

OUR RESPECT STRATEGY

Person Responsible: Headteacher

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People Involved: SLT

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The Respect Strategy

What is the Respect Strategy?

Vision and Culture

At Whitstone School, we believe that every student has the right to learn and socially develop in a safe and happy environment. We believe that this environment should be built on respect between all individuals, irrespective of their gender, sexual orientation, race or socio-economic background. At Whitstone School, we continually strive to embed a culture of equality, fairness and understanding, built on education for all members of our community, a clear process for dealing with issues where standards have fallen below our expectations and a staged approach to dealing with such issues.

The aim of this Respect Strategy document, the training and education that underpins it and the sharing of our process with the wider community is to ensure that we are transparent in our aim for complete safety and equality for all and the steps we will take to achieve this. Rather than see aspects of equality and safety as additional to 'the norm', we believe that it is important that we create a culture which includes all of these aspects from the very beginning.

Whilst adults have a key role to play in ensuring a respectful, safe and happy environment is available to all students to learn in, this document focuses on the behaviour of students towards each other and the procedures in place to deal with situations whereby behaviour has contravened the pillars of the Respect Strategy. Documentation around the behaviours of adults in school can be found in other school policy, notably the Staff Code of Conduct. That is not to say that all adults in school, parents and Trustees cannot model the behaviours expected of all students and in fact, work has been undertaken to ensure that the policy and documentation in place regarding staff behaviours mirrors the Respect Strategy expectations of student behaviour.

Finally, it is important that the Respect Strategy is read in conjunction with our Whitstone School Behaviour for Learning Policy. This policy focuses on academic behaviour for learning and the basic expectations of student behaviour around the school site. This Respect Strategy goes further and focuses on the specific structures in place to ensure that all students are respected and valued, whilst also outlining how young people should interact between each other.

How do we respect every student at our school?

Pillars of our Respect Strategy

The pillars which form our Respect Strategy are based on the protected characteristics within the Equality Act 2010 and also feedback from students within our school. These are the characteristics which we feel are a central part of the environment of respect which we wish to create and embed within our school. From these characteristics, we are then able to identify behaviours which do not protect these characteristics, do not allow students to feel safe and do not lead to a culture of understanding and happiness.

Gender: Every student at Whitstone School will be treated equally irrespective of their gender. We respect the right of all young people to identify on the gender spectrum and do not promote or support the notion of the gender binary approach. At Whitstone School, we are aware of the challenges and barriers which our female students and those who identify as trans face in terms of equality and fair opportunities. In all aspects of our academic work, pastoral care and support of young people, we respect a student's right to equal opportunity irrespective of their gender or gender identity.

Race: At Whitstone School, we are proud to welcome students to our school who fit different racial and ethnic categories. All students are made welcome and their right to a fair and equal education at our school is a key aspect of this Strategy. Whilst students are free to attend Whitstone School irrespective of their racial identity, we are also very aware of the different outcomes experienced by different racial groups at our school and across the country. As such, we work strategically with students from different racial backgrounds to support their development in a manner which is linked to wider research, cultural understanding and acceptance.

Sexual Orientation: This Respect Strategy, and our structures in school, aim to remove any form of discrimination, inequality or unpleasant language/behaviour towards young people of all sexual orientations. As detailed earlier in this document, we believe that it is important to create a culture and a way of working together which is built on acceptance, rather than on the requirement to 'add on' new ways of working which see us accept young people as 'different' to the norm. We believe that language between young people is crucially important in moving away from words and terms which may create a derogatory impression of different sexual orientations.

Socio-Economic Background: We are aware that we welcome students to our school from a variety of family backgrounds and who have different financial situations at home. All students are treated equally, irrespective of their family situation or the wealth that they may experience at home. Despite this, we do work hard to ensure that those students who may be national recognized as Pupil Premium, and those who we may additionally designate as disadvantaged, receive additional funding, support and academic help where appropriate.

