



# Watling Academy

## Anti-Bullying Policy

**Approved by:** LSB  
**Date:** 4<sup>th</sup> December 2023  
**Review date:** December 2024

December 23

## **Introduction**

Watling Academy is committed to providing the best educational experience for every student. Each member of the Watling community has the right to feel safe and secure at school and shares the responsibility for helping to prevent bullying.

Bullying affects everyone, not just the bullies and the victims. Bullying is not an inevitable part of school life or a necessary part of growing up, and it rarely sorts itself out. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed, will a child be best able to benefit from the opportunities available at Watling Academy.

Bullying does not have defined boundaries and can be experienced in many environments, e.g. home, school, social media, the workplace. Whilst the school will act in accordance with the principles and guidance laid down in this policy to address bullying within the school, it is ultimately the parent's responsibility for issues outside of school hours (especially on social media platforms).

## **Why is an anti-bullying policy necessary?**

At Watling Academy, we believe that all students have the right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without the fear of being bullied.

All schools, both large and small, contain numbers of students with the potential for bullying behaviour. If a school is well disciplined and organised, it can minimise the occurrence of bullying. Watling Academy also has a clear curriculum plan on the teaching of British Values and PSHE, where it is made clear that bullying is a form of anti-social behaviour. Bullying is not tolerated or ignored at Watling Academy.

It is important, therefore, that Watling Academy has a clear written policy to promote this belief, where both students and parents/carers are fully aware that any bullying concerns will be dealt with firmly, fairly, and promptly.

## **Policy aims**

- To provide a safe environment where students can learn and achieve.
- To promote equality and diversity.
- To identify what bullying is.
- To prevent bullying.
- To create an environment where all students are aware of bullying and know how to report it when it happens.
- To support victims of bullying.
- To support change in the perpetrators of bullying.

## **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 can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online. It can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour.

Bullying behaviour can be:

- Physical
- Verbal
- Emotional
- Sexual
- Online/cyber
- Causing damage to property or theft

Bullying may be directed at the characteristics protected by the Equality act – Age, Disability, Pregnancy, Race, Religion, Sex, Sexual orientation.

## **Identifying Bullying**

Identifying bullying can be difficult and we encourage all members of the Watling Community to recognise how a victim may behave. The following list includes signs that a student may be bullied. Note, these symptoms are not definitive.

- Persistent absence- does not want to go to school; feels ill in the morning; starts truanting.
- Suffers from bad moods and may feel depressed.
- Lacks concentration in lessons or at home, their academic work is suffering.
- Loss of appetite.
- Loss of confidence.
- Demonstrating personality changes or changes in their normal behaviour i.e. suddenly becomes quiet or loud.
- Suffers from tiredness.
- Not participating in lessons; sport; other activities, where they had previously done so.
- Showing signs of panic, feeling nervous, exhibiting changes in body language.
- Losing friends or has a dramatic change in friendship group.
- Exhibiting a physical injury.
- Purposefully avoiding people; trying to be invisible.

## **Preventing bullying**

- Preventing bullying is the responsibility of all staff and students at Watling Academy.
- Awareness of the nature of bullying is increased through assemblies, tutor time activities, and displays around the school.

