

Westminster Synagogue Anti-Bullying and Racist Incidents Policy¹

Last Reviewed: February 2020

The Anti-Bullying Policy interacts with policies on Child ²Protection, Safeguarding, Behaviour, Social Networking/Acceptable Use of Information and Communication Technology, and Equality and Diversity.

Our Anti-Bullying Policy has been written by Westminster Synagogue, building on e-Safety government guidance. It has been agreed by senior management and approved by the Education Committee and Trustees.

1.0 Aims of the Policy

At Westminster Synagogue, staff, parents and children work together to create a happy, caring, safe, and tolerant environment encouraging caring attitudes and mutual respect where all can learn without anxiety. Bullying, verbal, physical or indirect, through the use of a computer, mobile phone, tablet or games console (cyber bullying), is wrong, damages individual children and will not be tolerated. It is everyone's responsibility to aim to prevent occurrences of bullying through promotion of self-esteem and self-discipline and to deal with any incidents quickly and effectively. We therefore do all we can to prevent it, by developing a community ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable. This policy aims to produce a consistent response to any bullying incidents that may occur and works alongside our Behaviour, Equality and Diversity, and Child Protection Policies. We aim to make all those connected with our children's education programmes aware of our opposition to bullying, and we make clear each person's responsibilities with regard to the eradication of bullying in our programmes.

The role and responsibilities of the Head of Education, our education staff and parents are set out in Appendix B of this document.

2.0 Definition of Bullying

Bullying is action taken by one or more children with the deliberate intention of hurting another child, either physically or emotionally.

Bullying can be described as being 'a deliberate act done to cause distress solely in order to give a feeling of power, status or other gratification to the bully. It can range from ostracising, name-calling, teasing, threats and extortion, through to physical assault on persons and/or their property. It can be an unresolved single incident, or a series of such incidents.'

Bullying can be related to appearance, personality traits, perceived capabilities/limitations, race, religion or culture, Special Education Needs (SEN) or disabilities, wealth, nationality, home circumstances and sexual orientation.

¹ From Primary School Anti-Bullying Policy

² A child is defined in law (Children Act 1989, 2004 and Scottish equivalent) as anyone who has not reached their 18th birthday. 'Children' therefore means 'children and young people'. Child Protection legislation and guidance therefore only applies to those members and users of WS's services up to that age.

3.0 Recognising Bullies, and Signs and Symptoms of Bullying³

Recognising bullies⁴:

- Children who bully tend to have assertive, aggressive attitudes over which they exercise little control. However, they sometimes operate in a more subtle, less overt manner.
- Bullies tend to lack empathy; they cannot imagine how the victim feels.
- Bullies tend to lack guilt; they rationalise that the victim somehow deserves the bullying treatment.

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Staff should be aware of these possible signs and they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to/from Westminster Synagogue
- is frightened of coming to Westminster Synagogue
- persistently feels ill in the morning and is unwilling to come to Westminster Synagogue
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, lacking in confidence, starts stammering, attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- Goes home with clothes, books or possessions damaged
- has money continually "lost", asks for or steals money
- has unexplained cuts or bruises, stops eating, becomes aggressive, disruptive or is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone and is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received
- is frightened to say what's wrong, or gives improbable excuses for any of the above.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

4.0 Principles governing our response to bullying

Despite all efforts to prevent it, bullying behaviour may occur and Westminster Synagogue recognises this fact. In the event of such incidents, the following principles will govern Westminster Synagogue's response:

- We will be proactive in our approach to bullying and apply an anti-bullying strategy through our curriculum, our ethos, our staff training and in our communications, in order to lessen the likelihood of it happening.
- Within the Synagogue, children are aware that incidents of bullying can be brought to the attention of staff either by the victim(s), their friend(s), their parent(s) or other interested people. They are made aware through a sign on the noticeboard, as well as being told at least once per half-term in assembly and by class teachers and reminded through teaching activities.
- All incidents of bullying will be addressed thoroughly and sensitively.

