



**Anti-Bullying and Harmful Peer Relations Policy**

<b>Review Body:</b>	Local Governing Body
<b>Leadership Group Responsibility:</b>	Headteacher
<b>Type of Policy:</b>	Non-Statutory
<b>Review Period:</b>	Every two years
<b>Reviewed:</b>	September 2024
<b>Next Review:</b>	September 2026

We believe that Newstead Wood School is an inclusive, supportive and tolerant school. Our students are very pleasant, caring and well-disciplined, and the incidence of bullying is rare, but it is right for all members of the school to be vigilant. The school has a legal duty to guard against the negative impact on children's welfare, happiness and development, caused by child on child abuse, which can include bullying.

Our ethos centres around the principle that all who work or study here respect and understand the needs of others. In this context bullying will not be tolerated. It is everyone's responsibility to prevent it happening and no-one should underestimate the potential psychological damage that bullying can cause - often far in excess of the intentions of the bully.

It is our fundamental belief that every student has the right to pursue their education free from adverse interference from others. We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our students in which each student can reach their potential in all areas, gaining self-esteem and being uniquely valued by others. This includes respecting each other's space, privacy and differences, treating everyone with kindness and sensitivity and offering support and encouragement to each other.

Students at Newstead Wood School are exceptionally able at resolving personal differences for themselves and their friends. However, there are occasions when staff intervention is required, to support students in resolving their differences and when we believe that bullying is or has been taking place.

**Definition of Bullying**

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. It may involve an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. Bullying or child-on-child abuse will not be tolerated at Newstead Wood School.

Parents and students should report any incident of bullying or child-on-child abuse following the procedures outlined in the separate policy.

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. The three main types of bullying are:

- physical (hitting, kicking, theft)
- verbal (name calling, racist remarks, homophobic remarks). This includes hurtful comments that are claimed to be “banter”. (Describing behaviour as “banter” can cause actual cases of bullying to go unreported and be dismissed as insignificant and we educate the students about this in PSHE lessons and other forums.
- indirect (spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups).

Cyberbullying is another form of bullying. This can be defined as the use of Information and Communications Technology, particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else. Cyberbullying takes different forms: threats and intimidation; harassment or “cyber-stalking” (e.g. repeatedly sending unwanted texts or instant messages); vilification/defamation; exclusion or peer rejection; impersonation; unauthorised publication of private information or images; and manipulation of text or images.

Cyberbullying will be treated as a serious matter and the following actions and sanctions relating to all forms of bullying apply equally to cyberbullying.

### **Vulnerable Students**

We recognise the need to acknowledge that some children are more at risk of potential targeting by bullying behaviour. Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024) emphasises the additional safeguarding challenges for children with SEN and Disabilities, including; the higher risk of peer group isolation, the disproportionate impact of bullying, and possible difficulties with communication.

### **Prevention**

Our initial concern is to prevent bullying rather than to punish the bullies. However, bullying is a major offence and will be dealt with firmly. A member of staff who witnesses bullying must deal with the incident immediately and directly. They must report what has happened to the Head of Year or Deputy Headteacher.

Within the curriculum the school will raise the awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in PSHE, form tutorial time, assemblies and subject areas, as appropriate, in an attempt to eradicate such behaviour.

Antibullying Ambassadors act around the school to promote positive behaviours and to raise the profile of our stance on bullying.

Staff attend regular training on the different types of bullying and how to spot signs.

All students and staff at Newstead Wood School have signed an Acceptable Usage Policy which governs their use of the school IT systems. Bullying is in contradiction of this agreement and could result in a student’s IT usage being restricted.

All staff are aware that students who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting from school. Students are encouraged to report bullying in school. In the case of cyberbullying there is often hard evidence in the form of text messages, emails or other electronic messages. These will be retained to aid any investigation.

### **Procedures**

Newstead Wood School's staff should be alert to signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with school procedure.

The following steps will be taken when dealing with incidents:

- if bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be recorded immediately by the member of staff who has been approached and referred to the Head of Year, Key Stage Lead or Deputy Headteacher.
- a clear account of the incident will be recorded
- the Head of Year may then interview all concerned
- the Head of Year may bring the parties together to discuss the situation and ways to resolve the issues involved if appropriate
- parents will be kept informed if appropriate
- The incident will be recorded using CPOMS

If the bullying persists or is deemed to be of a sufficiently serious nature, the Assistant/Deputy Headteacher will be involved at all stages, who may then refer it to the Headteacher. Parents will also be informed that their child has been involved in an incident.

Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of the pastoral team
- reassuring the student
- offering continuous support
- restoring self-esteem and confidence.

Students who have bullied will be helped by:

- discussing what happened
- discovering why the student became involved
- establishing the wrong doing and need to change
- informing parents or guardians to help change the attitude of the student.

The following disciplinary steps may be taken depending on the nature of the bullying or if it continues (this is not an hierarchical list);

- official warnings to stop the bullying behaviours

- detention
- confiscation of electronic equipment
- exclusion from certain areas of school premises
- removal from lessons to work in isolation
- minor fixed term exclusion
- major fixed term exclusion
- permanent exclusion.

### **Record keeping**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead acts as a central point for recording cases of bullying using CPOMS.

Heads of Year pass on to the designated person details of any incident which may be termed 'bullying'. This may take the form of forwarding emails or copying him/her to a file note on CPOMS. They keep a record of the incident and any action taken. If sanctions result from the incident, records are kept of these as well.

This system is intended to:

- provide the pastoral team with the fullest possible picture of the situation
- enable patterns and trends to be spotted which can then be followed up and addressed
- link up incidents which concern students from different Year groups
- provide a historical record. The record is also used as part of the "handover" process when one Head of Year meets with their immediate successor at the end of an academic year to pass on information about students in the relevant Year group.