



WIDNES
ACADEMY

ASPIRING AND ACHIEVING

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY 2025-2026

Ratified by Governors: Summer 2025

Next Review Date: Summer 2026

Link: Mrs L.Kirchin

A GREAT
PLACE
**TO BE A
PART OF**

MEMBER OF THE WADE DEACON TRUST

STATEMENT OF INTENT

Widnes Academy have a responsibility to ensure that bullying behaviours are not tolerated. We will never knowingly tolerate bullying behaviour and reject bullying behaviour towards any member of our school community. A child who is happy and secure is more likely to make progress personally, socially and academically than a child that is anxious. The ethos of our school fosters high expectations of outstanding behaviour and we will consistently challenge any behaviour that falls below this.

Bullying is wrong and damages individual children. Persistent bullying can result in depression, low self-esteem, shyness, poor academic achievement, and isolation, threatened or attempted suicide. We therefore do all we can to prevent it, by developing a trust 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, and measures are in place to reduce the likelihood of bullying. This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur. We aim to make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying, and we make clear each person's responsibilities with regard to the eradication of bullying in our trust.

At Widnes Academy there is a zero tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment and it is never acceptable and will not be tolerated. We will not tolerate instances of peer on peer abuse and will not pass it off as “banter”, or “part of growing up”. We will recognise that “child on child abuse” can occur between and across different age ranges. We will follow both national and local guidance and policies to support any child subject to peer on peer abuse. We will follow the guidance on managing reports of peer on peer sexual violence and sexual harassment in schools in line with Part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 and Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children in schools 2023. Children can abuse other children. Child on Child abuse is behaviour by an individual or group, intending to physically, sexually or emotionally hurt others. This abuse can be motivated by perceived differences e.g. on grounds of race, religion, gender, culture, sexual identity, disability, special educational needs or other differences and can result in significant, long lasting and traumatic isolation, intimidation or violence to the victim.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying is behaviour which is done on purpose and happens over and over. It can make people feel hurt and upset. It can be verbal, social, physical, emotional or aggressive behaviour which is caused repeatedly by a person or a group of people.

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behaviour among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both young people who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems.

In order to be considered bullying, the behaviour must be aggressive and include:

- An Imbalance of Power: Young people who bully use their power-such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity-to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- Repetition: Bullying behaviours happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumours, attacking someone physically or verbally or for a particular reason e.g. size, hair colour, gender, sexual orientation, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

DfE “Preventing and Tackling Bullying – Advice for School Leaders, Staff and Governing Bodies” defines bullying as “behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally”.

Pupil Rights	Pupil Responsibilities
<p>Be valued as members of the school community Get help when they seek it, whether with their work or with bullying or other personal worries, and to have a sympathetic audience for their ideas and concerns Make mistakes, and learn from them; Be treated fairly, consistently and with respect Be consulted about matters that affect them, and have their views listened to and, as far as is reasonable, acted upon Be taught in a pleasant, well-managed and safe environment Work and play within clearly defined and fairly administered codes of conduct Experience a broad, balanced and suitably differentiated curriculum, and to have any special learning needs identified and met; Develop and extend their interests, talents and abilities</p>	<p>Come to school on time, with homework done, and suitably equipped for the lessons in the day ahead Respect the views, rights and property of others, and behave safely in and out of class Co-operate in class with the teacher and with their peers Work as hard as they can in class Conform to the conventions of good behaviour and abide by school rules Seek help if they do not understand or are in difficulties Accept ownership for their own behaviour and learning, and to develop the skill of working independently</p>

Staff Rights	Staff Responsibilities
<p>Work in an environment where common courtesies and social conventions are respected Express their views and to contribute to policies which they are required to reflect in their work CPD Support and advice from senior colleagues and external bodies Adequate and appropriate accommodation and resources To be treated with care and dignity from all members of our school community</p>	<p>Behave in a professional manner at all times Ensure that lessons are well prepared, making use of available resources, and that homework is appropriately set and constructively marked Show interest and enthusiasm in the work in hand and in their pupils' learning Listen to the pupils, value their contributions and respect their views Be sympathetic, approachable and alert to pupils in difficulty or falling behind Identify and seek to meet pupils' special educational needs through the SEN Code of Practice</p>

