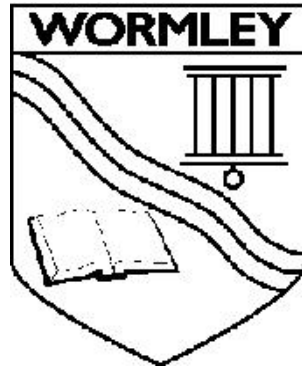# WORMLEY C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL (VC)

Have Faith, Show Respect, Take Responsibility and Achieve

Anti-bullying Policy

A Safeguarding Policy

Policy approved – Summer 2022
Policy next review – Summer 2025

Contents

This policy should be read alongside the school's discipline policy: Rights and Responsibilities and is part of the school's safeguarding strategy.

1.   Introduction

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for dealing with bullying at Wormley Primary School. It was developed through a process of consultation with teaching staff, governors, children and parents.

Wormley school committed to promoting and protecting the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and staff. We are committed to working with staff, pupils and parents and carers to create and maintain a school community where bullying is not tolerated. The school anti-bullying policy has been developed with due regard for our duties and obligations under existing legislation and public sector duties for the safeguarding and wellbeing of all our pupils and we will take all steps to ensure their safety.

> *Children and young people who are bullied are more at risk of developing mental health problems, including depression and anxiety. Children at the highest risk are those who are both bullied, and who bully others (Victoria Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2013; NICHD, 2012).*

1.1   Aims

- To raise awareness about bullying behaviour and about the school's action against bullying policy

- To challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour, increase understanding for bullied pupils and help to build an anti-bullying ethos in the school.
- To provide this aspect of personal and social education as part of a balanced curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of the children.

1.2   Defining bullying

While there is no single definition of bullying, the Department for Education provides the following guidance:

'Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case.' "Preventing and Tackling Bullying" DfE 2011

Most definitions include the following dimensions:

1. The behaviour is intended to cause distress
2. The behaviour is repeated
3. There is an imbalance of power between the perpetrator of bullying and the target

However there are important issues to consider within these broad factors:

The first element, 'the behaviour is intended to cause distress', should not be taken to excuse behaviour which individuals or groups claim was intended in fun. It is reasonable for schools to expect that young people will develop age appropriate skills of empathy and will not be drawn into behaviour that for the perpetrators amounts to teasing but for the target becomes seriously distressing. Behaviour that impacts to damage the emotional wellbeing of others should be taken to be a matter of serious concern and individuals should be made to understand their culpability, regardless of their intention. The effect of the behaviour on the recipient – not just the intention of the perpetrator – is significant in deciding whether to treat an incident as bullying.

The second element, 'the behaviour is repeated', should be understood in terms of the number and degree of impacts on the target. A single posting of hurtful material on the internet has the potential to be seen by hundreds if not thousands of people and is therefore a very serious matter. A single act of physical assault, mental abuse or threat of the same can lead a child to be in a state of ongoing fear. Any incidents of deliberately hurtful behaviour that lead to fear of recurrence should be designated as bullying incidents.

The final element, 'an imbalance of power', can be subtle and complex. It should not be assumed that a larger child cannot be a victim, nor a smaller child a perpetrator. It is also often important to recognise the role of popularity as a factor that pertains to the balance of power.

Equalities and issues of prejudice also need to be considered carefully within this dimension. A great deal of bullying is linked to difference, perceived difference or discriminatory attitudes towards certain groups regardless of whether the target is actually a member of these groups. For example, many children and young people who are not lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) may be targeted for homophobic bullying while others may be the targets of racist

bullying based on inaccurate presumptions about their culture. These dimensions should always be recorded and monitored.

Hertfordshire County Council recommends that schools therefore reflect the following more complex aspects in defining and responding to behaviour.

Bullying is behaviour that impacts negatively on others in the following ways:

1. The behaviour is either intended to cause distress or results in significant distress
2. The behaviour is repeated or results in multiple impacts on the target
3. There is an imbalance of power between the perpetrator/s of bullying and the target/s whether as a result of the prior context or the content or the experience of the hurtful behaviour

At Wormley we use the acronym STOP (several times on purpose) to define bullying for the children.

Bullying behaviour might include the following hurtful behaviours

- name-calling, taunting, teasing, mocking and making offensive comments
- offensive, threatening or personalised graffiti or other written material
- excluding people from groups
- gossiping and spreading hurtful or untruthful rumours
- kicking, hitting, pushing
- taking belongings
- cyberbullying – including sending inappropriate, offensive or degrading text messages, emails or instant messages, setting up websites or contributing content to social networking sites that is designed to embarrass or upset individuals or collective exclusion of individuals from social networking sites.

