



Whitburn Academy

Respect for All Policy

August 2026

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Introduction

- **Our Policy ensures equality and promotes respect for all ethos.**

Whitburn Academy's Values and Beliefs

At Whitburn Academy, we are a rights-respecting school that follows the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This is a comprehensive and internationally binding agreement on the rights of children. It is based on equality, dignity, respect, protection, development and participation.

We are dedicated to upholding a set of values and beliefs that prioritise equality, excellence, and inclusivity to ensure the highest standards of education. Our policy is grounded in core values, including fostering a culture of respect, promoting equality and social justice, and preparing young people for life in a diverse society.

Our vision is to foster a positive ethos that empowers all young people to realise their full potential and become compassionate, respectful, responsible, integrated, and ambitious. We are unwavering in our commitment to providing equitable educational opportunities for all, regardless of race, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, faith, religion, or socio-economic background.

We are aware that there may be additional barriers to accessing support for people who identify as having a protected characteristic. These are outlined in the Equality Act (2010):

- Age
- Disability
- Religion and Belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Gender Reassignment
- Race
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Marriage and Civil Partnership status

Whitburn Academy is also aware of the potential vulnerability of young people to the following:

- Asylum seeker or refugee status
- Body image & mental health
- Care-experienced young people
- Social or economic status (Poverty)
- Young Carer responsibilities
- Imprisonment of parents/carers, siblings, or other family members
- Mistreatment as a result of identity, such as being LGBTQ+

Recognising the diverse needs of individuals, we strive to reduce barriers to learning. Staff members are supported in maintaining an inclusive ethos, recognising that young people's needs may evolve.

To achieve this, we proactively establish strong partnerships with parents/carers and the community, guaranteeing equitable chances for engagement in school activities. We actively engage them in our equality initiatives, fostering their involvement in decision-making processes. We aim to foster a culture of inclusivity and diversity, ensuring that everyone connected to the school takes pride in their identity and can engage fully in the school community.

At Whitburn Academy, everyone has the right to feel happy, safe, and included, fostering an environment conducive to successful and confident learning.

We are committed to advancing equality of opportunity for all, and we work actively towards eliminating all forms of bullying and discrimination, as these are never acceptable. It is an abuse of power and of relationships, and at Whitburn Academy, we actively foster good relations among diverse groups and individuals.

This policy is written for Whitburn Academy but also aligns with the wider West Lothian [Promoting Positive Relationships policy](#) and the [Equality and Diversity Framework](#).

Action against discrimination

We can voluntarily engage in activities that support individuals with protected characteristics, known as 'positive action.' Positive action is permissible when individuals with protected characteristics:

- experience disadvantages.
- have specific needs.
- are underrepresented in a particular activity or type of work.

At Whitburn Academy, we also expand these protected characteristics to include pupils undergoing gender transition and transgender identities in general. In addition, our anti-bullying policy is designed to ensure and protect equality, such as that of Care-experienced young people, Young Carers and young people coming from poverty. Please see the previous section for more details.

What is bullying?

Bullying is an abuse of power that is defined by its effects. Bullying behaviour can harm people physically and/or emotionally. The threat may be sustained over time through actions, messages, confrontations, physical interventions, or the fear of these.

People who are bullied are upset by something someone else has said or done to them or about them. They are likely to fear this will happen again and feel powerless to stop it. Bullying is a breach of children's rights, most notably under Articles 3, 12, 13, 19, 28, 29, and 39 from the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Article number	Definition
3	The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.
12	Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously. This right applies at all times, for example, during immigration proceedings, housing decisions or the child's day-to-day home life.
13	Every child must be free to express their thoughts and opinions and to access all kinds of information, as long as it is within the law.
18	Parents and carers must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment.
19	Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.
28	Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free, and different forms of secondary education must be available to every child. Discipline in schools must respect children's dignity and their rights. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.
29	Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.
39	Children who have experienced neglect, abuse, exploitation, torture or who are victims of war must receive special support to help them recover their health, dignity, self-respect and social life.

Cyberbullying is bullying behaviour that takes place via mobile phone or over the internet through social networks.

