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West Coats Primary Anti-Bullying Policy

Version	Date	Author	Reason for Change	Changes	Consulted
0.1	September 2022	Shauna Sloan	New policy based on research, training and staff, pupil and parental feedback.		All staff Anti-Bullying Ambassadors Parent Focus Group
0.2	January 2024	Shauna Sloan	Quality assurance and feedback sought	Language surrounding bullying in line with SLC RespectMe. Clarity over staff responsibilities. Further information section updated.	Karen Reilly, QIO SLC

Review Frequency	Next Review Date
Every 2 years	September 2024

Introduction

West Coats Primary believes that all children have the right to learn in a safe and supportive environment; this means being free from all forms of bullying behaviour. Our Anti-Bullying policy outlines how we aim to prevent, report and respond to incidents of bullying.

Rationale

At West Coats, we aim to create and sustain a nurturing, safe and supportive environment which fosters positive relationships between pupils and staff. We aim to provide an environment which promotes mutual respect and embodies our value of kindness. We recognise that bullying behaviour can have a great impact on a child's wellbeing, health, participation, confidence, and attainment in learning. We strive to provide a holistic approach to build capacity, resilience and skills in young people which help to prevent and deal with bullying. We aim to work in partnership with parents and carers and support them in their crucial role.

Aims & Objectives

At West Coats, we have high expectations and aim to prevent any form of bullying taking place within our school community. We aim to do this by:

- Providing a safe, secure, and nurturing environment which celebrates individuality whilst fostering a sense of community
- Having high expectations of all and promoting a high standard of behaviour
- Supporting children in their education to develop positive attitudes, values and skills which enable them to become happy, confident, and resilient individuals who are responsible citizens

Throughout this policy, we intend to:

- Raise awareness of the school community of our approaches and stance towards bullying behaviour
- Define different types of bullying behaviour
- Provide strategies to prevent, de-escalate or stop any harmful behaviour with consistency across our school
- Give children strategies to deal with bullying, including being sufficiently assertive to object to unacceptable behaviour

- Outline the role of pupils, staff and parents in preventing and dealing with bullying behaviour
- Help build an anti-bullying ethos in the school and develop a shared vision
***Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and must be addressed quickly.
Bullying should never be seen as a typical part of growing up.***

Scottish Government, 2017

Vocabulary and Language

At West Coats we understand the impact of our choice of language on individuals. Bullying is a behaviour, meaning this is something which can be changed and is not attached to an individual. Therefore, we believe it is important that when discussing bullying that we use the following terms:

Instead of..

Bully

Victim

We use..

Person displaying bullying behaviour

Person experiencing bullying behaviour

Definitions

What is bullying?

There is many definitions of bullying used and for the purpose of this policy, it is important to outline which definition we use. At West Coats, we adopt the definition of bullying used by Anti-Bullying Pro:

Repeated, negative behaviour that is intended to make others feel upset, uncomfortable or unsafe.

The Diana Award, 2022

Additionally, we recognise that where bullying occurs, there is often an element of power imbalance which the perpetrator exploits. Bullying is:

Both behaviour and impact; the impact is on a person's capacity to feel in control of themselves. This is what we term as their sense of 'agency'. Bullying takes place in the context of relationships; it is behaviour that can make people feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out. This behaviour happens face to face and online.

RespectMe, 2015

Bullying Categories

Bullying can take many forms, however, at West Coats, we organise these into categories:

V **Verbal Bullying** - repeated, negative use of speech, sign language, or verbal gestures to intentionally hurt others, e.g. using hurtful words, discriminatory or offensive language, or swear words.

I **Indirect Bullying** - repeated, negative use of actions, which are neither physical nor verbal, to intentionally hurt others e.g. spreading rumours, purposefully excluding another person, damaging or stealing someone's property, or cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is the repeated, negative use of technology to intentionally hurt others e.g. posting unwanted pictures or messages, accessing another person's account without permission, creating fake accounts to impersonate or harass someone, and sharing other people's private information online.

P **Physical Bullying** - repeated, negative use of body contact to intentionally hurt others, e.g. kicking, punching, slapping, inappropriate touching, or spitting.