It should be noted that not all hurtful behaviour is bullying, but all reported hurtful behaviour should be taken seriously and resolved at the earliest opportunity.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission's report on the effectiveness of responses to 'Identity-based' (or 'Prejudice-based') bullying (Research report 64 2010) states that it
"is widespread and continues to blight the lives of many young people, affecting educational attainment and having a long term impact on their life chances."
Schools should pay particular attention to ensuring that all prejudice-based harmful incidents are identified and prevented from escalating. Ofsted will specifically look for evidence that this is the case in all schools in relation to special educational need, sexual orientation, sex, race, religion and belief, gender identity or disability. In addition, schools should be sensitive to wider issues of prejudice. Some children and young people can be singled out because they are overweight, deprived, in care, young carers, particularly able or talented.

Schools should also be alert to challenging the development of an environment which is hurtful and threatening to particular groups or communities. For example, casual use of homophobic, transphobic, sexist or racist language should not go unchecked whether or not it is targeted at an individual.

2 Roles and responsibilities across the school

<u>Headteachers and senior staff with key responsibilities</u>

- Build and maintain a school ethos which is welcoming, supportive and inclusive of all pupils, parents/carers and staff
- Promote the wellbeing and ensure the safeguarding of all pupils in the school
- Provide support for the governors through the development and implementation of an effective anti-bullying policy
- Ensure the voice of the pupils, staff and parents/carers is heard and communicated to governors

<u>All teaching and support staff</u>

- Contribute to building and maintaining a school ethos which is welcoming, supportive and inclusive of all pupils and staff
- Promote the wellbeing and ensure the safeguarding of all pupils in school
- Behave with respect and fairness to all pupils, carrying out the spirit of the anti-bullying and equalities policies

<u>Governors</u>

- Promote the wellbeing and ensure the safeguarding of all pupils in school
- Ensure the school carries out the spirit of the legislation and statutory duties, and observes national and local guidance
- Provide leadership to ensure the development, implementation and regular review of the anti-bullying policy
- Ensure that policy and good practice is reflected in the school's anti-bullying practice

3   Preventing And Responding To Bullying Incidents

3.1   Preventing bullying

Wormley Primary School is committed to prevent bullying and discrimination and to promote equality. Actions to ensure this include:

- Implementing a values-based curriculum
- Developing a caring ethos that is by the school mission statement and the Rights and Responsibilities of Wormley
- Implementation of the Social Learning Agenda
- The school promotes strategies during national anti-bullying week
- The school has been accredited as a Stonewall Champion School. All teachers have been trained to recognise and prevent homophobic and transphobic bullying
- The school has been accredited with Wellbeing Award which acknowledges the school's attention to promoting the children's wellbeing.
- Displaying material around the school by a variety of means, e.g. posters, display boards etc,
- Providing information on policy to staff and governors
- Teaching pupils how to raise their concerns and how to help each other respond assertively to bullying e.g. How to be an Upstander; using the superhero pose to say Stop! I don't like it.
- Using curriculum opportunities to address the issues, e.g. circle time and social learning

- Making sure all staff are trained to model appropriate behaviour and challenge bullying according to school guidance
- Buddy systems and special responsibilities
- Questionnaires
- Using restorative conversations to focus on the feelings of victims and ensuring that things are repaired or 'put right'.
- In the classroom teachers can be aware of pupils being pressured or teased by their peers. It is important that teachers pick up on these kinds of incidents and do not leave them unchallenged.
- Record keeping
- A range of social and emotional interventions (see SEN policy)
- Providing a range of alternate spaces and opportunities at break times e.g. Nurture Garden, Oak Room, library, clubs

3.2   Some strategies to improve playground behaviour

We should constantly review the play areas and seek to improve them through the provision of play equipment, teaching suitable games etc.
Our aim always should be to:-
- Supervise the children's play and develop strong relationships with each of the children as individuals
- communicate positively and clearly to the children (see Rights & Responsibilities policy)
- Encourage purposeful play with reduced boredom.
- Increase imaginative play through provision of a variety and range of diverse environments.
- Improve social skills through the provision of small and intimate spaces.

3.3   Responding to bullying

All reports of bullying should be taken seriously and investigated. For pupils who have experienced bullying, parents/carers should be made aware that incidents have been addressed by the school. They should be told what the school has established through investigation and what action was taken in resolution.

Pupils who have been bullied will be helped by:

- Focus on the victim not the wrongdoer
- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a staff member of their choice
- Reassuring the pupil that they have done the right thing by making a report and that the school will be responding
- Offering continuous support to the bully and the person being bullied
- Ensuring safety
- Working to restore self-esteem and confidence
- Use a restorative approach such as a restorative circle and contract

Pupils who have bullied will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened
- Discovering why they became involved
- Exploring different perspectives as appropriate
- Establishing all hurtful behaviour and the need to change
- Informing parents or guardians to support change in the pupil
- Supporting pupils form (appendix 3) may assist with this process
- Use a restorative approach such as a restorative circle and contract

3.4   Strategies to deal with bullying

For children who are being bullied we encourage them to be:
- Be firm and clear.
- Get away from the situation as soon as possible.
- Tell an adult what has happened straight away.

If you have been bullied we encourage pupils to:
- Tell a teacher or another child in your school.
- If you are scared to tell a teacher or an adult on your own, ask a friend to go with you.
- Tell your family.
- Keep on speaking up until someone listens.
- Don't blame yourself for what has happened.