Bullying behaviour takes many forms, for example:

- racist abuse
- sexist abuse (Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for harassment)
- homophobia
- biphobia
- transphobia
- sectarianism
- assault
- forcing people to do things against their will, e.g. stealing
- damaging or stealing property
- malicious notes
- personal remarks about body image/appearance, disabilities, learning needs, family or social background
- any other behaviour which makes the victim or other people around them feel frightened or isolated

What is racism?

Racism is when prejudice against a young person's actual or perceived ethnicity is used as a motive to exclude, threaten, hurt or humiliate them. Racism can be experienced not just as a personal attack on a young person but as something deeper which undermines and degrades their family, their community and their culture. In common with many other forms of prejudice-based bullying, racism can have a damaging impact on young people. Any young person who is viewed by others as being part of a minority ethnic group is at risk of experiencing racism. This can happen regardless of how they view their own ethnic identity. Racism is not a result of the ethnicity of the person being bullied, but a result of the attitudes of the person displaying the bullying behaviour.

Identifying and dealing with this racism does not mean labelling a young person as 'a bully' or as 'racist'.

Key questions to identify whether a bullying incident is racist would include:

- Does anyone feel that the incident was racist?
- Does the behaviour reflect stereotypes based on colour, nationality, ethnicity, or national origin?
- Does the behaviour include the use of racial slurs or racist language?

In line with the Macpherson Report's definition of a racist incident, an incident should be considered racist if it is "perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person." This includes young people experiencing bullying, parents/carers, teachers and any bystanders who witness the behaviour. This definition is crucial to ensure the impact of what's happening can be addressed, regardless of the intention (or claims about intention) from the person responsible.

Racist language can be used without malice or understanding, but this does not mean that it has no impact on young people who hear it used in this way. Both minority ethnic young people and the wider school community may be seriously affected by these negative messages. One example, which could be regarded as an encounter, is the use of song lyrics containing language that could be viewed as a racial slur. In these cases, young people must understand that whilst the song may be written by someone who arguably has the right to reclaim and use that language how they wish, it's inappropriate for them to repeat the lyrics in school (regardless of their intentions). Repeating this type of language in school is sometimes used as part of bullying behaviour, partly because it's easy to deny any intention to offend.

Encouraging reflection on language.

It's important to challenge racist language in a way which avoids making young people feel defensive. Evidence suggests that feelings of defensiveness can actually worsen any underlying prejudiced attitudes. Approaches that encourage reflection on the meaning and impact of what was said are likely more effective.

Examples of phrases which can help to address the use of racist language could include:

- What happened?
- What were your thoughts at the time? Were you aware that what you said sounds racist and could hurt someone?
- What have been your thoughts since? Have you considered whether this language is racist?
- Who has been affected by what happened?
- How have they been affected?
- What do you need to happen now? Do you need more information about racism and how it affects people?

Supports at Whitburn Academy may include:

- We have Zero Tolerance for Racist Language: Under no circumstances should the 'n-word' or any other racial slur be spoken aloud by teaching staff or young people, regardless of context. The Scottish Government recommends this. This language, and any form of racial dehumanisation, is deeply harmful and can and does cause trauma to those who hear or see it. As educators, we are responsible for creating a safe space where young people feel supported and respected. When using texts that contain offensive language, we ensure that our young people are prepared for its presence by discussing the material with them beforehand. These texts are only used with their consent and input as a group, allowing them to decide how to proceed. We are mindful of the challenges young people from marginalised backgrounds face in expressing discomfort in such situations. As part of our support, we promote safer and braver spaces. As staff, we are committed to continual education in racial literacy.
- Decolonising the Curriculum, including Social Justice (see the Equalities Policy).
- Adult representation where the young people can see themselves to foster a sense of belonging and provide inspirational role models.
- Policies on language used by staff and processes to ensure students are comfortable in class.

A section on terminology and common questions is in Appendices 1 and 2.

Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia

Homophobia is when someone is scared of or dislikes gay or lesbian people.

Biphobia is when someone is scared of or dislikes bisexual people.

Transphobia is when someone is scared of or dislikes transgender people.

Homophobic, bi-phobic and transphobic bullying is where bullying targets an individual or group of people based on their actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender.

