

Westminster Tutors



Anti-Bullying Policy

2026-2027

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Anti-Bullying Policy enshrines a central aspect of Westminster Tutors' ethos: to provide a warm, friendly and inclusive atmosphere in which each student is valued. Supporting students' safety and wellbeing helps develop confident and considerate individuals. The College aims to prevent bullying and respond effectively whenever it occurs.
- 1.2 This policy applies to all students, including those aged 18 and over, and to staff and independent teachers working with them. It should be read with the Behaviour Policy, Equality and Diversity Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Online Safety Policy, Staff and Teacher Code of Conduct, Exclusion Policy and the College's PSHCE provision. Concerns about an adult working with students must follow the Safeguarding Policy's adult-concern reporting route rather than a student mediation procedure.
- 1.3 This policy takes account of the College's equality and safeguarding responsibilities and its private further education context, including:
 - the Equality Act 2010 and the duties applicable to the College's provision, including protection from unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and the consideration of reasonable adjustments;
 - the relevant Private Further Education inspection framework and the College's Safeguarding Policy, informed by Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, September 2026) for safeguarding students under 18. Adult-student concerns require an age-appropriate safeguarding response.

2. Aims

- 2.1 The aims of this policy are that Westminster Tutors will:
 - Maintain an environment characterised by warmth, positive regard, and mutual respect so that bullying will be less likely.
 - Raise awareness of bullying through the curriculum, PSHCE and other activities.
 - Have a Behaviour Policy that clarifies that all forms of bullying are totally unacceptable.
 - Develop effective strategies for recognising and supporting students who experience bullying, including homophobic and transphobic bullying, online bullying and bullying related to disability, race, religion, sex or culture, and for addressing the behaviour of those responsible.
 - Ensure that staff and independent teachers know how to recognise, report and respond to bullying consistently and take every incident seriously.
 - Assure students and parents that reports of bullying will be listened to and treated seriously.
- 2.2 The College draws on the principles in [DfE guidance on preventing and tackling bullying](#), which can also be useful in further education settings. School-specific statutory powers must not be assumed to apply to this private provider.

3. What constitutes bullying?

- 3.1 Bullying involves an imbalance of power, making it hard for those bullied to defend themselves. Bullying may be seen or felt physically, online, or psychologically, and includes social isolation, intimidation, and any threat of violence.

- 3.2 Bullying is generally characterised by deliberately hurtful behaviour repeated over time. A serious one-off incident, discriminatory harassment, sexual harassment or other abuse requires action even where this repeated-behaviour definition is not met. Staff must not wait for an incident to be repeated before addressing harm.
- 3.3 Bullying may take various forms and is often motivated by prejudice, including:
- Online bullying: using electronic communications, images, video, gaming, social media or other digital services to frighten, humiliate or harass. Content can spread rapidly and remain accessible; repeated sharing can compound harm. This includes abusive or deceptive AI-generated content.
 - Disability: focusing on the issue of disability.
 - Emotional: excluding, tormenting (e.g., hiding books, threatening gestures).
 - Homophobic or Transphobic: focusing on issues of sexuality and/or gender identity.
 - Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence inflicted on another individual.
 - Racist/Cultural/Religious: racial, cultural, or religious taunts, comments, or gestures.
 - Sexual: sexual taunts, comments, gestures, aggressions around a person's body, or unwanted comments of a sexual nature.
 - Verbal: words used to hurt or intimidate, including name-calling, sarcasm, unkind teasing and spreading rumours.
- 3.4 Bullying can be carried out by an individual or a group. The College addresses harmful behaviour and supports students to change it, taking account of their understanding, individual needs and the effect on others.
- 3.5 Westminster Tutors respects differences, welcomes diversity in young people and society, and believes the College should be inclusive.
- 3.6 Westminster Tutors believes that students should have the right to feel safe, secure and valued and that creating a safe environment and dealing with bullying is everyone's responsibility.
- 3.7 Westminster Tutors supports a range of positive strategies to deal with bullying and actively challenges the use of humiliation, fear, ridicule, and other similar approaches to reduce bullying.
- 3.8 Bullying can result in long-term psychological damage and, in extreme cases, suicide. It is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on the grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or gender identity, special educational needs and disability, or because a student is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between young people or perceived differences. Any prejudice-based language is unacceptable.
- 3.9 Bullying is not itself a single specific criminal offence, but conduct described as bullying may involve crimes such as assault, harassment, threats or sexual offences. Staff must seek safeguarding and police advice where appropriate and follow the Safeguarding Policy. Call 999 where there is immediate danger or an emergency.

