



Watling Academy

Anti-Bullying Policy

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*Publication on website			
Denbigh Alliance website		School website	
1	Statutory publication	A	Statutory publication
2	Good practice	B	Good practice
3	Not required	C	Not required

**Policy level			
1	Trust wide	Single policy relevant to everyone and consistently applied across all schools and departments, with no variation. e.g. Complaints procedure	Statutory policies approved by The Alliance Board of Trustees (or designated Trustee Committee). Non-statutory policies approved by the CEO with exception of Executive Pay.
2	Trust core values	This policy defines the Trust core values in the form of a Trust statement to be incorporated fully into all other policies on this subject, that in addition contain relevant information, procedures and or processes contextualised to that school. e.g. Safeguarding, Behaviour	Statements in statutory policies approved by the Denbigh Alliance Board of Trustees (or designated Trustee Committee). Statements in non-statutory policies approved by the CEO. Policy approved by Local School Board.
3	School/department	These policies/procedures are defined independently by schools as appropriate. E.g. Anti-bullying	Approved by Local School Board.

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1. Introduction

Watling Academy is committed to providing an inclusive, safe and supportive environment where every pupil is respected, valued and able to achieve their full potential.

Each member of the Watling Academy community has the right to feel safe and secure and shares a responsibility for preventing bullying. Bullying affects everyone involved, including those who experience bullying, those who engage in bullying and those who witness it.

The Academy recognises that bullying should not be an inevitable part of growing up and should never be accepted as normal behaviour. Bullying can have a significant impact on a child's wellbeing, attendance, engagement, achievement and mental health.

Watling Academy recognises that bullying may constitute a safeguarding concern and, in some cases, child-on-child abuse. All incidents will therefore be considered within both behavioural and safeguarding frameworks.

Bullying can occur both within and beyond the school environment, including online. Whilst parents and carers retain responsibility for their child's conduct outside of school hours, the Academy reserves the right to investigate and act where off-site behaviour impacts the safety, welfare or education of members of the school community.

2. Purpose and Principles

At Watling Academy, we believe all pupils have the right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment free from fear of bullying.

The Academy actively promotes equality, diversity, inclusion and mutual respect through its curriculum, culture and values of respect, responsibility and kindness. Bullying is a form of anti-social behaviour and is not tolerated under any circumstances.

This policy ensures that:

- Pupils understand what bullying is.
- Pupils know how to report concerns.
- Staff respond consistently and effectively.
- Parents and carers understand the Academy's approach.
- Victims receive appropriate support.
- Those displaying bullying behaviours are challenged and supported to change.

3. Policy Aims

The aims of this policy are:

- To provide a safe and secure learning environment.
- To promote equality, inclusion and respect.

- To clearly define bullying and related behaviours.
- To prevent bullying through education and early intervention.
- To create a culture where bullying is reported and addressed.
- To support victims appropriately.
- To address and change bullying behaviours.
- To recognise bullying as a potential safeguarding concern.
- To identify and address discriminatory behaviours, including sexism and misogyny, before they escalate.
- To ensure effective recording, monitoring and reporting of bullying incidents.

4. Defining Bullying

Bullying is:

"The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power."

Bullying may be physical, verbal, emotional or psychological. It can occur face-to-face, online or through other forms of communication.

Bullying behaviours can include:

- Physical violence or intimidation.
- Verbal abuse.
- Name-calling.
- Threatening behaviour.
- Emotional manipulation.
- Social exclusion.
- Sexual harassment.
- Online or cyberbullying.
- Damage to property.
- Theft or extortion.
- Intimidation.
- Rumour spreading.

Bullying can be motivated by prejudice and discrimination relating to protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

This may include:

- Racist bullying.
- Sexist bullying.
- Misogynistic behaviour.
- Homophobic bullying.
- Biphobic bullying.
- Transphobic bullying.

- Disability-related bullying.
- SEND-related bullying.
- Faith-based bullying.
- Bullying related to pregnancy or parental status.
- Bullying related to any protected characteristic.

Such incidents may be treated as both bullying and discriminatory incidents and may require safeguarding intervention.

5. Child-on-Child Abuse

Watling Academy recognises that bullying may constitute child-on-child abuse.

Staff understand that children can abuse other children and that such behaviour can occur inside and outside school, including online.

Child-on-child abuse may include:

- Bullying, including cyberbullying.
- Prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying.
- Physical abuse.
- Emotional abuse.
- Sexual harassment.
- Sexual violence.
- Harmful sexual behaviour.
- Image-based abuse.
- Online abuse.
- Coercive or controlling behaviour.
- Initiation or hazing-type violence and rituals.

All concerns involving child-on-child abuse will be managed in accordance with the Academy's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, with involvement from the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) where appropriate.

6. Misogyny, Sexism and Harmful Attitudes

Watling Academy recognises the escalatory nature of misogyny and sexism.

Language, attitudes and behaviours that demean, objectify, stereotype or discriminate against others will be challenged and addressed.

The Academy recognises that:

- Sexist language may contribute to a culture where harmful sexual behaviour becomes normalised.
- Misogynistic behaviour can increase risk of sexual harassment and sexual violence.

- Early intervention is essential to prevent escalation.

Incidents involving misogyny, sexism or harmful gender-based behaviours will be recorded, investigated and addressed through both behaviour and safeguarding processes where appropriate.

7. Online and Technology-Facilitated Bullying

Bullying may occur through digital technology and online platforms.