³ From NNLS AB Policy 2016

⁴ From Alyth Behaviour Policy 2012

- Children/ young people will be encouraged to immediately report any incident of bullying that they witness. They will be reassured that what they say will be taken seriously and handled carefully.
- It is our belief that silence and secrecy nurture bullying and it is therefore important that children realise that their concerns will always be recognised and dealt with appropriately.
- Staff/ volunteers have a duty to inform the Director of Community and Education if they witness an incident of bullying involving children or adults at the Synagogue.
- If a child/ young person or member of staff/ volunteer tells someone that they are being bullied, they will be given the time to explain what has happened and reassured that they were right to talk about it.
- The individual who has been the victim of bullying will be helped and supported by the staff team. They will be kept under close supervision.
- In most cases, bullying behaviour can be addressed according to the strategies set out in the behaviour management policy. The bully will be encouraged to discuss their behaviour and think through the consequences of their actions. Where appropriate, they will be encouraged to talk through the incident with the other person concerned.
- Where bullying behaviour persists, more serious action may have to be taken, as laid out in our Behaviour Policy.
- If a parent/ carer raises a concern of bullying, the Director of Community and Education will immediately reassure them that this is an issue and taken seriously. The Director of Community and Education will address the situation appropriately, promptly and effectively.
- Parents are encouraged to report and discuss any incidents of perceived bullying with either their child's class teacher or the Director of Community and Education . If parents wish to pursue this matter further, the Chair of the Education Committee can be informed as per the complaints procedure policy.
- All incidents of bullying will be reported and recorded in the Incident Record book.
- The Director of Community and Education monitors any situations that are persistent and are recorded in consultation with the Rabbi, as pastoral leader, and Executive Director as operational lead.
- During staff meetings safeguarding issues are a standing agenda item and all staff are made aware of any relevant current issues. All staff have the responsibility of monitoring and providing educational opportunities to advise on preventative strategies.

5.0 Proactive Approaches to Anti-Bullying⁵

5.1 All teachers are trained in appropriate proactive anti-bullying strategies such as group building, how to set ground rules and how to ensure events are 'safe spaces'. Our leadership training for help teachers also contains this important component.

5.2 The Or Shabbat curriculum is based on Jewish values, with *g'millut chassadim* (acts of loving kindness) prominent among them, along with *b'tzelem Elohim* (that we are all made in the image of God), *tikkun olam* (healing the world), *tzedakah* (charity) and *darchei shalom* (the ways of peace). We regularly emphasise these values through our teaching as well

⁵ From RSY Statement on Bullying

as discussing them in assemblies and at Family Services. Through these means, we make it clear that bullying runs against our ethos, that it will not be permitted and that our expectation is of a respectful and inclusive community.

5.3 Prevention⁶: We may use the following methods for helping children to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

- writing a set of class rules
- signing a behaviour contract
- writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying and making connections with Jewish source material
- reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly
- using role play as a trigger for discussion
- having discussions about bullying and why it matters.

5.4 All participants sign a Code of Conduct prior to participating in any residential event.

6.0 Guidelines for Dealing with Reports of Bullying

Incidents of alleged bullying should be dealt with initially by the staff who are told about it, but with the support of the Director of Community and Education. Depending on the severity of the case it may be that the Director of Community and Education will deal with it immediately.