Religion: Students at our school are educated about the different World religions and an acceptance, understanding and support of all religions is important in creating a culture whereby students can practice a religion or none in safety. Our process also includes a system for challenging and sanctioning behaviour which does not evidence acceptance of different religions and belief systems.

What are we trying to achieve?

Aims of The Respect Strategy

1. For all members of our school community to feel valued, respected and safe whilst at our school.
2. For students to act as respectful role models whilst in the wider community.
3. For there to be a clear understanding that there are times when issues arise between students and provide a clear and transparent procedure for dealing with these instances.
4. To ensure that where issues do arise between students, the procedure for dealing with these instances includes an emphasis on restorative practice, education for the students involved and learning at each point for Whitstone School.

Who will help us achieve this?

Student Involvement and Peer Mentors

Students in all years have been involved throughout the writing of this Respect Strategy. They have been involved in initial discussions around the sort of ethos, culture and environment they wish to be a part of at Whitstone School, provided ideas and feedback around protected characteristics and also gave thought to the procedures and sanctions associated with each form of poor student-to-student behaviour.

We have also trained and introduced Peer Mentors, who work as student mental health support and can provide a different form of help. These students are also trained in how to deal with allegations of student-to-student behaviour and how they will be dealt with. They hold individual and small group sessions with

students who may require support, whilst also providing help in dealing with low-level allegations and restorative justice sessions.

Student Receptionist

Our Student Receptionist is an experienced and skilled colleague who works with individual students and small groups to ensure that all individuals feel supported and safe. This colleague will often attend pastoral briefing each day and will be able to contribute information regarding student-to-student behaviour which needs to be investigated and dealt with appropriately. Students are able to access support from the Student Receptionist throughout the day at the front of the school building.

Wellbeing Practitioner

This member of staff plays a key role in the day to day organisation of the Respect Strategy. This colleague will regularly review the Google Form which details allegations and investigations around incidents and will then provide rapid response support where required. The Wellbeing Practitioner will liaise with parents, run restorative justice sessions and is line managed by the restorative justice lead in school.

Heads of Year

Heads of Year will often play a key role in the dealing with bullying allegations and incidents and will be central to the strategic approach to issues within their year groups. These colleagues also work collaboratively to find the best ways of dealing with behaviour which contravenes the Respect Strategy and organising longer-term work with groups of students.

Aspire Leads

Every student at Whitstone School has an Aspire Lead, who can provide initial support around the key issues within this Strategy. Aspire Leads will know individual students well and will be able to build strong working relationships with the students in their Aspire Groups. An Aspire Lead is often well-placed to respond to issues around student-to-student behaviour.

Safeguarding Team

We have a relatively large safeguarding team comprising of colleagues with different skills and backgrounds. This blend of skills allows the team to work cohesively together and challenge the decisions made by other members of the team. The safeguarding team will focus on incidents around sexualised behaviour between students and other matters of a more serious nature.

ELSAs

Part of the work conducted by staff in school around longer-term wellbeing is run by our ELSA staff. These colleagues will work with individuals and small-groups, often working on a referral basis from Heads of Year.

Respect Strategy Education

The Respect Strategy will only be successful in achieving its intended aims if students, staff, parents, Trustees and the wider community are educated to apply the principles within it consistently. Regular training is key to ensuring that all students, staff, parents and Trustees are aware of the approach taken in school and the way in which allegations of student-to-student behaviour can be reported.

This training comes through a variety of methods and is seen as a long-term approach, with regular updates provided. Staff meetings, Trustee meetings, assemblies, regular Aspire updates and one-to-one education for individuals all form part of the wider education. Parents/carers are also included through regular communication, briefings and information evenings.