When pupils talk to an adult about being bullied, be encourage them to be clear about:
- What has happened.
- How often it has happened.
- Who was involved.
- Who saw what happened.
- Where it happened.
- What you have done about it already.

3.5   Being an Upstander:

The majority of pupils may not be involved in bullying behaviour themselves but are aware it is happening. Often they are afraid to do anything or they simply do not know what to do. All pupils have been encouraged to be an Upstander.:
1. Be a buddy
2. Interrupt
3. Speak out
4. Tell someone

3.6   Bullying outside the classroom

Much bullying takes place outside the classroom, usually out of view of the adults. This may be on the journey to school, walking from one room to another, in the toilets and at playtime. Good supervision when children are not in the classroom is extremely important.

Effective supervision
- Involves walking around the school grounds, visually scanning the area to anticipate potential difficulties and engaging in brief conversation with pupils.
- If a problem is suspected concerning aspects of pupil behaviour this should be investigated by the teacher or supervisor immediately in a quiet and calm manner.
- Strategies outlined in the school's behaviour policy should be followed by all staff when supervising children at break time.
- Adults should recognise behaviour which indicates a play fight and that which may be a result of bullying.
- Knowledge of pupils who have been persistently bullied or been involved in bullying can help adults to be more vigilant.
- Identifying problem area which may be a factor in behaviour problems. Long queues of hungry children, insufficient toilet facilities, lining up in crowded corridors – all these factors can lead to short tempers and conflict.

3.7   Observing children

Children in play fights often:
- Are smiling or laughing.
- Make "mock" blows which do not connect or only do softly.
- May take turns in being on top or chasing the other
- Do so in the open, but are ignored by the others.
- We do not allow play fights as they may get out of hand and pupils may end up hurt.

Pupils who are being physically bullied or attacked often:
- Frown or look unhappy or angry.
- Try to move away from the aggressor.
- Do not take turns, the aggressor maintaining the dominant role throughout the interaction.
- If in view of other pupils, will get considerable attention.

4   Recording and reporting bullying

- All alleged or witnessed incidents are recorded and reported to relevant class teachers/staff and parents/carers **and logged on CPOMS. Information must include:**
  - **where it happened**
  - **when it happened**
  - **any witnesses**
  - **the direct voice of those affected**

Factors to help determine if incident constitutes bullying

Incident was bullying because:

- ☐ Hurt has been deliberately/knowingly caused (physically or emotionally)
- ☐ It is a single serious incident or a repeated incident or experience e.g. multiple incidents, cyberbullying or the involvement of a group
- ☐ Involves an imbalance of power:
  - ▪ target feels s/he cannot defend her/himself, or
  - ▪ perpetrator/s exploiting their power (size, age, popularity, coolness, abusive language, labelling/name calling, etc.)

- Incidents will be initially investigated by the victim's teacher of the class or a senior leader. The senior leader will decide whether the investigation can be delegated based on the complexity or perceived severity.
- Staff should look for evidence that the behaviour has occurred before or by its nature has caused repeated experience or the fear of it, e.g. cyber bullying or serious incident, was deliberately intended to cause distress or harm, has created a sense of powerlessness on the part of the individual being targeted
- Staff should then consider whether any aggravating factors such as equalities dimensions have been taken into account and been addressed. Where minor incidents have been dealt with by adults who witnessed them, pupils involved should be observed to ensure that the behaviour is not repeated. Serious or repeated incidents should be formally followed up with the children involved.
- Cases of cyberbullying are treated in the same way. In certain circumstances, the police may be contacted.
- In curriculum time, we train the children how to avoid incidents of cyberbullying, e.g. not giving out mobile phone numbers or how to use the internet safely (see Online Safety policy).
- Mobile phones brought to school are kept at the office.
- The leadership team are informed through CPOMS incident log
- Governors should receive regular updates and reports

4.1 Consequences

While our aim is to prevent bullying from happening in our school by early intervention in aggressive behaviour, from time to time we are obliged to deal with more serious forms of bullying. **Consequences will be agreed as outlined in the school's behaviour policy: Rights and Responsibilities.**

The anti-bullying policy should be fully reviewed every three years. Our desired outcomes include:
- All pupils know where to ask for help if they are being bullied
- All staff report that they feel confident to identify and address all forms of, and reasons for bullying
- There is increasing pupil confidence in the school system to respond to bullying

Policy signed and agreed by:

Governor representative: _____ date _____

School Leadership representative: _____ date _____

Approved: April 2022

Next review: May 2025

Equality Impact assessment

Protected characteristics	Does this policy impact on any of these characteristics?	How would you describe the level of impact?
● *age (for staff only)*	N/A	N/A
● *disability*	Yes	High
● *ethnicity and race*	Yes	High
● *gender (sex)*	Yes	Low
● *gender identity and reassignment*	Yes	High
● *pregnancy, maternity and breast feeding*	No	N/A
● *religion and belief*	Yes	High
● *sexual orientation*	Yes	High