Bullying is not..

We work closely with our young people to raise awareness of what bullying is (repeated, negative, and intentional) and what it is not. As children grow and mature, they explore friendships and relationships with others and, naturally, will have conflicts and disagreements. These are normal and essential challenges faced by children, however sometimes children can say or do things because they are upset or angry. It is vital that we work together to teach children the skills to manage their own emotions as well and conflicts that they find themselves in. Whilst it can be difficult when a child is upset to encourage and allow them to take leadership of the situation, when adults in a child's life intervene too quickly to repair relationships on their behalf, our children may not develop the skills necessary to deal with conflicts that they will inevitably continue to face throughout their lives.

Whilst at West Coats we have a clear 'hands and feet to ourselves' approach, not every incident of physical altercation may be perceived as bullying, and in these instances, staff members will work to understand the whole situation before

deciding on the best approach. It is not bullying when a member of staff corrects a child in line with the schools' rules, vision, aims and values.

Preventing Bullying

We work hard at West Coats to not only discourage bullying but develop and sustain an actively anti-bullying ethos. We do this by employing a range of proactive and preventative measures, some of which are listed below:

- Having a consistent, present and trained pupil leadership group of Anti-Bullying Ambassadors supported by Staff Anti-Bullying Ambassadors (See Appendix B for more information)
- Activities and learning in all classes to mark Anti-Bullying Week in November each year
- Anti-Bullying lessons embedded into our RME and Health and Wellbeing curriculum across every stage
- High expectations of all pupils with regards to behaviour
- Kindness embedded as a core value of our school
- A caring and listening ethos across our school
- A highly nurturing staff team

Recognising Bullying

There may be some signs and signals visible when a child is the target of bullying behaviour. Adults should be aware of these and investigate if they notice a child:

- having a change of regular behaviour - any change is worth noting
- is frightened of walking to or from school
- is unwilling to go to school (school-phobic) or regularly feels ill in the morning
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens to self-harm or runs away
- stops eating
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- begins to do poorly in schoolwork
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive, or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings

- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received
- wanting to make drastic changes to their usual appearance, interests, or personality
- uses negative language to talk about themselves

All staff within West Coats Primary are aware of the above indicators of bullying.

Reporting Bullying

Children who are experiencing bullying behaviour

Children who believe they are may be experiencing bullying behaviour are encouraged to:

- Try not to show that they are upset in front of the person displaying the bullying behaviour
- Confide in someone they trust in school who can help them, such as a teacher, support assistant or Anti-Bullying Ambassador
- Be assertive without being aggressive - utilise strategies taught in class and during Anti-Bullying lessons
- If worried about telling a trusted adult or Ambassador, use the reporting box at the Anti-Bullying display to record concern

Children who are worried about someone else or witness bullying

When children are witnessed to bullying, we encourage them to avoid being a bystander and instead try to be an upstander. Support the person in question by reporting the incident to a trusted adult or an Anti-Bullying Ambassador.

Parents and carers

We want to work in partnership with parents and carers to prevent and protect against bullying, we therefore ask that parents and carers speak with their child if they are concerned that they may be experiencing or displaying bullying behaviour. We ask that parents exercise caution and objectivity and encourage the child to disclose their concerns to a member of school staff in the first instance. However, if a child feels unable to seek resolution from one of the above avenues,

we ask that parents contact the school office, head teacher or relevant member of SLT via email regarding the incidents, giving as much detail as possible.

School office: office@westcoats-pri.s-lanark.sch.uk
Mrs Duff, Head Teacher: headteacher@westcoats-pri.s-lanark.sch.uk
Miss Miller, DHT P1-3: gw08millerlaura9@glow.sch.uk
Mrs Cameron, DHT P4-7: gw07cameronshona@glow.sch.uk

Responding to Bullying

Our approach to bullying is rooted in, and clearly reflects, our value of kindness. Responses to bullying also focus on developing resilience and promoting positive relationships between young people.

