

Witham Prospect School Anti-Bullying Policy including Harassment

Relevant Legislation and Guidance

- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (latest available, revised) – UK Gov.
- Children’s Homes (England) Regulations 2015
- DFE: Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations including Quality Standards April 2015
- Ofsted: Social Care Common Inspection Framework (SCCIF): Latest version.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges) – latest version.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children – A guide to multi-agency working to help, protect and promote the welfare of children: (revised latest version).
- Preventing and tackling bullying (advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies) – DFE (latest version).
- DFE: Cyberbullying – Advice for headteachers and school staff.
- DFE: The Equality Act 2010 and Schools – Departmental advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities May 2014
- Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership: Policy and Procedures Manual (live manual)

Applies to:

The whole school, staff, volunteers and pupils. All activities provided by the school, including those activities outside the normal school day, off-site learning and residential trips. This policy also applies to residential care, residential staff and volunteers.

Related Documents:

- Behaviour Policy
- “E” Safety Policy
- Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy
- Mobile Phone and Social Media Policy

Availability:

This policy is made available to parents/carers, staff and pupils via the school website or upon request from the school office.

Monitoring and Review:

This policy will be monitored and refined on a continuous basis and reviewed bi-annually by either the Directors, Registered Manager or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. This will take place earlier if changes in legislation, regulatory requirement or best practice guidelines so require.

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Purpose of this Policy

The purpose of this policy is to clarify the measures and the support structures that Witham Prospect School has in place to prevent and tackle bullying, including cyberbullying. This policy takes into account advice given by the Department for Education (DFE) with regard to preventing and tackling bullying (including cyberbullying). This policy extends to the residential care setting, off-site educational trips and out of school premises.

Bullying, if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on pupils. It can be a barrier to their learning and have serious consequences for their mental health. Bullying which takes place at school does not only affect a pupil during childhood but can have a lasting effect on their lives well into adulthood.

Harassment, making a victim feel distressed, humiliated, threatened or fearful of further violence. It is essential to realise that harassment in the context of Witham Prospect School may take many forms and may not be as outwardly obvious as it would be within a school where children and young people are verbal and able to communicate their fears and concerns to the adults within the organisation.

Rationale

At Witham Prospect School we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our staff and pupils, so that our pupils can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere and are able to maximise their learning, flourish and fulfil their potential. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in our school. This policy is written with the whole school community in mind and covers staff, pupils, parents and carers, support and ancillary staff. All staff have a responsibility of monitoring any incidents of bullying and ensuring that the anti-bullying policy is implemented.

What Constitutes Bullying

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. (DFE “preventing and tackling bullying”: July 2017). Bullying can take many forms including:

- Name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments; kicking; hitting; taking belongings; producing offensive graffiti; gossiping; excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.
- This includes the same unacceptable behaviours expressed online, sometimes called online or cyberbullying. This can include sending offensive, upsetting and inappropriate messages by phone, text, instant messenger, through gaming, websites, social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading photos or videos.
- Bullying can be a form of peer-on-peer abuse and can be emotionally abusive; it can cause severe and adverse effects on children’s emotional development.

What constitutes harassment?

The main goal of harassment is to persuade victims to either not to do something that they are entitled or required to do or to do something that they are not obliged to do. Actions listed under the Protection from Harassment Act include, but are not limited to:

Phone calls

Letters

Emails

Visits

Stalking

Verbal abuse of any kind – including on social media

Threats

Damage to property

Bodily harm

Such actions amount to harassment when they occur more than once.

Forms of Bullying

Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

Where there is "reasonable cause to suspect that a pupil is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm" from a bullying incident at Witham Prospect School, the incident will be referred by staff to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy (DDSL), who will then follow the guidance as per the safeguarding (child protection) policy.

Background Theory

Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

Forms of harassment

Coercion – is defined as the action of forcefully persuading or threatening an individual to do something which includes behaviours, such as blackmail, extortion, threats or physical and sexual assaults could also be considered as a form of harassment.