We are a school dedicated to fostering equality, diversity, and solidarity. Recognising the importance of inclusivity, it is essential to have a diverse representation in both the curriculum and staff to create a nurturing environment where young people feel a sense of belonging. We take pride in embracing and supporting the journey of all our young people as they explore and express their sexual orientation or gender identity, and have introduced several programmes to reduce the incidence of homophobic or transphobic bullying. In particular, our pupil-led LGBTQ+ club is a safer and braver space, which has had a strong positive impact on our ethos. It comprises LGBTQ+ young people and allies working together and is known as 'Jigsaw'.

We will talk to pupils who have experienced homophobia, biphobia and transphobic bullying and ensure that any steps to resolve bullying include them. There will be a sensitive approach to ensure that any disclosure does not 'out' the pupil to others. Information that is helpful when considering the above forms of bullying are as follows:

- Sexual Orientation & Homophobic Bullying: Bullying based on sexual orientation is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) people. It is also commonly referred to as 'homophobic bullying', but can also be expanded to recognise the specific experiences of bisexual young people using the term 'biphobic bullying'.
- Young people do not necessarily have to be gay, lesbian or bisexual themselves to experience 'homophobic bullying'. This type of bullying may be directed towards young people perceived to be lesbian, gay or bisexual, those who do not conform to gender norms and/or expectations, and those who have gay friends or family. Young people with LGBTQ+ parents/carers may also experience homophobic bullying. Although homophobic bullying is distinct from sexist and transphobic bullying, it is related to these forms of bullying through underlying sexist attitudes.
- The term 'transgender' is an 'umbrella term' for those whose 'gender identity' or expression differs in some way from the gender that was assigned to them at birth. Gender identity reflects an individual's internal sense of self as male, female, or somewhere in between or outside the two.

- Transgender people face significant societal prejudice, largely because they are perceived as not conforming to gender stereotypes, expectations and norms. As a result, transgender or gender 'variant' young people can be particularly vulnerable to bullying. This can manifest in many ways, including transphobic and homophobic name-calling or deliberately misgendering them. An individual may also experience transphobic bullying as a result of a perception that a parent/carer, relative or other significant figure is transgender.

Supports at Whitburn Academy may include:

- A pupil-run LGBTQ+ club (Jigsaw).
- Yearly events and opportunities to support LGBTQ+ charities, including a Pride event, Purple Friday, and World AIDs Day.
- Representation in the curriculum and around the school of LGBTQ+ figures.
- Adult representation where the young people can see themselves to foster a sense of belonging and provide inspirational role models.
- Via the Library:
 - All are welcome posters or similar throughout the library.
 - Heartstopper Display.
 - Pride Flag on display.
 - Banned Books display (several books have been banned in the US due to LGBTQ+ content).
 - HWB display with quotes about the library being a safe space.
 - HWB hub with mental health and LGBTQ+ resources to browse or borrow.
 - All books in the library with an LGBTQ+ theme have a rainbow heart on the spine, so they are easily identified.
 - Full LGBTQ+ reading list available here: [LGBT+ Reading List - Wakelet](#).
 - Access to mental health and LGBTQ+ online resources here: [LGBTQ+ HWB Resources @WhitburnAcademy - Wakelet](#).
 - LGBTQ+ themed bookmarks with QR codes for these links to take away.
 - Pride or LGBTQ+ colouring in sheets.
 - Jigsaw's Bits and Pieces Zine copies available to read or take away.

Disability discrimination

This includes:

- direct discrimination
- indirect discrimination
- failure to make reasonable adjustments
- discrimination arising from disability
- harassment victimisation

Whitburn Academy operates on a 'continuum of support' in line with West Lothian's [Promoting Positive Relationships policy](#). This is the framework West Lothian Council uses to inform assessment and planning for all children and young people, underpinned by the principles of Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC).

Supports at Whitburn Academy may include:

- Potential representation within the curriculum and staff.
- Consistent, annual CLPL opportunities for staff on supporting pupils with ASNs.
- Readily available ASN support resources for staff.
- Check-ins with pupils with ASNs to ensure support is being provided effectively and by all.
- Dedicated programmes to support pupils with their literacy and numeracy.
- A out-of-class log to ensure the safety of our students.
- A dedicated unit for pupils on the ASD spectrum.
- A 'flexible timetable' programme to ensure all pupils can access learning and qualifications.
- Passes provided to allow for pupils to:
 - access the toilets at any time.
 - leave the lesson early to avoid crowds.
 - 'Reset' themselves/'Chill Out'.