It is important to ensure that the pupil who has experienced bullying behaviour feels listened to and supported. It is also important to help young people who demonstrate bullying behaviour by providing clear expectations about behaviour as well as providing a range of ways to respond. This can include taking steps to repair a relationship, and where appropriate, supporting them to make amends. We aim to challenge prejudice and offer the opportunity to learn and change behaviour. Consideration is always given to any factors that may impact upon a young person's well-being including the additional support needs of those involved.

In all cases, the child experiencing the bullying behaviour will be supported and kept informed of any developments. Staff will exercise judgement and will keep parents informed when a resolution has been reached but will not share any information relating to another child. This is to protect the dignity and wellbeing of all children

Roles and Responsibilities

At West Coats, we recognise that we all have roles and responsibilities when it comes to safeguarding our children and promoting an Anti-Bullying ethos within our school.

Pupils

- Should engage with learning surrounding Anti-Bullying
- Should watch out for others and report any concerns
- Should display our values of kindness and confidence

- Should treat everyone with respect
- Should act promptly if they feel they are being targeted by bullying behaviour

Support Staff

- Should ensure they are confident in spotting the signs of bullying by doing their own or offered CPD
- Should follow procedures when bullying is witnessed or reported by investigating the incident and referring the incident on to a member of SLT who will support and record this on the Seemis reporting system. Where bullying is reported but is unfounded, class teachers should inform a member of SLT who will record this on the Seemis reporting system as such
- Should model mutual trust, respect, kindness at all times
- Should take bullying seriously and listen to all concerns
- Should communicate effectively and promptly with relevant parties when dealing with reports of bullying

Teaching Staff

- Should ensure they are confident in spotting the signs of bullying by doing their own or offered CPD
- Should follow procedures when bullying is witnessed or reported by investigating the incident and referring the incident on to a member of SLT who will support and record this on the Seemis reporting system. Where bullying is reported but is unfounded, class teachers should inform a member of SLT who will record this on the Seemis reporting system as such.
- Should model mutual trust, respect, kindness at all times
- Should take bullying seriously and listen to all concerns
- Should communicate effectively and promptly with relevant parties when dealing with reports of bullying
- Should ensure that an Anti-Bullying ethos and curriculum are evident within their classroom

Senior Leadership Team

- Should ensure they are confident in spotting the signs of bullying by doing their own or offered CPD
- Should effectively lead others in developing greater understanding and awareness of bullying and the systems and procedures surrounding this
- Should promptly and accurately record reports of bullying using the Seemis reporting system
- Should regularly analyse data in the Seemis reporting system and adopt appropriate quality assurance measures
- Should model mutual trust, respect, kindness at all times

- Should take bullying seriously and listen to all concerns
- Should communicate effectively and promptly with relevant parties when dealing with reports of bullying

Parents

- Should regularly talk with their child(ren) about their school life and experiences, with reference to friendships
- Should know and watch for the signs of bullying outlined above and report any concerns promptly to the school by following the procedure outlined above
- Should work with the school to support their child and remain solution orientated



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Supporting documents, organisations and guidance

www.AntiBullyingPro.com

www.Anti-BullyingAlliance.org.uk

www.BeatBullying.org

www.ChildLine.org.uk

www.Kidscape.org.uk

www.MindEd.org.uk

www.RespectMe.org.uk

www.RestorativeJustice.org.uk

www.YoungMinds.org.uk

Anti-Bullying Pro (2020) Definitions and types of bullying behaviour. The Diana Award: online. Available: <https://www.antibullyingpro.com/support-and-advice-articles/definitions-and-types-of-bullying-behaviour>

RespectMe (2017) Prejudice based bullying. Available: <https://respectme.org.uk/bullying/prejudice-based-bullying/>

RespectMe (2017) Policy through to Practice - Getting it Right.

Scottish Government (2017) Respect for All: national approach to anti-bullying. Edinburgh: Scottish Government.

South Lanarkshire Council (2018) Treat Me Well: Anti-Bullying Behaviour Guidance. South Lanarkshire: South Lanarkshire Council.

United Nations (1989) Convention on the Rights of the Child. Available: <https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/>