

# Westleigh Methodist Primary School Anti-Bullying Policy



Written by:	S. Williams Pastoral Manager
Date agreed:	26 <sup>th</sup> April 2021
Next Review Date:	Spring 2024
Chairs Signature	

## Mission Statement



Westleigh Methodist Primary School aspires to be a Christian family where all can develop to their full potential. We aim to promote the value of self, others and the environment.



**Our Vision:** The vision of Westleigh Methodist Primary School is to maintain a small, Christian school where the SLT and staff are knowledgeable about each child's abilities and challenges so that we can offer the most effective support for each individual child to meet those challenges, grow completely as a "well rounded" person and increase his/her skills to perform successfully in all academic areas

**Our Mission:** Underpinning our Mission Statement, we seek to sustain a Christian, educational community where:

- ✓ An emphasis on academic excellence is complemented by our concern for each learner's personal growth and spiritual, intellectual, aesthetic, and psychological development.

The curriculum is developmentally responsive, actively engaging children in learning skills in a context; integrative – directing children to connect learning to daily lives; and exploratory – enabling children to discover their abilities, interests, learning styles, and ways that they can make contributions to society.

## Safeguarding Statement

At the Westleigh Methodist Primary School we recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. We work to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice. The procedures contained in the Safeguarding Policy apply to all staff, volunteers and governors

### Contents:

#### Rationale

1. **[Updated]** [Legal framework](#)
2. [Definitions](#)
3. [Types of bullying](#)
4. [Roles and responsibilities](#)
5. [Statutory implications](#)
6. [Prevention](#)
7. [Signs of bullying](#)
8. [Staff principles](#)
9. **[Updated]** [Preventing peer-on-peer abuse](#)
10. [Cyberbullying](#)
11. [Procedures](#)
12. **[Updated]** [Sanctions](#)
13. [Support](#)
14. [Follow-up support](#)
15. [Bullying outside of school](#)
16. [Monitoring and review](#)

#### Appendices

## **Rationale**



**Our 4 R's underpin all of our approaches in school to uphold the Christian ethos of the school.**

At Westleigh Methodist we believe that everyone within our school has the right to feel welcome, secure and happy and **respected** so that they may form lasting positive **relationships** with others and build emotional **resilience** within a safe environment. Only if this is the case will all members of the school community be able to achieve to their maximum potential. Bullying of any sort prevents this happening and prevents equality of opportunity. It is everyone's **responsibility** to prevent this happening and this policy contains guidelines to support the school's aim to be "A happy, caring school family" where all are valued.

Although bullying in school is rare we believe where it does exist the victims must feel confident to activate the anti-bullying systems within the school to end the bullying. It is the trust's aim to challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour, increase understanding for bullied pupils and help build the Christian ethos of the trust.

At Westleigh Methodist we value the importance of its pastoral role in the welfare of the children and the schools community. The ethos of the school ensures that children learn and develop in all aspects and that children and their families are given the appropriate guidance and support. The Pastoral Mangers is a "Stonewall Champion" and provides training for all staff on best practice. The school will seek to support LGB & T pupils and those from LGB & T families. Across the Trust, schools will promote equality and an understanding and ensure all homophobic, biphobia and transphobic (HBT) incidents will be recorded and followed up effectively.

At Westleigh Methodist we value the importance of Mental Health. This is promoted by regular training, school counsellor and access to support a positive mental health.

This policy outlines how we make this possible.

# 1[Updated] Legal framework

[Updated] This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- Communications Act 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Education Act 2011
- DfE (2017) 'Preventing and tackling bullying'
- DfE (2018) 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'
- [Updated] DfE (2021) 'Keeping children safe in education (2020)'
- DfE (2020) 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people'

[Updated] This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behavioural Policy
- Cyberbullying Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy
- [Primary schools only] Primary Relationships and Health Education Policy
- [New] Exclusion Policy

## 2 Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, "bullying" is defined as persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another person or group. Bullying is generally characterised by:

- **Repetition:** Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over a period of time.
- **Intent:** The perpetrator(s) means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.
- **Targeting:** Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.