- 3.10 This policy applies to behaviour on College premises, during remote lessons, on visits and to off-site or online conduct that affects students' safety, well-being or participation in College life. Concerns involving travel, the local community or other providers will be addressed through the College's Behaviour and Safeguarding Policies and appropriate liaison. The policy does not create statutory school disciplinary or search powers.

4. Our Procedures

- 4.1 Effective training is essential to preventing and tackling bullying. The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) is responsible for ensuring that staff and independent teachers understand this policy, reporting routes, relevant responsibilities and sources of support. Training should address the needs of students with SEND and those who may be targeted because of actual or perceived differences, including lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students.
- 4.2 The College recognises that bullying can occur anywhere. Staff and teachers should be alert to patterns, locations and times of increased risk, including online and less supervised spaces. The College will consider its layout and existing safety arrangements when assessing those risks. CCTV does not replace supervision, listening to students or safeguarding action.
- 4.3 We aim to ensure that staff feel confident to tackle all forms of bullying and that students are empowered to say "no" to bullying.
- 4.4 Where bullying is suspected or disclosed, first consider immediate safety and welfare. Listen, reassure the student, record their account accurately and avoid promising secrecy. Report the concern promptly to a senior member of staff and record it on MyConcern. Suspected abuse, sexual violence or harassment, coercion or serious threats must be referred immediately to the DSL or a deputy and handled under the Safeguarding Policy before deciding on a College investigation. Recording a concern must not delay protective action or a referral. Any College fact-finding should be coordinated with safeguarding or police enquiries, use separate age-appropriate conversations and preserve evidence safely.
- 4.5 Affected students will be kept appropriately informed. Parents or carers of a student under 18 will normally be involved unless this could increase risk or prejudice an investigation. For students aged 18 or over, family involvement will normally require the student's agreement or another lawful basis. Information about another student must be shared only where necessary, lawful and proportionate.
- 4.6 Responses may include pastoral support, education, protective arrangements and sanctions under the Behaviour and Exclusion Policies. Serious or persistent bullying may lead to suspension or exclusion following the relevant procedures; a sanction must not be automatic or replace safeguarding action. Mediation or restorative work may be considered only after an assessment of risk, where appropriate and freely agreed by those affected. A student must not be pressured to meet the person alleged to have harmed them. A senior member of staff will oversee follow-up with relevant teachers and students to check safety and whether the behaviour has stopped.

- 4.7 Parents and carers are encouraged to raise concerns promptly and support students to report incidents to a trusted member of staff. Students may report directly to a teacher, personal tutor, mentor, the Pastoral Coordinator or the DSL. The Principal is responsible for ensuring that incidents and actions are recorded in the behaviour incident log; safeguarding records are maintained through the safeguarding arrangements, with access limited appropriately.

5. Preventative Strategies

- 5.1 The College aims to create an inclusive environment in which bullying is challenged early and students feel able to report it. An absence of reports must not be taken as proof that bullying is not happening.
- 5.2 The College listens to students and identifies concerns that may lead to bullying or conflict. Curriculum, PSHCE, mentoring, Student Discussion and relevant activities provide opportunities to discuss difference, respectful relationships and safe online behaviour. Communication should make students feel included and safe to raise concerns.
- 5.3 The College promotes good behaviour through mutual respect, an understanding of the value of education, fundamental British values and awareness of how actions affect others. Staff and teachers should model these expectations and challenge prejudiced language or harmful conduct consistently.

6. Successful Intervention Strategies

- 6.1 Westminster Tutors applies disciplinary measures to students who bully to show clearly that their behaviour is wrong. In accordance with our Behaviour Policy, we apply sanctions fairly, consistently, and reasonably, considering any special educational needs or disabilities that students may have and considering the needs of vulnerable students.
- 6.2 The College considers factors underlying harmful behaviour and whether the student responsible also needs safeguarding or pastoral support. Such support does not diminish responsibility for the harm or the need to protect other students.
- 6.3 Parents and carers are involved in accordance with the family-involvement and confidentiality provisions in section 4. They should understand that bullying is not tolerated, know how to report concerns and have confidence that the College will act to protect students.
- 6.4 We involve students so they understand our approach towards bullying and are clear in their role to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders.
- 6.5 We regularly evaluate our approach and ensure that our policy and practice are current.
- 6.6 We ensure that the consequences of bullying reflect the seriousness of the incident so that others see bullying as unacceptable.
- 6.7 We teach students that using any prejudice-based language is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
- 6.8 We work with the broader community, such as the police and children's services, where bullying is particularly serious or persistent and where a criminal offence may have been committed.