Public intimidation – words and/or behaviour intended or likely to block, influence or deter participation in debate, or causing alarm or distress in order to intimidate the individual from participating i.e., school council.

Racial Harassment – includes but is not limited to:

Insensitive jokes related to race, colour or nationality.
Remarks or banter that have a racial content or are racist in nature.
Pranks perpetrated on racial grounds.
Deliberate exclusion from conversations on racial grounds
Abusive, threatening or insulting words and behaviour on racial grounds
Displaying racially abusive writing or pictures
Emails of a racist nature
Harassment relating to a disability.
Harassment when a person is undergoing gender re-assignment.
Sexual orientation
Sex based harassment.

Culture

At Witham Prospect School the school community (educational and residential staff, ancillary and support staff, parents and carers and visitors to the site) all have a role in creating a culture where all types of bullying are considered unacceptable; this applies both to the bullying of pupils and staff. We recognise that staff are important role models for our pupils. The behaviour of adults towards each other and towards pupils is potentially a highly effective tool for creating a positive environment from which our pupils can learn acceptable social behaviours and adopt good social skills through positive relationships.

At Witham Prospect School we aim to make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying as we strongly believe that a preventative approach helps our school safeguard the well-being of our pupils and staff as well as creating a society in which we all treat each other with dignity and respect.

As a school community we recognise that we have a responsibility to contribute, in whatever way we can, to uphold the aims of this policy; we will therefore take an active approach to promoting good behaviour, respect for others and to tackling any form of bullying, including prejudice driven bullying and cyber bullying. We recognise that the nature of some of our pupils' disability means that some of our pupils may not have the sufficient understanding or awareness that certain behaviours directed towards others may be undesirable or that they might be construed as bullying. This means that all staff at Witham Prospect School have a duty to not only be aware of such behaviours and of any pupil involved, but also to respond appropriately to instances of 'bullying' behaviour.

At Witham Prospect School we strongly believe:

- Pupils have a right to learn free from intimidation and fear.
- The needs of the victim are paramount.
- Bullying behaviour will not be tolerated.
- Pupils who feel they have been bullied will be listened to.
- Every member of the school community has the right to feel comfortable, safe, secure, equally valued and respected.
- Every member of the school community has the right to grow and change, free from prejudice, stereotyping, harassment and negative discrimination.

- All staff have the right to work in an environment that is conducive to their well-being.
- Any reported incidents will be taken seriously and thoroughly investigated.

Prevention Strategies

At Witham Prospect School our response to bullying will not start at the point at which a pupil has been bullied. All staff will aim to be proactive in their approach and look to identify underlying issues between pupils which might provoke conflict and develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place. This might involve talking to pupils about issues of difference, perhaps in lessons (PSHCE, RSE), through dedicated events or projects, or through assemblies.

Environment

At Witham Prospect School we will:

- Create and support an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration and care for others, which will be upheld by all.
- Recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the community, including adults and children (peer on peer abuse).
- Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as: religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality or appearance related difference. Also, children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities.
- Challenge practice and language which does not uphold the values of tolerance, non-discrimination and respect towards others.
- Be encouraged to use technology, especially mobile phones and social media positively and responsibly.
- Work with staff, the wider community and outside agencies to prevent and tackle concerns including all forms of prejudice-driven bullying.
- Actively create “safe spaces” for vulnerable children and young people.
- Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos.

Support

At Witham Prospect School we will:

- Provide a range of approaches for pupils, staff and parents/carers to access support and report concerns.
- Regularly update and evaluate our practice to take into account the developments of technology and provide up-to-date advice and education to all members of the community regarding positive online behaviour.
- Implement appropriate consequential sanctions, in line with our behaviour policy which will reflect the seriousness of the incident, so that pupils and the wider school community see that bullying is unacceptable.
- Use a variety of techniques to resolve the issues between those who bully, and those who have been bullied.