- **Power imbalance:** Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.

Vulnerable pupils are more likely to be the targets of bullying due to the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves. Vulnerable pupils may include, but are not limited to:

- Pupils with SEND.
- Pupils who are adopted.
- Pupils suffering from a health problem.
- Pupils with caring responsibilities.

Pupils with certain characteristics are also more likely to be targets of bullying, including, but not limited to:

- Pupils who are LGBTQ+, or perceived to be LGBTQ+.
- Pupils from BAME backgrounds.
- Pupils from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds.

### 3 Types of Bullying

Many kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying, and bullying can be related to almost anything.

Teasing another pupil because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, home life, culture, disability, or SEND are some of the types of bullying that can occur.

Bullying is acted out through the following mediums:

- Verbally
- Physically
- Emotionally
- Online (cyberbullying)

**Racist bullying:** Bullying another person based on their ethnic background, religion or skin colour. Racist bullying is a criminal offence under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Public Order Act 1986.

**Homophobic/biphobic bullying:** Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

**Transphobic bullying:** Bullying based on another person's gender identity or gender presentation, or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.

**Sexist bullying:** Bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.

**Prejudicial bullying:** Bullying based on prejudices directed towards specific characteristics, e.g. SEND or mental health issues.

**Relational bullying:** Bullying that primarily constitutes of excluding, isolating and ostracising someone – usually through verbal and emotional bullying.

**Socioeconomic bullying:** Bullying based on prejudices against the perceived social status of the victim, including, but not limited to, their economic status, their parents' occupations, their health or nutrition level, or the perceived "quality" of their clothing or belongings.

#### **4 Roles and responsibilities**

The governing board is responsible for:

- Evaluating and reviewing this policy to ensure that it is not discriminatory.
- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring that the school adopts a tolerant and open-minded policy towards difference.
- Ensuring the school is inclusive.
- Analysing any bullying data to establish patterns and reviewing this policy in light of these.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that this policy is updated regularly, accounting for new legislation and government guidance, and using staff experience of dealing with bullying incidents in previous years to improve procedures.
- Keeping a [Bullying Report Form \(Appendices a\)](#) of all reported incidents, including which type of bullying has occurred, to allow for proper analysis of the data collected.
- Analysing the data in the bullying record at termly intervals to identify trends, so that appropriate measures to tackle them can be implemented.
- Arranging appropriate training for staff members.

Pastoral Staff are responsible for:

- Corresponding and meeting with parents where necessary.
- Providing a point of contact for pupils and parents when more serious bullying incidents occur.
- Supporting pupils using a restorative approach.
- Providing follow-up support after bullying incidents.
- Offering emotional support to victims of bullying.

- Monitoring the children involved.

Teachers are responsible for:

- Being alert to social dynamics in their class.
- Being available for pupils who wish to report bullying.
- Being alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups, and informing relevant staff of such observations.
- Refraining from stereotyping when dealing with bullying.
- Understanding the composition of pupil groups, showing sensitivity to those who have been the victims of bullying.
- Reporting any instances of bullying once they have been approached by a pupil for support.
- Use PSHE and circle time to develop positive relationships.

Parents are responsible for:

- Informing relevant staff members if they have any concerns that their child is the victim of bullying or involving in bullying in anyway.
- Being watchful of their child's behaviour, attitude and characteristics and informing the staff of any changes.
- Supporting strategies proposed by relevant staff to help deal with the situation.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Informing a member of staff if they witness bullying or are a victim of bullying.
- Not making counter-threats if they are victims of bullying.
- Walking away from dangerous situations and avoiding involving other pupils in incidents.
- Keeping evidence of cyberbullying and informing a member of staff should they fall victim to cyberbullying.
- Offering emotional support to victims of bullying.

## **5 Statutory implications**

At Westleigh Methodist we understand that, under the Equality Act 2010, we have a responsibility to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.



The school understands that, under the Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998, it could have charges brought against it if it allows the rights of pupils to be breached by failing to take bullying seriously. The headteacher will ensure that this policy complies with the HRA; the headteacher understands that they cannot do this without fully involving all staff.

