yourself. Do not do or say things which you may later regret.
3. If someone insults you online or by phone, stay calm – and ignore them.
4. 'Do as you would be done by.' Think how you would feel if you were bullied. You're responsible for your own behaviour – make sure you don't distress other people or cause them to be bullied by someone else.

Useful Cyberbullying links

<https://www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre/>

<https://reportharmfulcontent.com/?lang=en-gb>

<https://saferinternet.org.uk/report-harmful-content>

<https://www.childnet.com/young-people/>