Staff Responsibilities
<p>Share with the parents any concerns they have about their child's progress or development</p> <p>Expect high standards and acknowledge effort and achievement; pursue opportunities for personal and professional development</p> <p>Report suspected cases of bullying to Designated Teacher for Child Protection or in their absence to Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection. The Principal must also be informed</p> <p>Follow up any complaint by a parent about bullying, and report back within on the action which has been taken</p>

Parents/Carers Rights	Parents/Carers Responsibilities
<p>A safe, well-managed and stimulating environment for their child's education</p> <p>Reasonable access to the school, and to have their enquiries and concerns dealt with sympathetically and efficiently</p> <p>Be informed promptly if their child is ill or has an accident, or if the school has concerns about their child</p> <p>Be well informed about their child's progress and prospects</p> <p>Widnes Academy uses a four-stage approach for dealing with incidents of bullying.</p> <p>All staff should adopt a positive mind set when responding to bullying concerns and have options for how to respond to incidents of bullying in a planned, deliberate and positive way.</p> <p>Be well informed about school rules and procedures</p> <p>A broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum for their child</p> <p>Be involved in key decisions about their child's education</p> <p>A suitably resourced school with adequate and well-maintained accommodation</p>	<p>Ensure that their child attends school regularly and arrives in good time, with homework done, and suitably equipped for the lessons in the day ahead</p> <p>Be aware of school rules and procedures, and encourage their child to abide by them</p> <p>Show interest in their child's classwork and homework, where possible, provide suitable facilities for studying at home</p> <p>Act as positive role models for their child in their relationship with the school</p> <p>Attend planned meetings with teachers and support school functions; provide the school with all the necessary background information about their child, including telling the school promptly about any concerns they have about school, or any significant change in their child's medical needs or home circumstances</p>

TYPES OF BULLYING

There are many forms and types of bullying that may occur between peers and this list is not exhaustive.

Emotional/Mental	Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures). Including exclusion of anyone new to a school or group or exclusion of a child because of the action/behaviour of their parent/carer. Includes name calling, insults, jokes, threats and spreading rumours. Includes isolation, refusal to work with talk/ talk to/ play with/ help others.
-------------------------	--

Physical	<p>This may include hitting, kicking, nipping/pinching, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm to another person. There may be many reasons why a child harms another and it is important to understand why a young person has engaged in such behaviour, including accidentally before considering the action or punishment to be undertaken.</p>
Online	<p>Online Bullying is the use of technology (social networking, messaging, text messages, email, chat rooms etc.) to harass threaten or intimidate someone for the same reasons as stated above. Online bullying can take many forms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abusive or threatening texts, emails or messages • Posting abusive comments on social media sites • Sharing humiliating videos or photos of someone else • Stealing someone's online identity • Spreading rumours online • Trolling – sending someone menacing or upsetting messages through social networks, chatrooms or games • Developing hate sites about another person • Prank calls or messages • Group bullying or exclusion online • Anonymous messaging • Encouraging a young person to self-harm • Pressuring children to send sexual messages or engaging in sexual conversations
Prejudicial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullying related to race, religion, faith and belief and for those without faith • Bullying related to ethnicity, nationality or culture • Bullying related to Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND) • Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic/biphobic bullying) • Gender based bullying, including transphobic bullying • Bullying against teenage parents (pregnancy and maternity under the Equality Act)
Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 • 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.

Under the Equality Act 2010, schools are responsible for eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation and must advance the equality of opportunity of children and adults who have protected characteristics. This includes bullying behaviour on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity.