- i. Listen to the person reporting the bullying (who may or may not be the person being bullied), and ensure they feel safe and supported. Always thank them for telling you. Reassure them that the situation will be investigated fully. This will require patience and understanding.
- ii. Talk to the person who has been accused of bullying and person being bullied separately. Reassure the person being bullied that you will support them and ensure they feel safe. When meeting with the person accused of bullying, it is important that they feel listened to and that the behaviour should be challenged and not the individual. Until you have heard both sides of the story it is important to keep an open mind.
- iii. Talk to any other people who may have relevant information e.g. peers, leaders.
- iv. If appropriate, meet with both parties involved and try to seek reconciliation.
- v. Write a full report of the discussions and ensure this is shared with the Director of Community and Education.
- vi. Final decisions as to actions to take should be made by the Director of Community and Education in discussion with the staff members who are aware of the context. Sanctions may include use of the strike system and/or consequences such as missing an activity. Consequences should always include apologising to the person who has been bullied.
- vii. Parents of participants who have been bullied, and those who have been bullying, should be informed by the Director of Community and Education where appropriate, who will then

⁶ From NNSL Anti-Bullying Policy 2016

give the young person an opportunity to speak directly to their parents. Parents of others who may have been affected may need to be contacted too.

- viii. If appropriate, additional activities may be arranged, aimed at group cohesion, respect and community-building, and challenging inappropriate attitudes and behaviours.

7.0 Procedure following instances of bullying

- Sanctions for the bully may include withdrawal from favoured activities, exclusion or expulsion from programmes, depending on the perceived severity of the incident(s).
- Continue monitoring the situation by observing at all times and having discussions with the victim to ensure there is no repetition.
- As the behaviour of the bully (hopefully) improves, then favoured activities etc. can be reinstated, and the child should be praised for good behaviour. This will rebuild the child's self-esteem, which may have been damaged after being caught bullying, or could have been low anyway, hence the bullying.
- The police may be informed where it is appropriate and necessary to do so.

8.0 Responding to Cyber bullying

Bullying can be done verbally, in writing or with images, including through communication technology (cyber bullying) e.g. graffiti, text messaging, e-mail or postings on websites. If a bullying incident directed at a child occurs using email or mobile phone technology, either during Synagogue time, the HoE must be informed as soon as possible and try to establish whether this is a new or ongoing problem.

8.1 If this is a new problem or it is impossible to establish whether this is a new problem or something that is already being dealt with, the guidelines set out in section 6 should be followed, and in addition:

- Advise the child not to respond to the message(s)
- Refer to relevant policies including Social Media/Social Networking and Behaviour Policies and apply appropriate sanctions
- Secure and preserve any evidence
- Notify parents of the children involved where appropriate
- Consider delivering a parent workshop for the Synagogue community in addition to a workshop for students
- Consider informing the police depending on the severity or repetitious nature of offence
- Inform the local authority (LA) e-safety officer if malicious or threatening comments are posted on an Internet site
- Inform and request the comments be removed if the site is administered externally
- Endeavour to trace the origin and inform police as appropriate
- Inform LA e-safety officer/CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre)

8.2 If the Director of Community and Education establishes that this is part of an ongoing problem, the Director of Community and Education should speak to parents and support the efforts that are being made to deal with the problem. The guidelines set out in section 6 should be followed in dealing with the child. The Director of Community and Education may also:

- Secure and preserve any evidence
- Consider delivering a parent workshop for the Synagogue community in addition to a workshop for students
- Consider informing the police depending on the severity or repetitious nature of offence
- Inform the LA e-safety officer if malicious or threatening comments are posted on an internet site
- If the site is administered externally, tell the administrator and ask for the comments to be removed and endeavour to trace the origin and inform police as appropriate
- Inform LA e-safety officer/CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre).

Children should be confident in a no-blame culture when it comes to reporting inappropriate incidents involving the internet or mobile technology: they must be able to do this without fear.

9.0 Responding to Racist Incidents

9.1 Unacceptable racist acts may include:

- Direct physical assault or the threat of it
- Racist name-calling or racist joke-making
- Expressing prejudices or deliberate mis-information on racial or ethnic distinctions
- Distributing racist literature
- Writing or expressing provocative slogans or catchphrases.

9.2 Actions to be taken in the event of racist incidents:

All forms of racial abuse by any person within the Synagogue are treated seriously.