- 6.9 Students can report bullying to any trusted member of staff and ask for an accessible or private way to explain their concerns. Staff should explain what will happen next, check whether further help is needed and act on any retaliation or renewed bullying. Concerns about the College's response may be raised under the Complaints Policy.
- 6.10 We draw on the expertise of specialist organisations with a proven track record in dealing with bullying to ensure our practices are effective and keep children safe.
- 6.11 The College will make age-appropriate sources of help accessible to students, including specialist anti-bullying and online-safety organisations. Support information and reporting links should be kept current and accessible.
- 6.12 The College listens to students' views, takes their concerns seriously and explains decisions in an age-appropriate way, while acting on safeguarding responsibilities where necessary.
- 6.13 Restorative approaches may help repair harm and rebuild relationships where they are safe, suitable and freely agreed. They must follow the safeguarding assessment described in section 4 and must not replace protective action, sanctions where appropriate or external referrals.

7. Stopping Bullying: Our Procedures

- 7.1 The immediate priority is to stop harm and protect those affected. All incidents will be taken seriously and acted on promptly. A student's intention or limited understanding of the impact does not justify harmful behaviour. Where appropriate, pastoral support will help the student understand the effects of their actions, take responsibility and change their behaviour. Investigations may take time, but necessary safety measures must not wait for their conclusion; affected students should receive appropriate updates.
- 7.2 The College considers whether the student responsible for bullying also has unmet needs or safeguarding concerns. Support and referral will be considered alongside the protection and support of the student who has been harmed.
- 7.3 In serious or persistent cases, relevant senior staff will agree next steps, including family involvement in accordance with section 4 and police or safeguarding referrals where necessary. Support to change harmful behaviour may include specialist advice or external agencies where appropriate.
- 7.4 A facilitated restorative meeting is an option only where the conditions in sections 4 and 6 are met. Those involved should understand the purpose, be able to decline without pressure, and have appropriate support. The meeting should not assume shared responsibility for abuse or require the person harmed to reconcile. A less formal approach may be used on the same safeguards where appropriate.
- 7.5 Relevant pastoral staff will record incidents, decisions, support, sanctions and follow-up. Safeguarding records and information sharing must follow the Safeguarding Policy and data-protection arrangements. This enables the College to:
- Manage individual cases effectively.
 - Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of strategies.
 - identify recurring issues and improve preventative work;

- respond promptly and appropriately to concerns raised by students and families.
- 7.6 The most obvious strategy is the use of disciplinary sanctions and learning programmes to deal with those students who are found to be bullying. Such corrective measures have three primary purposes, namely:
- make clear to the student responsible that the behaviour is unacceptable;
 - Deter them from repeating that behaviour.
 - Signal to other students that the behaviour is unacceptable and deter them from doing it.
- 7.7 Sanctions are intended to hold students to account, prevent repetition and support positive change. They will be applied fairly, consistently and proportionately under the Behaviour Policy, taking account of SEND, reasonable adjustments and vulnerability. Permanent exclusion may be considered where appropriate by the Principal under the Exclusion Policy, including its decision-making and review procedures.
- 7.8 Concerns involving a person's possessions or electronic device must be referred promptly to the Principal or DSL. Staff may request voluntary handover in accordance with College rules, but must not search a person or device, compel handover, retain a device or delete material without a lawful basis. The Principal must establish any applicable authority and seek police advice where needed. This policy does not grant school statutory search powers. Staff must not themselves view, copy, forward, save or delete suspected sexual imagery of a child. Report immediately to the DSL; the DSL must follow the Safeguarding Policy and UKCIS guidance, including the exceptional conditions governing any viewing. Preserve other potential evidence only where safe and lawful. If a device is lawfully retained, its storage, access and return must be recorded and managed appropriately.

8. Monitoring and Evaluation

- 8.1 The Principal is responsible for maintaining a behaviour log including bullying instances with support from the Pastoral Coordinator.
- 8.2 The Principal is responsible for implementation and review of this policy, supported by the Pastoral Coordinator. Review should consider students' experiences, incident patterns, the effectiveness of support and sanctions, repeat incidents and whether reporting is accessible. The policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner following a serious incident or material change.
- 8.3 The Principal reports on behaviour and bullying to the Governance Advisory Board to support the proprietor's oversight. Reports should identify patterns and necessary action while protecting personal information.

9. Related guidance

- 9.1 [Keeping Children Safe in Education: current DfE guidance](#)
- 9.2 [DfE preventing and tackling bullying guidance](#)
- 9.3 [UKCIS guidance on responding to sharing nudes and semi-nudes](#)

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