Although bullying itself is not a criminal offence, some types of harassment, threatening behaviour and/or communications may be considered criminal offences:

- Under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to electronically communicate with another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, or in a way which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or contains information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.
- Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by means of a public electronic communications network, a message, or other matter, that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information through any media, including internet sites.
- Other forms of bullying which are illegal and should be reported to the police include violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation, and hate crimes.

## 6 Prevention

The school will clearly communicate a whole-school commitment to addressing bullying in the form of PSHE lessons, Internet safety sessions and workshops. These will be regularly promoted across the whole school.

All reported or investigated instances of bullying will be investigated by a member of staff.

**[Primary schools]** All types of bullying will be discussed as part of the relationships and health education curriculum, in line with the Primary Relationships and Health Education Policy.

Staff will encourage pupil cooperation and the development of interpersonal skills using group and pair work. Diversity, difference and **respect** for others will be promoted and celebrated through various lessons.

Seating plans will be organised and altered in a way that prevents instances of bullying. Potential victims of bullying will be placed in working groups with other pupils who do not abuse or take advantage of others.

Opportunities to extend friendship groups and interactive skills will be provided through participation in special events, e.g. drama productions, sporting activities and cultural groups.

All members of the school will be made aware of this policy and their responsibilities in relation to it. All staff members will be updated on strategies with identifying and dealing with the different types of bullying and if necessary receive any relevant training.

A safe place, supervised by a relevant member of staff, will be available for pupils to go to during break times if they feel threatened or anxious about any incidents of bullying. The adult supervising the area will speak to pupils to find out the cause of any problems and, ultimately, stop any form of bullying taking place.

Pupils deemed vulnerable, as defined in section two, will meet with pastoral staff on a regular basis, where appropriate, to ensure any problems can be actioned quickly. Teachers will also offer an 'open door' policy allowing pupils to discuss any bullying, whether they are victims or have witnessed an incident.

Before a vulnerable pupil joins the school, pastoral staff and the class teacher will develop a strategy to prevent bullying from happening – this will include giving the pupil a buddy to help integrate them into the school.

The school will be alert to, and address, any mental health and wellbeing issues amongst pupils, as these can be a cause of bullying behaviour.

The school will be alert to instances of the sharing of indecent imagery of pupils amongst the school cohort, and will evaluate whether the instance is part of normal sexual development or whether it presents a safeguarding concern; the latter instances will be managed in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

The school will ensure potential perpetrators are given support as required, so their educational, emotional and social development isn't negatively influenced by outside factors, e.g. mental health issues.

## **7 Signs of Bullying**

Staff will be alert to the following signs that may indicate a pupil is a victim of bullying:

- Being frightened to travel to or from school
- Unwillingness to attend school
- Repeated or persistent absence from school
- Becoming anxious or lacking confidence
- Saying that they feel ill repeatedly
- Decreased involvement in school work
- Leaving school with torn clothes or damaged possessions
- Missing possessions
- Missing dinner money
- Asking for extra money or stealing
- Cuts or bruises

- Lack of appetite
- Unwillingness to use the internet or mobile devices
- Becoming agitated when receiving calls or text messages
- Lack of eye contact
- Becoming short tempered
- Change in behaviour and attitude at home

Although the signs outlined above may not be due to bullying, they may be due to deeper social, emotional or mental health issues, so are still worth investigating. Pupils who display a significant number of these signs will be approached by a member of staff to determine the underlying issues causing this behaviour.

Staff will be aware of the potential factors that may indicate a pupil is likely to exhibit bullying behaviours, including, but not limited to, the following:

- They have experienced mental health problems, which have led to them becoming more easily aggravated
- They have been the victim of abuse
- Their academic performance has started to fall and they are showing signs of stress

If staff become aware of any factors that could lead to bullying behaviours, they will notify the pupil's form tutor, who will investigate the matter and monitor the situation.

## **8 Staff Principles**

The school will ensure that prevention is a prominent aspect of its anti-bullying vision.