Sexual Harassment

Sexism is a human construct. It is built on a history of strict gender roles and restricted rights, often tied to other forms of discrimination, like class prejudice (stereotyping), homophobia and racism. Sexual harassment is one form of sexual violence involving unwanted comments of a sexual nature that make someone feel uncomfortable. It can include online statements, comments made directly to someone, or things said in the background.

Isms and power

Sexism, like other isms, is linked to power and systemic power imbalances. Stereotypes and negative attitudes exist about men and boys – they are harmful and need to be consistently challenged.

In general, we don't speak about men experiencing sexism because the systemic power structures favour men. So, sexism is typically used to describe the discrimination experienced by women, non-binary and Trans people.

However, it is important to recognise that many of the stereotypes about men are harmful to them and promote limiting, insulting or outdated ideas about masculinity (e.g. not being caring, not expected to express emotion or display feelings, not being trusted to care for children, prone to use aggression).

The stereotypes about men connect to other patterns of stereotyping and intersect with different areas of their identity. For instance, Black boys are often treated as adults, viewed as if they embody many masculine stereotypes (such as physical strength and aggression), and are discriminated against based on this.

Similarly, Black girls can be treated as overly sexual or aggressive through a process of adultification, placing adult expectations on teenagers because of their race. It is not only race that intersects with sexism, but class, ableism and cultural factors can each combine to create unique and challenging situations for young people.

Working with boys:

- Most perpetrators of sexual violence and sexual harassment are men, and we need to interrupt the cycles that condone, provoke and legitimise male violence.
- They will become husbands, partners, fathers, uncles, foster carers and more. Intervening at a young age can help to break cultural cycles of violence against women and girls.
- Many young men frequently lack awareness of behaviours that constitute abuse, such as encountering control or inappropriate sexual touch within or outside a relationship and participating in inappropriate sexual acts within a relationship.
- It can make a difference by helping boys to be active bystanders and friends to each other within peer groups – by changing their behaviour, influencing other men and boys, and supporting women and girls. We can equip young men with

the awareness and skills to have a positive influence – to think for themselves and act for others.

- While less common, men and boys might have experienced sexual harassment or know someone who has. Survivors UK, an organisation that supports male-identifying survivors, reports that it is 26 years, on average, before a man seeks help for the sexual violence they've experienced. Conversations can break down stigma and victim blaming and may lead to a male survivor of sexual assault seeking help.
- This can give boys the understanding of how to create healthy relationships and skills at creating safer and more equitable workplaces.
- Boys frequently reveal a strong pressure to be (hetero) sexually active and to tell the other boys about this activity. This can lead to stress, a sense of failure, and an unrealistic expectation that everyone else is having sex. It can also lead to young men feeling that a large part of their value and worth as a person is determined by having multiple sexual partners and having sex, which they can tell their social group about.
- Patriarchy and toxic masculine norms harm boys, place pressure on them to conform, lead to violence in their lives and close down options for them to express their personalities, interests, sexual orientation and emotions. Highlight that men's mental health often suffers because of gender social norms about men not talking about their feelings or mental health or seeking help for their physical or mental wellbeing.

Working with girls:

- It can make a difference by helping girls to be active bystanders and friends to each other within peer groups – by supporting fellow women and girls. We can equip young women with the awareness and skills to have a positive influence – to think for themselves and act for others.
- When girls are viewed, portrayed, or treated as objects, they start to self-objectify. This can be psychologically damaging, especially when the girls begin to value physical attractiveness or sexual worthiness above intelligence and personal well-being.
- When a young girl suffers from poor mental health, she becomes vulnerable to manipulation, false promises, violent acts, and mistreatment. This can then affect a young girl's education.
- Many young women frequently lack awareness of behaviours that constitute abuse, such as encountering control or inappropriate sexual touch within or outside a relationship and participating in inappropriate sexual acts within a relationship.
- This lack of awareness contributes to compromised mental health, as these individuals may experience feelings such as self-objectification, heightened vulnerability, and diminished self-esteem. As a school, one of our roles is to help young women to understand consent and identify signs of abuse.

Sexual assault and exploitation are not types of bullying; they are abuse.

