



Woolwich Polytechnic
School for Girls



Woolwich Polytechnic School for Girls POLYMAT Anti-Bullying Policy

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Philosophy

All pupils and staff have the right to feel happy, safe and included. It is an integral part of the 3 school rules, to Be Ready, Be Respectful and Be Responsible.

Students and staff have the right to work in an environment without harassment, intimidation or fear. All bullying, of any sort, is therefore unacceptable.

Students who experience bullying will be supported.

We recognise the effects that bullying can have on students' feelings of worth and on their school work, and the school community will actively promote an anti-bullying environment.

Policy Statement

It is the belief of the staff and the Governors that all students should be included fully in the life of Woolwich Polytechnic School. We aim to provide a learning environment, free from any threat or fear, which is conducive to the achievement of individual aspirations.

We will strive to reduce and to eradicate, wherever possible, instances in which students are made to feel frightened, isolated or unhappy. Aiming to reduce and to eradicate wherever possible, instances in which students are subject to any form of bullying. We will do all that we can to respond effectively to all instances of bullying that are reported to us. Also to establish a means of dealing with bullying, providing support to students who have been bullied. Whilst also providing support for pupils who are accused of bullying, who may be experiencing problems of their own.

We will ensure that all pupils and staff are aware of the policy and that they fulfil their obligations to it and to meet any legal obligations which rest with the school.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying involves dominance of one student by another, or a group of others, is pre-meditated and usually forms a pattern of behaviour.

Bullying is therefore:

- Deliberately hurtful
- Repeated, often over a period of time
- Difficult for victims to defend themselves against.

It can take many forms but the main types are:

- Physical – hitting, kicking, taking another's belongings
- Verbal – name calling, insulting making offensive remarks
- Indirect – spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours, sending malicious e-mails or text messages on mobiles phones.

Principles

Behaviour is considered to be bullying if:-

- A person repeatedly uses offensive names, threatens or attacks, deliberately attempts to worry or upset, makes offensive signs, frightens or attempts to extort from another.
- Watching or encouraging another to be bullied is also considered to be bullying
- All bullying is challenged and addressed seriously and publicly
- Strategies exist to encourage victims to report bullying and to help them deal with bullying – develop a 'tell' culture
- Sensitivity is used to protect victims

Some forms of bullying are attacks not only on the individual, but also on the group to which he or she may belong. Within school we will pay particular attention to:-

- Racial harassment and racist bullying
- Bullying because of students' religious beliefs
- Sexual bullying
- Bullying because of pupils' sexual orientation (including the use of homophobic language)

- Bullying of students who have special educational needs or disabilities
- Any other group/s which may be identified within the school community.

Cyber Bullying

- Cyber bullying includes sending or posting harmful or upsetting text, images or other messages, using the internet, mobile phones or other communication technology.
- It can take many forms, but can go even further than face to face bullying by invading home and personal space and can target one or more people.
- It can take place across age groups and target pupils, staff and others.
- It can include threats and intimidation, harassment, defamation, exclusion or peer rejection, impersonation and unauthorised publication of private information or images.
- It can include messages intended as jokes, but which have a harmful or upsetting effect.
- Cyber bullying may be carried out in many ways, including:-
- Threatening, intimidating or upsetting text messages
- Threatening or embarrassing pictures and video clips via cameras
- Silent or abusive phone calls or using the victim's phone to harass others, to make them think the victim is responsible
- Threatening or bullying emails, possibly sent using a pseudonym or someone else's name
- Menacing or upsetting responses to someone in a chatroom
- Unpleasant messages sent during instant messaging mobile phone, unpleasant or defamatory information posted to blogs, personal websites and social networking sites (e.g. Facebook)

In some cases this type of bullying can be a criminal offence.

Our school's Behaviour Policy explains how we promote positive behaviour in school to create an environment where students behave well; where students take responsibility for each other's emotional and social well-being; and where they include and support each other.

Our curriculum is used to:

- Raise awareness about bullying and our anti-bullying policy
- Increase understanding for victims and help build an anti-bullying ethos
- To teach students how constructively to manage their relationships with others

Bullying will not be tolerated and we will aim to make this clear in the information we give to students and parents when they join our school.

We will use school assemblies to reinforce this message.

Where appropriate we will report illegal bullying to the School Police Officer

All reports will be taken seriously and will be followed up by the Pastoral Team and where necessary SLT.

When appropriate we will have Restorative Justice to prevent future incidents.

Creating an anti-bullying climate in school

We will advertise our anti-bullying policy on the school website.

Posters will remind students what constitutes bullying.

The school will support antibullying week each year.

There are anonymous boxes in the canteen and LRC for students to report bullying.

There is a noticeboard in the main corridor advertising the Heads of Year as points of contact.

Responding to incidents when they occur

Students who have been bullied should report this to their Tutor or Head of Year in the first instance, either in person, via email, via parents/friends or the antibullying boxes.

Students who see others being bullied should report this to the Tutor or another member of staff. All matters of bullying should be reported immediately to the Pastoral Team.

Reports of bullying will be logged by the Heads of Year on SIMs.

All reports will be taken seriously and will be followed up by the Pastoral team and where necessary SLT. Work with children who have been bullied could involve some or all of the following:

- We will provide support to students who are bullied.
- They will be reassured that they do not deserve to be bullied and this is not their fault. We will assure them that it was right to report the incident.
- We will encourage them to talk about how they feel.
- We will try to ascertain the extent of the problem.
- We will engage them in making choices about how the matter may be resolved.
- We will try to ensure that they feel safe.
- We will discuss strategies for being safe and staying safe.
- We will ask them to report immediately any further incidents to us.
- We will affirm that bullying can be stopped and that our school will persist with intervention until it does.
- We will involve their friends/older students in peer support/a buddying scheme/ mediation.
- We will interview the student (or students) involved in bullying separately.
- We will listen to their version of events.
- We will talk to anyone else who may have witness the bullying.
- We will reinforce the message that bullying is not acceptable, and that we expect bullying to stop.

Support of the student being bullied

As with any form of bullying, support for the individual will depend on the circumstances. Examples include:-

- Emotional support and reassurance that it was right to report the incident
- Advice not to retaliate or reply, but to keep the evidence and show or give it to their parent or a member of staff
- Advice on other aspects of the code to prevent re-occurrence
- Advice on how the perpetrator might be blocked from the individual's sites or services
- Actions, where possible and appropriate, to have offending material removed
- Advice to consider changing email addresses and/or mobile phone numbers
- Discuss contacting the police in cases of suspected illegal content.

There is also acknowledgement that the student bullying will also often need both support and sanction, parents of all parties will also be informed.

Staff responsibilities

Everyone within school is expected to:

- Act in a respectful and supportive way towards one another.
- Adhere to and to actively promote the objectives of this policy.

Students' responsibilities

Students are expected to

- ensure that they support the school rules to Be Ready, Be Respectful and Be Responsible, and to ensure their behaviour means other students are able to Be Ready, Be Respectful and Be Responsible.

Parents can help by:

- Supporting our anti-bullying policy and procedures
- Encouraging their children to be positive members of the school community
- Discussing with their child's teacher any concerns that their child may be experiencing bullying or involved in some other way.
- Helping to establish an anti-bullying culture outside of school.

Concerns, complaints and compliments

We recognise that there may be times when parents feel that we have not dealt well with an incident of bullying and we would ask that this be brought to the Headteacher's notice. If the Headteacher cannot resolve these concerns informally, parents can raise their concerns more formally through the school's Complaints Procedure.

We would also be pleased to receive compliments/feedback from parents when things have gone well.