Staff will treat reports of bullying seriously and they will not ignore signs of suspected bullying. Staff will act immediately when they become aware of a bullying incident. Unpleasantness from one pupil towards another will always be challenged and will never be ignored.

Staff will always respect pupils' privacy, and information about specific instances of bullying are not discussed with others, unless the pupil has given consent, or there is a safeguarding concern. If a member of staff believes a pupil is in danger, e.g. of being hurt, they will inform the DSL immediately.

Follow-up support will be given to both the victim and perpetrator in the months following an incident to ensure all bullying has stopped.

## **9 [Updated] Preventing Peer on Peer Abuse**

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of peer-on-peer abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence as outlined in our child protection and safeguarding policies.

To prevent peer-on-peer abuse and address the wider societal factors that can influence behaviour, the school will educate pupils about abuse, its forms, and the importance of

discussing any concerns and respecting others through the curriculum, assemblies and PSHE lessons. The school will also ensure that pupils are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum in PSHE lessons, relationships education and group sessions. Such content will be specific to age and stage of development, and tackle issues such as the following:

- Healthy **relationships**
- **Respectful** behaviour
- Gender roles, stereotyping and equality
- Body confidence and self-esteem
- Prejudiced behaviour

All staff will be made aware of the heightened vulnerability of pupils with SEND, who are more likely to be abused than their peers. Staff will not assume that possible indicators of abuse relate to the pupil's SEND and will always explore indicators further.

Staff will be aware that LGBTQ+ pupils are more likely to be targeted by their peers. In some cases, pupils who are perceived to be LGBTQ+, whether they are or not, can be just as vulnerable to abuse as LGBTQ+ pupils.

Pupils will be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled – this includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers.

If a pupil has been harmed, is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children's social care services (CSCS).

## **Managing disclosures**

Victims will always be taken seriously, reassured, supported and kept safe. Victims will never be made to feel like they are causing a problem or made to feel ashamed.

If a friend of a victim makes a report or a member of staff overhears a conversation, staff will act – they will never assume that someone else will deal with it. The basic principles remain the same as when a victim reports an incident; however, staff will consider why the victim has not chosen to make a report themselves and the discussion will be handled sensitively and with the help of CSCS where necessary.

Staff will report all allegations of abuse against pupils to the DSL. If staff are in any doubt over how to handle an incident or report, they will speak to the DSL.

If a report involves a pupil with SEND, the DSL will record the incident in writing and, working with the SENCO, decide what course of action is necessary, with the best interests of the pupil in mind at all times.

## **Confidentiality**

The school will only engage with staff and agencies required to support the victim and/or be involved in any investigation. If a victim asks the school not to tell anyone about the disclosure, the school will not make this promise. Even without the victim's consent, the information may still be lawfully shared if it is in the public interest and protects children from harm. The school's Pupil Confidentiality Policy will be adhered to at all times.

The DSL will consider the following when making confidentiality decisions:

- Parents will be informed unless it will place the victim at greater risk
- If a pupil is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger or has been harmed, a referral will be made to CSCS

More information regarding the school's stance on preventing peer-on-peer abuse is available in our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

## **10 Cyberbullying**

The school views cyberbullying with the same severity as any other form of bullying and will follow the sanctions set out in section 12 this policy if they become aware of any incidents.

The school will support pupils who have been victims of cyberbullying by holding formal and informal discussions with the pupil about their feelings and whether the bullying has stopped, in accordance with section 13 and section 14 of this policy.

## **11 Procedures**

Minor incidents will be reported to the victim's class teacher, who will investigate the incident, set appropriate sanctions for the perpetrator and inform the senior leadership team in writing of the incident and outcome via the use of CPOMS.

When investigating a bullying incident, the following procedures will be adopted:

- The victim, alleged perpetrator and witnesses are all interviewed separately
- Members of staff ensure that there is no possibility of contact between the pupils being interviewed, including electronic communication
- If a pupil is injured, members of staff take the pupil immediately to the school nurse for a medical opinion on the extent of their injuries
- A room is used that allows for privacy during interviews
- A witness is used for serious incidents
- If appropriate, the alleged perpetrator, the victim and witnesses are asked to write down details of the incident; this may need prompting with questions from the member of staff to obtain the full picture
- Premature assumptions are not made, as it is important not to be judgemental at this stage

- Members of staff listen carefully to all accounts, being non-confrontational and not assigning blame until the investigation is complete
- All concerned pupils are informed that they must not discuss the interview with other pupils

Staff members involved in dealing with the incident are required to consider whether there is a need for safeguarding processes to be implemented.