Whitburn Academy fosters a secure and respectful environment by implementing a wide range of educational programs and support systems. These include an extensive Personal and Social Education (PSE) curriculum that incorporates age-appropriate sex education to encourage empathy and relationship skills. Furthermore, the school offers support services such as counselling and mentorship programs to aid the development of young individuals.

Supports at Whitburn Academy may include:

- Annual Child Protection training to ensure staff know and use the procedures to safeguard pupils. This includes council-wide training on gender-based violence and sexual exploitation.
- The MVP programme within the school focuses on gender-based violence, and the majority of our S5 and S6 pupils have taken part in this programme.
- Extensive PSE lessons throughout a student time at Whitburn Academy.
- Initiatives to raise awareness of gender imbalances in subjects selected for students' pathways, such as workshops to encourage girls to make STEM subjects part of their school pathway.
- A school counsellor is available to talk about themes like sexual harassment.
- All students of Whitburn Academy have five trusted adults that they have identified, that they feel comfortable talking to about themes such as sexual harassment.

Poverty

Poverty and the intersectionality of the Protected Characteristics can significantly impact the self-esteem of young individuals. At Whitburn Academy, efforts are made to combat dehumanising language associated with poverty, such as mocking speech patterns, belongings, clothing, and hygiene, using derogatory terms like 'Ned.' The school focuses on educating young people about the underlying causes of poverty and encourages them to question and confront stereotypes that contribute to dehumanisation.

Whitburn Academy advocates for a perspective that refrains from attributing blame to individuals facing poverty, instead highlighting poverty as a systemic issue. The school emphasises that being in poverty is not a source of shame; rather, the existence of poverty itself is what should be deemed shameful. By acknowledging the interconnection between wealth and poverty, these two aspects coexist as integral parts of the same societal structure, inseparable from one another.

Critical thinking is integrated into the curriculum to challenge prevailing narratives surrounding poverty. Whitburn Academy is committed to empowering young people and strives to alleviate financial burdens by maintaining a zero-cost school day.

Five 'Austerity' Ailments	Five important indicators of a psychologically healthy society
1. Humiliation and shame 2. Fear and distrust 3. Instability and insecurity 4. Isolation and loneliness 5. Being trapped and powerless	1. Agency 2. Security 3. Connection 4. Meaning 5. Trust

Ned

A derogatory term applied in Scotland to hooligans, louts or petty criminals. It is also a backronym for "Non-Educated Delinquent". The term dates back to the early 19th century. In Scotland, Ned is the equivalent of the English word 'Chav' (Council Houses and Violence) or the more modern term 'Roadman'.

Stigma

A mark of disgrace associated with a particular circumstance, quality, or person.

Shame

A painful feeling of humiliation or distress caused by the consciousness of wrong or foolish behaviour

Bullying is both behaviour and impact: what someone does and the effect it has on a person's capacity to feel in control of themselves. We call this their sense of 'agency'. Prejudice-based bullying is bullying behaviour motivated by prejudice, or 'perceived' to be motivated by prejudice. It can be based on any characteristic unique to a child or young person's identity or circumstance.

Supports at Whitburn Academy may include:

- A dedicated staff group, focusing on cutting the costs of the school day.
- Initiatives to cut the costs of opportunities for students, including educational trips or prom.
- School supplies are available in classrooms and can be borrowed by students.
- Sanitary products are available for free.
- Some faculties have 'take what you need' boxes which had items like snacks and hygiene products for students.

Care-experienced students

Supports at Whitburn Academy may include:

A dedicated member of staff is in charge of looking after the wellbeing and needs of care-experienced pupils. Their role includes:

- Regular check-ins with pupils.
- Tracking care-experienced pupils' attainment and completing tracking and monitoring meetings as reports come out.
- Advocating for them as required by attending CPMs or My Planning meetings as appropriate, including setting specific targets.
- Looking at alternative curriculum options if required or helping with subject choices.
- Liaising with other providers such as Level Up, Active Schools, Larder, MCMC, etc.
- Completing applications for things like bursaries for college or signposting to different agencies that can help with these things.

It is led by the young person, so they decide what input they need at what time, and they will be provided with the relevant support.