- The Wellbeing programme outlines what bullying is and how it can be prevented. These lessons are supported by assemblies that not only educate students about bullying but promote tolerance of others (Black history, LGBT rights, Traveller history, etc).
- All students are encouraged to take responsibility for recognising and reporting the bullying of others.
- Parents and Carers are consulted about bullying in the annual survey, results are analysed, and recommendations made.
- Our core values of Respect, Responsibility and Kindness support an Academy environment that does not accept bullying.
- The Academy's physical environment is examined, we examine where lighter supervision may lead to opportunities for bullying to occur.
- Bullying ambassadors support the Academy message that no bullying is acceptable.
- Strategies are employed to prevent further bullying taking place. This may take the form of counselling or consequences being issued.
- In regular Head of Year (HOY) meetings, bullying is identified and recorded on CPOMS, our online programme on which we record all safeguarding incidents. This makes pastoral staff aware of patterns, victims, and perpetrators of bullying.
- Safe areas are found for vulnerable students.
- Students have opportunities to report bullying and unkind behaviour that may lead to bullying online ([callitout@watling.academy](mailto:callitout@watling.academy)), and they have opportunities to speak with their Form Tutor or Head of Year.
- Student surveys are used to identify bullying in the academy and to identify any areas of concern.
- Deal quickly, firmly and fairly with any complaints, involving parents/carers where necessary.
- Review Watling's Anti-Bullying Policy and its degree of success.
- Continue to have a firm, but fair discipline structure. The rules are few, simple and easy to understand, as outlined in our Behaviour policy.
- Encourage pupils to discuss how they get on with other people and to form positive attitudes towards other people. This includes a review of what friendship really is.
- Will treat bullying as a serious offence and take every possible action to eradicate it from Watling Academy.
- Keep a careful record of all bullying incidents and type of bullying and act, as appropriate.
- Regularly provide pupils with information on bullying.
- Offer students the opportunity to represent the school on community anti-bullying forums.
- Publicise and engage in appropriate national antibullying campaigns aimed at school age children.

## **Reporting Bullying**

Anyone who sees or hears bullying or is a victim of bullying should report it straight away.

- Bullying can be reported to any member of staff who are told as part of their training programme that it must be dealt with and not simply forgotten.

- The member of staff will ensure the student is safe and will then pass the message directly to members of the pastoral team.
- Students and parents can report bullying directly online at [callitout@watling.academy](mailto:callitout@watling.academy), this link is also available through the Academy website.
- Students can report bullying to our trained Bullying Ambassadors who are easily recognisable by their badges.
- Students are encouraged to report any bullying they might see or report it on behalf of a friend.

## **Procedure**

Once bullying has been reported the incident is investigated by a member of the pastoral team.

- The Head of Year (HOY) will investigate, and parents/carers of the victim and perpetrator will be contacted. The HOY will decide on the most appropriate course of action, which will involve supporting the victim and perpetrator and issuing an appropriate consequence to the perpetrator.
- We will inform the victim and parents/carers of action taken.
- If both victim/bullies are agreeable, we will engage in a restorative process.
- Should the incidents of bullying continue, then the HOY will continue to work with the victim, perpetrator, and their parents/carers. Further strategies including enhanced levels of support with the Wellbeing lead, or the Academy counsellor will be employed and enhanced consequences will be issued to deter further escalation.
- Where the incidents of bullying continue, the students may be placed on a Pastoral Support Plan (PSP) with a focus on child-on-child abuse. The PSP will include support strategies and be closely monitored to ensure change happens. Both the victim and the perpetrator will have a personalised PSP. Further consequences, up to and including a suspension from the Academy may be implemented at the Headteacher's discretion.
- There are occasions where it is not possible to prove cases of bullying. It cannot be pinpointed. However, we are aware this does not mean it is not happening. In such cases, students involved will be spoken to regularly and the situation will be monitored. This will include contacting parents and discussing the latest situation. Incidents will be recorded to establish a pattern of behaviour.
- There may be situations when bullying may be felt or perceived but not substantiated. There may also be instances where more than one party equally feels a victim of bullying. In these cases, the Academy will seek to support all parties involved, deal with the available evidence and act on the balance of probability

## **Recording Bullying**

All Incidents related to bullying are recorded on CPOMS (provides chronology). This is reviewed regularly and reported to both Governors and the Trust. Action taken is also recorded and we are held accountable by Governors and Trustees regarding bullying incidents at Watling. We also identify trends and respond accordingly.

## **Outcomes**

- Victims should feel safe and happy, with a confidence that the bullying should not re-occur.
- The victims should be aware that consequences have been issued to the bully, however the type of consequence will not necessarily be divulged to the victim.
- The bully should apologise to the victim, if appropriate.
- After the event, the pastoral team will continue to monitor the students to ensure there is no re-occurrence.
- We will use various forums, including assemblies, wellbeing lessons, tutorials and communications home to respond to any trends that may occur in an effort to reduce and prevent bullying at Watling.