## 12 [Updated] Sanctions

If the headteacher is satisfied that bullying did take place, the pupil will be helped to understand the consequences of their actions through restorative conversations and warned that there must be no further incidents. The headteacher will inform the pupil of the type of sanction to be used in this instance, e.g. missing end of term rewards, and future sanctions if the bullying continues.

If possible, the pastoral team will attempt reconciliation using restorative work and will obtain an apology from the perpetrator. Discretion will be used here; victims will never feel pressured into a face-to-face meeting with the perpetrator.

Parents are informed of bullying incidents and what action is being taken.

The class teacher will informally monitor the pupils involved over the next half-term.

[New] Where there have been serious or consistent incidents of bullying, the school will act in line with the Exclusion Policy.

## 13 Support

For a month after the initial complaint of bullying, the pastoral team will hold an informal discussion with the victim, on a weekly basis, to check whether the bullying has stopped. Following this a more formal meeting, on a monthly basis, will be held to check whether the bullying has stopped – these formal meetings will continue to take place once a month until the victim is confident the bullying has stopped. The victim will be encouraged to tell a trusted adult in school if bullying is repeated.

If necessary, group dynamics will be broken up by members of staff by assigning places in classes. The victim will be encouraged to broaden their friendship groups through nurture.

Relevant staff will work with the victim to build **resilience**, e.g. by offering counselling.

The school will acknowledge that bullying may be an indication of underlying mental health issues. Perpetrators will be put forward for counselling, to assist with any underlying mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. The school will work with the perpetrator regarding any underlying mental health or emotional wellbeing problems.

## 14 Follow up support

The progress of both the perpetrator and the victim will be monitored by their class teachers and pastoral. One-on-one sessions to discuss how the victim and perpetrator are progressing may be appropriate. If appropriate, follow-up correspondence will be arranged with parents one month after the incident.

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported in the following ways:

- Being listened to
- Having an immediate opportunity to meet with pastoral or a member of staff of their choice
- Being reassured
- Being offered continued support
- Being offered counselling, where appropriate

Pupils who have bullied others will be supported in the following ways:

- Receiving a consequence for their actions
- Being able to discuss what happened
- Being helped to reflect on why they became involved
- Being helped to understand what they did wrong and why they need to change their behaviour
- Appropriate assistance from parents

Pupils who have been bullied will be assessed on a case-by-case basis with a view to a referral to the CAMHS link worker for additional support or advice.

## **15 Bullying outside of school**

The headteacher has a specific statutory power to discipline pupils for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives the headteacher the power to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises, and therefore, not under the lawful charge of a school staff member.

Teachers have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside of the school premises. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and acted upon. In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying, members of staff can only discipline the pupil on school premises, or elsewhere when the pupil is under the lawful control of the member of staff, e.g. on a school trip.

## **16 Monitoring and Review**

This policy is reviewed every two years by the Pastoral Manager and headteacher. The scheduled review date for this policy is 2023.

## Bullying Report Form

This form will be sent to SLT or Pastoral upon completion.

Personal details	
Name of person reporting incident:	
Name of pupil being bullied:	
Year group:	
Form group:	
How may we contact you? (please circle)	
At school	At home
Home address:	
Email:	
Telephone:	

Incident details
<b>What happened?</b>
<b>Where did the incident take place?</b>



**When did the incident occur?**

**Who has been suspected of bullying?**

**Did anyone else see the incident?**

**According to the victim, how often does the bullying take place?**

**According to the victim, how long has the bullying been going on?**

**How has the incident been dealt with?  
Include parental involvement, use of restorative practice and any actions needed moving forwards.**

Signed:

SLT: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Pastoral: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_