Young Carers

Supports at Whitburn Academy may include:

A dedicated member of staff is in charge of looking after the wellbeing and needs of Young Carers. Their role includes:

- If needed, getting Young Carers registered with external agencies (West Lothian Young Carers), they get a referral from the school.
- Ensuring that every Young Carer who would like a 'Young Carer's Statement' gets one, as this is their right.
- Providing a safe support space at lunchtime for pupils.
- Organising for a worker from West Lothian Young Carers to come for a workshop with the students who are registered with them, where we make sure we have everything up to date for them, such as a Young Carers ID card, if the pupils want this every term.
- Check-ins with each Young Carer every term.
- Ensuring that students are having their needs met by updating this on SEEMIS and Support Notes on the ASN Spreadsheet to keep staff up to date.

Why do some people become involved in bullying behaviour?

There are many reasons why pupils may get involved in bullying behaviour. Some examples include:

- to impress or establish leadership amongst a peer group
- to create a group identity by attacking an outsider
- pressure to conform – punishing non-conformity
- lack of social skills
- jealousy
- have been bullied themselves
- family and/or social problems
- lack of education or understanding of the impact of bullying

Those who carry out bullying actions or are at the receiving end may display certain behaviours, for example:

- deterioration of work
- faked illness
- erratic attendance
- low self-esteem
- loss or lack of self-respect
- isolation
- desire to remain with adults
- uncharacteristic behaviour or acting out to impress, e.g. showing off or aggressive behaviour

The Prevention of Bullying and Discrimination:

The Head Teacher is responsible for introducing and implementing this policy at Whitburn Academy. However, all staff, pupils, and parents/carers have an active part to play in the development and maintenance of the policy and its success. West Lothian's anti-bullying policy matches the National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People is outlined in the Scottish Government's published report "Respect for All" from 2017. This framework builds on the positive work which has already taken place in Scotland to address bullying. It provides a holistic framework for all adults working with children and young people to address all aspects of bullying, including prejudice-based bullying. Respect for All reflects Getting it Right for Every Child and recognises that bullying impacts on wellbeing. In order to thrive and achieve their full potential, children and young people need learning environments which are safe, nurturing, respectful and free from fear, abuse and discrimination. West Lothian Council Education Services adopts the 'Respect for All' framework for implementation across all schools. The Framework can be found using the following link <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2017/11/6766> .

We are proactive at Whitburn Academy, and we do many things within the school to promote positive relationships. We teach about rights and responsibilities and treating others with respect.

During the life of every pupil at Whitburn Academy, the stress on mutual respect, trust, equality, and fostering positive relationships is ongoing:

- There are various avenues within the school curriculum for the pupils to focus on and discuss issues connected to relationships and bullying. For example, in PSE pupils are encouraged to identify trusted adults within the school.
- A commitment to having social justice and equality embedded throughout the curriculum for all subjects and all years that fosters critical thinking to question patterns that may contribute to bullying.
- Themed assemblies and events for pupils to target specific issues - for example, a focus on internet safety.
- Pupil Parliament: Representation of pupils' voices from across the year groups, including from the LGBTQ+, young carers, and care-experienced communities.
- Saver and braver spaces: LGBTQ+ club, Pupil Councils and Parliament.

- Jigsaw: Consisting of staff and pupils. This group links directly with the SLT and the Pupil Parliament. It focuses on promoting equality for LGBTQ+ pupils and staff at Whitburn Academy and making the school a safe and accepting place for LGBTQ+ people. We have an LGBTQ+ club that is a safer and braver space for pupils to discuss LGBTQ+ issues and will guide the school on how best to promote equality and further prevent bullying behaviour. Specialist awareness training for staff has also been completed for Level 1 and 2 via TIE.
- Our Senior and Middle Leadership team monitor the school and social area daily during breaks and lunchtimes. If they come across any issues, they will be actioned and recorded.
- Pupils are supported by their House team, who are committed to their pastoral care. The House team works tirelessly to build strong relationships with their pupils. Pupils are encouraged from day one to report any bullying concerns to staff. Pupils know the open-door policy they operate.
- The House team can put pupils in touch with various organisations and agencies that can offer support, advice and counselling. Further, at Whitburn Academy, we strive to offer group work programmes led by staff volunteers that can aid pupils with confidence-building and coping strategies. b Mindfulness and Community Learning Development.
- We give staff members opportunities to participate in equality training that is relevant and up to date through our Inset days and Collegiate Time evenings. All staff receive regular training around trauma-informed practises.
- In (roughly) 2018, we introduced the Mentors in Violence Prevention initiative (MVP), with staff and senior pupils developing their knowledge of and confidence in positive and safe intervention as bystanders to enhance our culture of inclusion and diversity at the school. The principles of this initiative overlap with those of protecting individuals from gender-based violence. Lessons are then delivered to all S1 and S2 pupils to raise awareness of these issues and encourage them to take a proactive approach.