Definitions of Student-to-Student Behaviours

Bullying/ Peer-On-Peer Abuse

At Whitstone School, we understand that there are times when adolescent young people, especially teenagers, may behave in a manner which is unpleasant and unwanted towards each other. This understanding and awareness that bullying can take place in all spaces whereby young people gather, is an important first step in creating an inclusive, safe culture and also in dealing with instances of bullying between students.

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behaviour among students that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both kids who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting issues as a result.

In order to be considered bullying, the behaviour must be aggressive and include:

- **An Imbalance of Power:** Students who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- **Repetition:** Bullying behaviours happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumours, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

To ensure that all students are aware of what bullying is, and as a result can request help and support when they are being bullied, we use the acronym 'STOP'. This corresponds to the words;

Several Times On Purpose

Those students who have been mistreated by other students on several occasions in a manner which displays intent and an aim to upset the other party, would be seen as victims of bullying.

As detailed above, the acronym 'STOP' is a key part of our Respect Strategy. Whilst students should not feel that anti-bullying is the only aspect of the Respect Strategy, it is a key part and, as such, has its own acronym.

Low-Level Disagreements

When relatively large numbers of young people gather together in a school, there are often disagreements, misunderstandings and relatively low-level comments made between individuals. Whilst these comments can have a negative impact on the wellbeing and mental health of the victim, they are one-off occurrences and would initially be dealt with as such. If there repeated instances of low-level disagreements between students, this may in time turn into bullying behaviour and the response to this would change.

It is very important that our students, staff and parents are able to distinguish between behaviour between students which is bullying and which is of a low-level disagreement nature. Whilst neither are tolerated and both will be dealt with according to the procedures set out in this document, it is important that there is a difference observed between the two types of behaviour. This will allow for a more nuanced and strategic response which will, in time, improve the quality of pastoral care in school.

Sexualised behaviour

We are very aware that young people, on occasion, may behave in a manner towards each other which is of an unwanted, sexualised manner. As with other forms of unwanted, student to student behaviour, this is dealt with in school as a matter of priority. At Whitstone School, we do not hide the reality that this sort of behaviour does happen between young people in school and seek to both educate students regarding the correct behaviour and also deal with any incidents of sexualised behaviour in line with our Respect Strategy. These incidents are almost always dealt with by our highly trained safeguarding team, who have also undergone additional training in how to handle disclosures of sexualised student-to-student behaviour. It is sometimes the case that these incidents may require additional input from external agencies, such as the Police, Children's Social Care and organisations which specialise in support for young people affected by sexualised behaviour.

Racist

Racism is not tolerated at Whitstone School and a strong stance is taken against such language and behaviour. We are very aware of the heightened rhetoric around the country regarding race and the issues that young people of all races are dealing with. Again, as with other forms of student-to-student behaviour, we seek to educate young people to develop and embed a culture of acceptance and tolerance, whilst also strongly dealing with proven allegations of racism.

Transphobic/Homophobic Comments

The final aspect of student-to-student behaviour which we cover explicitly in this Strategy, is language and behaviour which seeks to undermine, humiliate or attack a student's sexuality or gender identity. Language overheard which is used in a 'light-hearted' manner is routinely challenged and dealt with, whilst behaviour of a serious nature against a particular group of students is also dealt with in a prompt and full way.

How will we educate everyone?

Education and Training

As referred to previously in this document, education and training are a key part of this Strategy. The forms of education and training are outlined below however, it is important to note that this is not an exhaustive list and other methods may be used as and when incidents arise.

- Assemblies
- Aspire Time
- Through lessons such as (but not confined to) Ethics and Culture, PHSE and Humanities.
- Parent Information Evenings
- Written communication with parents
- Trustee training sessions and meetings
- Staff meetings, small group sessions and documentation

- Initial Year 7 Induction and Parent Information Evenings

Restorative Justice

An important aspect of our work to build a respectful and safe environment for all students, is the work we do around restorative justice. We believe that there is a place for sanctions for behaviour between students which is not in line with the pillars and principles of our Respect Strategy however, we are also mindful that young people make mistakes and, as such, seek to build in a restorative element to all of our interactions around student-to-student behaviour.