This definition has been agreed by staff and pupils within the Trust. Bullying between any members of our trust community will not be tolerated; this includes the bullying of adults and children.

SIGNS OF BULLYING

A child may indicate by sign 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:

- Is reluctant to walk to or from school
- Begs to be driven to or from school
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic);
- Begins to truant;
- Has possessions which are damaged or go missing;
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged/ mislaid;
- Comes home hungry (money/ lunch has been stolen or spoilt);
- Asks for money or starts stealing money;
- Has dinner or other monies continually “lost”;
- Tries to avoid going out to play at break or lunchtimes (remains close to an adult supervisor); • Asks to move seats in class to avoid contact with certain other pupils;
- Stops eating;
- Becomes anxious, withdrawn or lacking in confidence;
- Starts stammering;
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away;
- Cries themselves to sleep or has nightmares;
- Feels ill in the morning;
- Begins to make less effort with school work than previously;
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises;
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable;
- Becomes short-tempered;
- Is exhibiting bullying behaviour towards or children or siblings;
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone;
- Lack of eye contact;
- Change in attitude to people at home;
- If frightened to say what’s wrong; and
- Give improbable excuses for any of the above.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other social, emotional and/or mental health problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

PREVENTING BULLYING?

In our daily contact with pupils all staff work at developing skills in pupils focusing particularly on self-confidence, self-esteem and resilience.

Strategies we may use are:

- Empower the Child with positive reinforcement
- Promoting of Safeguarding messages throughout the school; development of the School Leadership Team,
- Assemblies to celebrate achievements and events
- PSHE lessons, Mental Health Awareness Week, Healthy Eating Week, Safer Internet Day
- Anti-Bullying Ambassadors
- Continuous professional development of all stakeholders

SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

The playground during playtimes and lunchtimes, is the main opportunity for social interaction within the school; this can be an environment where bullying can occur. The school provides an environment for break times where children can feel secure and enjoy activities.

Energetic activities or sports including:

- Playground markings encourage active games
- Play equipment and children are taught how to play together
- **Quiet activities including:**
- Zoned Areas-quiet areas in playgrounds include seating and the development.
- Lunchtime clubs run by the Learning Mentor to encourage positive social interactions.

Anti-Bullying Education is taken seriously. Children need to know that bullying is wrong, what it is and how to deal with it when they see it. Anti-bullying week is held in November, alternating between a focus on respecting diversity and stopping bullying when it happens. The week can include visits from theatre groups, visitors from the community, assemblies and taught lessons in class. Taught lessons include drama work, circle time, reading stories and nonfiction texts about bullying, discrimination and diversity, discussion, artwork, writing and surveying and data analysis. Weekly PHSE lessons teach the social and emotional aspects of learning. The half termly themes are designed to teach resilience, self-awareness and confidence. Children are taught through a range of activities to resolve conflict and recognise their own strengths and set personal targets. E-safety is taught in discrete lessons and as part of ICT lessons in line with the school e-safety policy. At Widnes Academy, in the first week of the new school term we complete antibullying charters. During this time each class also chooses an anti-bullying ambassador for their class. Anti-bullying ambassadors act as another voice of the child. Children are encouraged to approach them around school if they have any worries or concerns. Anti-bullying ambassadors are also encouraged to support pupils on the playground with their social interactions. When there has been a bullying incident, additional focused activities may be carried out to address underlying issues (e.g. awareness raising activities, targeted interventions, anti-bullying ambassadors). All staff receive training to increase awareness of bullying and equality and staff and parents updated with training/newsletters.

SIGNS AND INDICATORS OF BULLYING

It can be hard for adults, including parents, to know whether or not a child is being bullied. A child might not tell anyone because they're scared the bullying will get worse. They might think that they deserve to be bullied, or that it's their fault or that they do not want repercussions from their concerns.