- i. We will record, investigate and act upon such incidents and parents will be contacted.
- ii. All incidents of racism should be reported (using Appendix A) to the Director of Community and Education, or in his / her absence to another member of the teaching team, who will record and pass the incident on to the Director of Community and Education at the earliest opportunity.
- iii. All racist incidents will be investigated by the Director of Community and Education along with the Executive Director.
- iv. Following the initial report and actions taken, a follow-up meeting will take place (see Appendix A) to review progress and outline further monitoring/actions to be taken
- v. Blank forms are kept in the ground floor office and in the basement classroom area.
- vi. It will always be made clear to offending pupils that such behaviour is unacceptable.
- vii. By encouraging pupils to work collaboratively as well as cultivating a global, tolerant, open- minded ethos based on Jewish values of acceptance and respect within our curriculum and education provision, we will discourage such abuse.

- viii. Racist incidents in the Synagogue are reported to the Education Committee and Safeguarding Trustee each term.
- ix. The police may be informed if necessary.

APPENDIX A- Incidents of Bullying Form



Bullying and Racism Report Form

*Please continue on separate sheet if more space is required

Name of person completing form:	
Date of incident:	Time of incident:
Location:	
People involved:	
Staff responsible for student(s):	
Type of bullying: <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal <input type="checkbox"/> Relational <input type="checkbox"/> Physical: Resulted in injury? YES/NO	
Describe the incident (staff report)*:	
Describe the incident (student's comments)*:	
Parent/carer comments*:	

<p>Actions taken*:</p>
<p>Follow-up required: Yes / No (If yes, please complete below)</p>

Signature (staff): _____

Signature (parent/carer): _____

Signature
(Head of Education) _____

Bullying incident follow-up

Meeting date:	Meeting time:
People present:	
<p>According to the student, has the issue been resolved? Yes / No / Neither</p>	
<p>Further actions to take (e.g. changing class seating plan, etc.)*:</p>	
<p>Any other comments*:</p>	
Continue monitoring? Yes / No	

APPENDIX B - The Roles of the Director of Community and Education, Education Staff and Parents in our Anti-Bullying Strategy.

i) The role of the Head of Education (HoE)

It is the responsibility of the Director of Community and Education to implement the anti-bullying strategy and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the policy and know how to deal with incidents of bullying. The Director of Community and Education reports to the Education Committee and Executive Committee about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.

The Director of Community and Education ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this Synagogue's programmes.

The Director of Community and Education ensures that all staff receive sufficient training to be equipped to deal with all incidents of bullying.

The Director of Community and Education sets the climate of mutual support and praise for success in our children's education programmes, so making bullying less likely. This includes implementing a range of preventative strategies as set out in part 5 of this document. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming community, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

ii) The role of the Teacher, Junior Teacher or Help Teacher

All staff in our children's education programmes take all forms of bullying seriously, and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. They record incidents that happen in their class and that they are aware of in the environment. If teachers witness an act of bullying, they do all they can to support the child who is being bullied. When an incident of bullying is noticed and recorded, after consultation with the Director of Community and Education, the Director of Community and Education may inform the child's parents.

All staff attempt to support all children in their class and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. By praising, rewarding and celebrating the success of all children, we aim to prevent incidents of bullying.

Teachers are aware of the vulnerable including Looked after Children, SEN pupils and those for whom English may not be a first language.

Teachers should develop preventative strategies along with their co/support staff to ensure they deliver a curriculum that protects every child from bullying, disrespectful behaviour or racism.

iii) The role of Parents

Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, are strongly encouraged to contact the Director of Community and Education immediately in strictest confidence. Parents have a responsibility to support the Synagogue's anti-bullying policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the community. Parents must not approach other parents or children with regard to allegations of bullying and should refer only to a class teacher or the Director of Community and Education with any concern. Parents and staff should always treat each other with trust and respect when discussing matters concerning their children. If a member of staff fails to show respect, the matter can be dealt with through the Complaints Policy.

Any concerns that bullying is taking place should be discussed privately. These discussions will be in strictest confidence.