At our school, we have a member of staff who leads our restorative work and is highly trained in this area. This colleague is then supported by layers of staff in school, all of whom have received training around the use of restorative language and its role in dealing with poor student-to-student behaviour.

What Support is Available?

At Whitstone School, we have a wealth of support available to young people who have been the victim of unpleasant student-to-student behaviour. Some of this behaviour has been detailed below:

- ELSA sessions
- Animal therapy
- Keyworker support
- Attendance and Safeguarding Worker support
- Mental Health Support Team
- School Nurse
- Peer Mentors
- Aspire Lead support
- Use of a wide variety of external agencies, dependent on the requirements of the individual

Learning Lessons

As with all aspects of education and wider society, we understand that sometimes mistakes are made. Whilst our aim is to always seek to reduce these mistakes, it is vitally important that we continually review our practice, look closely at incidents which have not been dealt with to the high standards we expect and also take on board feedback from all members of our community to continually review our procedures.

The learning from these 'lessons' will be documented and stored within school, with regular updates given to staff around the learning and what we will do to amend our practices.

Appendix A: Student-To-Student Behaviour Flow Chart

A student behaves in a manner towards another student which does not respect their basic protected characteristics.

The member of staff who observes the behaviour begins an initial investigation to understand what has taken place.

Once the member of staff has collected the relevant information, they will complete the Google Form as soon possible. If the situation requires immediate attention from either the DSL or Wellbeing Practitioner, the member of staff will ensure that they are aware of the information via MyConcern.

The Wellbeing Practitioner will monitor the Google Form throughout the day and will delegate tasks to relevant colleagues as and when is appropriate.

The Google Form will be reviewed daily at the morning pastoral briefings.

MyConcern logs will be checked throughout the school day and periodically during evenings, weekends and holidays.

Once the situation has been logged, dealt with in accordance with the Google Form instructions and parents/carers communicated with, there will be a 2 week monitoring window. At the end of this window, the follow-up review will take place.

If the 2 weekly review is successful, the incident will be archived and kept for monitoring and analysis purposes.

If the 2 weekly review is unsuccessful, or if there are further incidents in the intervening period, the situation will return to the start of the flow diagram.

Appendix B: Several Times On Purpose (STOP) Poster

These posters are displayed around school and are visible in every classroom. They provide a definition of bullying and signpost students to what the relevant means of reporting the bullying.

Appendix C: Google Form Example

To ensure that all staff members are able to highlight examples of inappropriate student-to-student behaviour, a Google Form with clear next step instructions is available to all colleagues. This can be accessed anywhere in school and also when off site. This ensures consistency and also allow colleagues the opportunity to observe trends and patterns in behaviour.

Appendix D: Student Respect Form

We are aware that some students may find it easier to disclose behaviour towards them in an anonymous manner or in a way which removes the need to speak initially to a member of staff. To cover this possibility, we have a link on our school website to allow students to report allegations of poor behaviour between students.

Students can also disclose information to staff members via Epraise, which can be done so outside of school. This allows all students the option of doing so from home in an evening or at weekends.

Appendix E: SEND Students

Appendix F: Respect Strategy Posters

Appendix G: Research

The links below provide an idea of the research used to write this Respect Strategy.

<https://www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk/anti-bullying.html>

[Home | When the Adults Change](#)

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/tools/guidance-reports/improving-behaviour-in-schools/>

https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/sites/default/files/migrated/article/inline/Behaviour%20Regulation%20Policy%20Guidance%20-%20Sep%2018_1.pdf

https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/sites/default/files/migrated/article/inline/Behaviour%20Regulation%20Policy%20Guidance%20-%20Sep%2018_1.pdf

[What-We-Say-Comic-1.pdf \(beaconhouse.org.uk\)](#)