Education and Training

At Witham Prospect School we will:

- Train all staff (initially through induction) and thereafter wider staff meetings/discussions and class/team meetings to identify all forms of bullying and take appropriate action, following our policy and procedures (including recording and reporting incidents).
- Consider a range of opportunities and approaches for addressing bullying throughout the curriculum and other activities, such as: through displays, assemblies, peer support, anti-bullying week, guest speakers and the student council (where appropriate/relevant).
- Provide systematic opportunities to develop pupils' social and emotional skills, including building their resilience and self-esteem.

Involvement of pupils

At Witham Prospect School the community will:

- Regularly canvas children and young people's views on the extent and nature of bullying, given a young person's cognitive level of understanding.
- Pupils to be involved in designing a set of class/school rules.
- Ensure that all pupils know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying.
- Ensure that all pupils, where appropriate are aware of the range of consequences which may be applied against those engaging in bullying.
- Involve pupils in anti-bullying campaigns in school and the residential care setting and embed messages in the wider school curriculum e.g., anti-bullying week, PSHE, assemblies and subject areas where appropriate.
- Publicise the details of internal support e.g. key worker, as well as external helplines and websites both in school and in the residential care setting.
- Offer support to pupils who have been bullied and to those who are bullying in order to address the problems they have.

Involvement and liaison with parents and carers

At Witham Prospect School the community will:

- Make sure that key information about bullying (including policies and named points of contact) are available to parents/carers.
- Ensure all parents/carers know who to contact if they are worried about bullying and where to access independent advice.
- Work with all parents/carers and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying and prejudicial behaviour.

Bullying or Harassment Incident – Implementation Protocol

The following steps must be taken when dealing with any incidents or concerns which staff feel relate to potential bullying. Where possible the following protocol, or steps, should be followed at all times whether the incident or cause for concern occurs in school, in the residential care setting, during off-site educational trips or out of school premises.

Protocol Steps

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident/concern will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached/observed behaviour which has caused concern. The incident will be recorded on a “incident sheet” and logged on behaviour watch.
- Appropriate support will be provided for the pupil being bullied – making sure they are not at risk of immediate harm. Support will also be provided to the “bully”.
- A clear account of the incident will be brought to the immediate attention of the senior member of staff on duty. This could be The Headteacher, Registered Manager or in their absence The Deputy Head, Senior Teacher, Deputy Residential Manager, Team Leader, Senior “on call” etc.
- The designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) will be informed immediately of all bullying incidents where there are safeguarding child protection concerns.
- The senior member on staff on duty will meet with all concerned and record the incident in the bullying log held in the school or in the residential care setting (this may be held in an electronic form on behaviour watch)
- The senior member of staff on duty will begin to fully investigate the incident.
- Where the senior member of staff on duty is not the Headteacher or the Registered Manager (or in their absence their appointed deputy), then they will immediately be informed of the incident at the next immediate available opportunity.
- Where appropriate parents and carers and other staff members will be informed.
- If necessary and appropriate, other agencies may be consulted or involved, such as social care, the police and local restorative justice organisations. Guidance and support may also be accessed from specialist organisations such as The Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA); Kidscape; Child Net International; Internet Matters (**See appendix 1**)
- The Headteacher or the Registered Manager (or in their absence their appointed deputy) will complete a full investigation of the incident and report back all findings to the member of staff who raised the concern (if appropriate), parents and carers, and social care (if appropriate).
- A full account of the investigation will be recorded in the bullying log, either in school or in the residential care setting (this may be held in an electronic form on behaviour watch). The account will include the incident, pupils involved, witnesses, supporting statements/evidence, outcomes, conclusion and action(s) taken.
- Actions taken will follow the “consequences” as laid out in our behaviour policy.
- For the pupils involved support will be given to help make them understand the nature of the incident and the implication of “bullying”. Support will be given to both the victim and perpetrator (see below).
- A summary of the incident and resultant consequences will be added to the concerned pupil’s files.
- Relevant senior staff, key workers and tutors will be identified to continue to monitor those involved with the incident and report any further potential concerns.