You can't always see the signs of bullying. And no one sign indicates for certain that a child's being bullied. But we should look out for:

- belongings getting "lost" or damaged

- physical injuries such as unexplained bruises
- being afraid to go to school, being mysteriously 'ill' each morning, or skipping school
- not doing as well at school
- asking for, or stealing, money (to give to a bully)
- being nervous, losing confidence, or becoming distressed and withdrawn
- problems with eating or sleeping
- bullying others

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH INCIDENTS OF BULLYING

Children can report bullying to any member of staff. Parents are welcomed into their school to speak with teachers about any concerns, they are asked to arrange an appointment after school so that the teacher can give them focused attention. Bullying can be reported by the child who is the target of the bullying or by anyone who observes it. All allegations of bullying will be taken seriously and investigated. When bullying is reported staff will act promptly to deal with the issues, a member of the senior leadership team will be notified and may investigate the allegations.

All bullying incidents are recorded on CPOMs; bullying reports are filed by the type of incident, racist, Homophobic/Biphobic/Transphobic, physical, cyber-bullying and other. Bullying incident records should include details of the nature of incident (outline of what happened, where, when, type); the names of those involved (those bullying, those being bullied and bystanders); an assessment of seriousness (based severity of impact, frequency, duration, intent, imbalance of power, empathy / remorse); action taken; and details of monitoring including feedback from those involved including parents.

In addressing bullying, schools must consider whether the behaviour may be a child protection issue or a criminal law offence. Under the Children Act 1989 definition of a “reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm”, some types of harassment, threatening behaviour or communications may be a criminal offence and should be reported to the Police. All incidents of bullying will be reviewed by the Principal and Inclusion Team who will work with school staff to agree the appropriate response.

Widnes Academy uses a four-stage approach for dealing with incidents of bullying. However, dependent upon the type or severity of the bullying the stages of intervention can or will be progressed in collaboration with the Senior Management and Pastoral Team.

All staff should adopt a positive mind set when responding to bullying concerns and have options for how to respond to incidents of bullying in a planned, deliberate and positive way.

STAGE 1 INTERVENTIONS & SUPPORT

A Bullying Concern reported on CPOMs. At stage 1 staff should;

- Explain the inappropriateness of the behaviour in line with the school's values
- Identify and implement possible consequences if the bullying behaviour continues
- Point out the level of distress experienced by the bullied pupil
- Talk with the pupil being bullied to explore whether he/she has in any way provoked the bullying behaviour
- Help the bullied pupil to identify ways in which he/she may be strengthened and supported, e.g. peer support
- Encourage reparation to be made, if appropriate
- Monitor the situation carefully and record all incidents on CPOMs
- Be prepared to intervene with a higher response level if the situation persists or deteriorates

STAGE 2 INTERVENTIONS & SUPPORT

While interventions at Level 2 involve continuing with the above, there is shift from individual support to group interventions. To be effective small group work needs:

- The consent and involvement of the pupil being bullied
- To be planned and timetabled, session length dependent on age and ability
- Carefully selected group membership
- To take place in a suitable and comfortable environment
- To be uninterrupted
- To be facilitated in a positive manner, by a familiar adult whose roles may alternate allowing one to participate and one to observe
- Structured and focused activities using active learning approaches to stimulate discussion and debate amongst members and develop group identity
- Decision and outcomes to be agreed and recorded, e.g. on a flipchart
- To facilitate the development of empathy amongst pupils
- A solution focused approach to the situation
- To provide opportunities for pupils to take responsibility
- Regular meetings of the group
- Regular meetings with the bullied pupil to assess on-going effectiveness of agreed actions
- To ensure regular feedback is given on agreed actions

STAGE 3 INTERVENTIONS & SUPPORT

Interventions at Level 3 will involve the Learning Mentor, SENCO, and other senior leaders, in collaboration with pupil(s) and parent(s) to determine the way forward in affecting change.

An Individual Risk Assessment procedure may be used which will determine a plan of intervention and risk management that will be communicated to all. External advice may be sought.