Examples include:

- Abusive messages.
- Social media harassment.
- Anonymous messaging.
- Sharing harmful content.
- Group chat exclusion.
- Online humiliation.
- Impersonation.
- Recording and sharing images or videos without consent.
- Image-based abuse.
- AI-generated images.
- Deepfake images or videos.
- Nudification applications.
- Sharing intimate images without consent.

Online incidents that pose a safeguarding risk will be referred to the DSL and managed in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

8. Identifying Bullying

A pupil experiencing bullying may:

- Show reluctance to attend school.
- Demonstrate persistent absence.
- Experience emotional distress.
- Become withdrawn or isolated.
- Show changes in confidence or self-esteem.
- Display changes in eating or sleeping patterns.
- Experience a decline in academic performance.
- Lose friendship groups.
- Develop unexplained injuries.
- Become unusually anxious or distressed.
- Demonstrate significant changes in behaviour.
- Show signs of self-harm or mental health difficulties.

These indicators may also suggest broader safeguarding concerns and should be reported appropriately.

9. Preventing Bullying

Preventing bullying is the responsibility of the entire community.

Watling Academy will:

- Promote a culture of respect, responsibility and kindness.
- Deliver education about bullying through the Wellbeing and PSHE curriculum.
- Promote understanding of diversity and protected characteristics.
- Educate pupils about online safety and digital conduct.
- Challenge discriminatory language and behaviour.
- Promote positive relationships and healthy friendships.
- Provide anti-bullying assemblies and awareness campaigns.
- Utilise Anti-Bullying Ambassadors.
- Monitor pupil voice through surveys.
- Identify and support vulnerable pupils.
- Monitor patterns and trends using CPOMS.
- Maintain safe spaces for pupils requiring support.
- Work closely with parents and carers.
- Participate in national anti-bullying campaigns.
- Review bullying data regularly to improve practice.

10. Reporting Bullying

Anyone who witnesses, experiences or becomes aware of bullying should report it immediately.

Pupils can report concerns through:

- Any member of staff.
- Their Form Tutor.
- Their Head of Year.
- The Safeguarding Team.
- Anti-Bullying Ambassadors.
- callitout@watling.academy

Parents and carers may also report concerns using the above email address or by contacting the school directly.

All staff must:

- Take reports seriously.
- Listen carefully and reassure the pupil.
- Never dismiss concerns as banter or friendship issues.

- Record concerns appropriately.
- Ensure concerns are passed to the pastoral team.
- Refer safeguarding concerns immediately to the DSL.
- Take action even where no formal complaint has been made.

11. Procedure

Following a report:

Initial Investigation

- The Head of Year will investigate the concern.
- Relevant accounts and evidence will be gathered.
- Parents/carers will be informed where appropriate.
- CPOMS records will be updated.

Supporting the Victim

Support may include:

- Regular pastoral check-ins.
- Safety plans.
- Wellbeing support.
- Counselling.
- Mentoring.
- Adjustments to seating or social arrangements.
- External agency involvement where required.

The wishes and feelings of the victim will be central to decision-making.

Addressing the Behaviour

Consequences may include:

- Restorative conversations.
- Educational interventions.
- Detentions.
- Internal suspension.
- Suspension.
- Other measures in accordance with the Behaviour Policy and DfE Suspensions and Exclusions guidance.
- Police involvement with serious incidents where a crime has been committed.

Responses will focus on both accountability and behaviour change.

Interventions may address:

- Respectful relationships.
- Online conduct.
- Discrimination.
- Sexism and misogyny.
- Harmful sexual behaviour.
- Empathy and emotional regulation.

Ongoing Concerns

Where bullying persists:

- Enhanced support plans may be implemented.
- Safeguarding assessments may be undertaken.
- Individual risk assessments may be developed.
- Pupils may be placed on Pastoral Support Plans.
- Multi-agency support may be sought.
- Further sanctions may be imposed.

Unsubstantiated Concerns

The Academy recognises that bullying is not always easily evidenced.

Where concerns cannot be substantiated:

- Pupils will continue to be monitored.
- Records will be maintained.
- Parents/carers may be updated.
- Support will be offered where needed.
- Further patterns will be investigated.

Decisions will be made on the balance of probabilities and in the best interests of pupil welfare and safety.

12. Recording and Monitoring

All bullying concerns will be recorded on CPOMS.

The Academy will:

- Maintain accurate records of incidents.
- Record actions and outcomes.
- Identify trends and patterns.
- Monitor vulnerable groups.
- Monitor discriminatory incidents.
- Monitor online bullying concerns.

- Monitor child-on-child abuse concerns.
- Review bullying data regularly.
- Report trends and findings to Governors and the Trust.

Findings will be used to inform:

- Staff training.
- Curriculum planning.
- Safeguarding practice.
- Behaviour strategies.
- Pupil support interventions.

13. Outcomes

Watling Academy seeks the following outcomes:

- Victims feel safe, supported and listened to.
- Bullying ceases promptly.
- Victims regain confidence and wellbeing.
- Appropriate action is taken regarding perpetrators.
- Pupils understand the impact of their actions.
- Behaviour change is achieved.
- Patterns and trends are addressed proactively.
- The Academy maintains a culture where bullying is not tolerated.

14. Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- Behaviour Policy.
- Acceptable Use of ICT for Pupils.
- Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy.
- SEND Policy.
- Mobile Phones and Electronic Devices Policy.
- Attendance Policy.
- Staff Code of Conduct.
- Trust Suspensions and Exclusions Policy.

15. Review

This Policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if DfE guidance changes.