Support for pupils who have been bullied or harassed.

- Being offered an immediate opportunity to communicate their experience to an adult of their choice.
- Reassuring the pupil.
- Offering support to the pupil either internally or accessing specialist support agencies on a 1:1 or small group basis.
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence.
- Providing the pupil with a “safe space” and feeling of security.

Support for pupils who have bullied or taken part in harassment.

- Discussing where possible what happened.
- Discovering why the pupil became involved.
- Establishing (where possible due to level of understanding) with the pupil the wrongdoing and the need for change in behaviour.
- Offering support to the pupil either internally or accessing specialist support agencies.
- Informing appropriate concerned parties e.g., residential care staff, education staff and parents/carers to help change the attitude/behaviour of the pupil where this is possible.

Potential signs of being bullied or harassed.

- Is frightened of walking to or from other parts of the school.
- Changes his/her usual routine.
- Is unwilling to go to specific areas of the school.
- Begins to not attend teaching sessions.
- Runs away.
- Says he/she is feeling unwell e.g., stomach aches.
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence.
- Starts stammering.
- Attempts or threatens suicide.
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares.
- Feels ill in the morning.
- Has possessions which are damaged or "go missing".
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully).
- Has monies continually "lost".
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises.
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable.
- Is bullying other children or siblings.
- Stops eating.
- Is frightened to communicate what's wrong.
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone.
- Is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received.
- Clingier to family and friends.

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

Cyberbullying

Misusing technology (particularly the internet which includes social networking sites and mobile phones), to deliberately upset/hurt, humiliate someone (includes the misuse of associated technology, i.e. – camera/mobile phone/video etc). Cyber bullying can be an extension of face-to-face bullying with technology providing the bully with another route to harass their target.

Where cyberbullying is suspected Witham Prospect School will:

- Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified and follow the anti-bullying policy.
- Provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.
- Support the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation.
- Take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible. This may include:
 - Looking at use of the school systems.
 - Identifying and interviewing possible witnesses.
 - Contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary.
- Work with the individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation. This may include:
 - Support reports to a service provider to remove content if those involved are unable to be identified or if those involved refuse to or are unable to delete content.
 - Confiscating and search pupils' electronic devices, such as iPad, communication device, mobile phone, in accordance with the law and also the school searching and confiscation policy.
 - Requesting the deletion of locally held content and content posted online if they contravene school behavioural policies.
- Ensure that consequences are applied to the person responsible for the cyberbullying; the school will take steps to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any additional help that they may need.
- Inform the police if a criminal offence has been committed.
- Provide information to staff and pupils regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online. This may include:
 - Advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply.
 - Providing advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists.
 - Helping those involved to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain.

Appendix A

Further sources of information, taken from DFE Preventing and tackling bullying: July 2017

Specialist organisations

The following organisations provide support for schools and parents dealing with specific bullying issues including the social, mental or emotional affects caused by bullying.

The Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA): Founded in 2002 by NSPCC and National Children's Bureau, the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) brings together over 100 organisations into one network to develop and share good practice across the whole range of bullying issues.

The ABA has also put together a fact sheet outlining the range of support that is available to schools and young people from the anti-bullying sector which can be accessed [here](#).

The Diana Award: Anti-Bullying Ambassadors programme to empower young people to take responsibility for changing the attitudes and behaviour of their peers towards bullying. It will achieve this by identifying, training and supporting school anti-bullying ambassadors.

Kidscape: Charity established to prevent bullying and promote child protection providing advice for young people, professionals and parents about different types of bullying and how to tackle it. They also offer specialist training and support for school staff, and assertiveness training for young people.

The BIG Award: The Bullying Intervention Group (BIG) offer a national scheme and award for schools to tackle bullying effectively.

Restorative Justice Council: Includes best practice guidance for practitioners.