Bullying at this level often involves complex group dynamics, where a number of roles are evident, such as those displaying bullying behaviour, bystanders and pupils experiencing bullying. Consequently interventions will require one-to-one meetings, small group work and whole class involvement. Interventions:

- Allocated time with Learning Mentor
- Time to Talk/Restorative Practise
- Lego Therapy
- Emotional First Aid
- Nurture/Wellbeing Group

STAGE 4 INTERVENTIONS & SUPPORT

Bullying behaviours assessed as Level 4 are severe and involve a significant threat to the safety and welfare of the pupils involved.

Such severe bullying concerns may be new or may have proved resistant to earlier school interventions and have now been assessed as high risk. Incidents at this level must be assessed in relation to the risk posed to any/all of the pupils involved. As such, the school's Child Protection policy and safeguarding procedures will need to be invoked. At this stage we will seek support through Halton Local Authority and The Wade Deacon Trust.

In addition to safeguarding procedures and practices including referral to external support services, this may include referral to the educational psychologist. The school's interventions at Level 4 should continue to implement interventions detailed at Level 3 as appropriate.

RESTORATIVE MEASURES

To ensure that pupils who are exhibiting bullying behaviours are dealt with appropriately it is necessary to work with these pupils to try to help them change their unacceptable behaviour. An appropriate adult should speak calmly with the child and use self-reflective restorative questions such as those listed below:

Adult Questions
1. Tell me what happened?
2. What were you thinking that led you to behave that way?
3. Who has been affected by what you have done?
4. Can you tell me how that person has been affected by your behaviour?
5. What do you think you need to do to make things right?

PROCEDURES

Support (and sanctions) should be considered on a case-by-case basis. Doing this is not mutually exclusive actions. They can, and should, occur at the same time if necessary.

Consideration should be given to:

- the age and the developmental stage of the alleged perpetrator(s),
- the nature of the allegations and frequency of allegations.

The school's response to any suspected or reported bullying will include:

Building a Picture

We will:

- Establish the location, time and date of the incident;
- Establish the type of bullying and the sequence of events: and

- Identify those involved.

Dealing with the Bully

We will:

- React promptly and fairly;
- Take action to modify the bully's behaviour;
- Take action that clearly demonstrates bullying is unacceptable
- Record all incidents of bullying and the measures taken; and
- Monitor the progress made by the bully

Applying Sanctions

- Graded sanctions will be applied progressively according to the seriousness and persistence of the bullying
- Discussion with the pupils involved - an apology maybe suffices
- Discussion with the bully's parents/carers
- Withdrawal of privileges such as playtime, jobs, after-school activities; etc
- Exclusion from school at lunchtime
- Temporary suspension; and
- Exclusion

Supporting the Victim

Victims must never suffer in silence. They are encouraged to talk to someone they can trust and write down what actually happened.

We will:

- Investigate any incident;
- Take the problem seriously;
- Interview the bully and the victim separately;
- Obtain an apology from the bully;
- Decide on appropriate action;
- Keep a record of the incident, the action taken and interviews;
- Contact the bully's parents in all but superficial incidents;
- Keep staff aware of proceedings;
- Monitor the effectiveness of action taken; and
- Hold follow-up meeting with the victim's family to discuss progress.

LINKED POLICIES

Behaviour Policy

Child Protection Policy

Attendance Policy

Online Safety policy

Equal Opportunities Policy

SEND Policy

SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS AND GUIDANCE

BullyBusters <https://www.bullybusters.org.uk/>

NSPCC - Bullying and Cyberbullying <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/bullyingand-cyberbullying/>

Childline – Bullying and advice on coping and making it stop <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abusesafety/types-bullying/>

NSPCC Briefing for schools, academies and colleges in England for tackling bullying www.nspcc.org.uk
<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/no-place-for-bullying> <http://www.stopbullying.gov/> <http://www.beatbullying.org/> this site includes free and confidential support and advice for individuals, information for teachers, school staff, parents and young people.