Cyber-bullying and online safety

Child Net International: Specialist resources for young people to raise awareness of online safety and how to protect themselves. Website specifically includes new cyberbullying guidance and a practical PSHE toolkit for schools.

Digizen: Provides online safety information for educators, parents, carers and young people.

Internet Matters: Provides help to keep children safe in the digital world.

Think U Know: Resources provided by Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) for children and young people, parents, carers and teachers.

The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) has produced a range of resources for schools, colleges and parents about how to keep children safe online, this includes advice for schools and colleges on responding to incidents of 'sexting.'

LGBT

Barnardo's: Through its LGBTQ Hub, offers guidance to young people, parents and teachers on how to support LGBT students and tackle LGBT prejudice-based bullying.

EACH: (Educational Action Challenging Homophobia): provides a national freephone Actionline for targets of homophobic or transphobic bullying and training to schools on sexual orientation, gender identity matters and cyberhomophobia.

Metro Charity: An equality and diversity charity, providing health, community and youth services across London, the Southeast, national and international projects. Metro works with anyone experiencing issues related to gender, sexuality, diversity or identity.

Proud Trust: Helps young people empower themselves to make a positive change for themselves and their communities through youth groups, peer support, delivering of training and events, campaigns, undertaking research and creating resources.

Schools Out: Offers practical advice, resources (including lesson plans) and training to schools on LGBT equality in education.

Stonewall: An LGB equality organisation with considerable expertise in LGB bullying in schools, a dedicated youth site, resources for schools, and specialist training for teachers.

SEND

Mencap: Represents people with learning disabilities, with specific advice and information for people who work with children and young people.

Changing Faces: Provide online resources and training to schools on bullying because of physical difference.

Cyberbullying and children and young people with SEN and disabilities: Advice provided by the Anti-Bullying Alliance on developing effective anti-bullying practice.

Anti-bullying Alliance SEND programme of resources: Advice provided by the Anti-bullying Alliance for school staff and parents on issues related to SEND and bullying.

Information, Advice and Support Service Network: Every Local area has an information, advice and support service, providing information, advice and support to disabled children and young people, and those with SEN, and their parents.

Mental health

MindEd: Provides a free online training tool for adults that is also available to schools. It can be used to help school staff learn more about children and young people's mental health problems. It provides simple, clear guidance on mental health and includes information on identifying, understanding and supporting children who are bullied.

PSHE Association – guidance and lesson plans on improving the teaching of mental health issues.

Race, religion and nationality

Anne Frank Trust: Runs a school's project to teach young people about Anne Frank and the Holocaust, the consequences of unchecked prejudice and discrimination, and cultural diversity.

Educate Against Hate: Provides teachers, parents and school leaders practical advice and information on protecting children from extremism and radicalisation.

Show Racism the Red Card: Provide resources and workshops for schools to educate young people, often using the high profile of football, about racism.

Kick It Out: Uses the appeal of football to educate young people about racism and provide education packs for schools.

Tell MAMA: Measuring Anti-Muslim Attacks (MAMA) allows people from across England to report any form of Anti-Muslim abuse, MAMA can also refer victims for support through partner agencies.

Anti-Muslim Hatred Working Group: Independent members of this group are representatives from the Muslim community and will assist and advice on all relevant issues.

Please note that internal servers may block access to some of these sites. Schools wishing to access these materials may need to adjust their settings.

Sexual harassment, sexual bullying, harmful sexual behaviours and child-on-child abuse and

Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAW): A Guide for Schools. This guide from the End Violence Against Women Coalition sets out the different forms of abuse to support education staff to understand violence and abuse of girls, warning signs to look for, and how to get your whole school working towards preventing abuse.

Disrespect No Body: A Home Office led campaign which helps young people understand what a healthy relationship is. This website includes teaching materials to be used in the classroom.

Anti-bullying Alliance: advice for school staff and professionals about developing effective anti-bullying practice in relation to sexual bullying.