What we do when bullying occurs:

A young person may not be consciously engaging in bullying behaviour, but its impact is still felt and taken seriously. The level of awareness of a young person who is bullied is a significant factor in how it is dealt with. Pupils who experience bullying or discrimination will be listened to and supported. Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour or discrimination will be treated fairly and consistently using a range of measures.

Dealing with Bullying:

Pupils are encouraged to:

- Report all incidents of bullying/inequality and suspected incidents that other pupils may be afraid to report. They should do this in the first instance to their classroom teacher or House team. They could also speak to one of their identified trusted adults.
- Demonstrate the school values of Respect, Compassion and Integrity.

Teachers are expected to:

- Front-line respond, and have zero tolerance for a class of unkind, disrespectful, targeted comments. Banter is not an excuse for these behaviours.
- Treat all allegations seriously and report this to the Faculty Heads or the House Team.

Parents/carers can help by:

- Supporting our anti-bullying/equalities procedures.
- Encouraging their children to be positive members of the school community.
- Discuss with their child's House team any concerns that their child may be experiencing.
- Helping to establish an anti-bullying culture outside of school.
- Speaking to the House Team/SLT if their concerns are serious and ongoing.
- We appreciate that some pupils may find it difficult to report bullying issues, but pupils are encouraged to speak out if they feel that they or their friends are on the receiving end of this type of behaviour. If pupils witness it, they must be encouraged to report it, as this gives a clear message about the positive role bystanders can have in terms of reducing the bullying which takes place, as there is an ethos of zero tolerance; these are the principles of the MVP programme and are promoted as part of this initiative. Parents/carers are also encouraged to contact the House Team if their child discusses any concerns with them.

- Incidents of bullying may happen out of school grounds and out of school hours, but their impact can easily have an effect on pupils in school, and this means it becomes an issue for staff to deal with. We urge parents/carers & guardians to contact the police if they feel an incident out of school or at the weekend merits legal attention. Parents/carers are encouraged to contact their child's House Team if they have concerns or information to pass on about out-of-school incidents. This allows Whitburn Academy staff to be better prepared and, thus, hopefully, pre-empt possible situations.

What happens if a bullying incident is brought to the attention of staff?

- At Whitburn Academy, we adhere to the principles of being **Ready, Respectful, and Safe**, emphasising the importance of consistent language use among staff.
- In a class, a pupil may bring an incident to the teacher's attention, or the teacher may witness an incident. In general, low-level incidents can usually be dealt with in the classroom setting.
- **All incidents** in the classroom are communicated to the Faculty Head.
- If a situation is more serious, e.g. racism or homo/bi/transphobia or assault, then the offending pupil will be sent to the House team/SLT, who will then further investigate and gather evidence.
- Staff will forward any concerns about pupils' mental health to the House team.
- Incidents referred to the Head of Faculty/House team/SLT are reported via the school's conduct log.
- House teams (consisting of SLT, HOH, CL and PSW) meet weekly to discuss a variety of support measures that can be implemented and necessary actions that need to be taken. This can include recording and monitoring on SEEMIS.
- If required, post-incident meetings will take place to further educate young people on appropriate actions and language in the eyes of the law.

Role of the House Team

An allegation of bullying is serious, and to ensure we do our job properly, we have to gather evidence, primarily by speaking to witnesses. With this evidence, action can be taken to address the pupils concerned and to keep staff, parents, and carers informed.

A pupil who has been on the receiving end of bullying behaviour needs support. There are several strategies we use at Whitburn Academy:

- Staff listen to what the young person is saying and reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling. Young people are often concerned that no one will take them seriously if they say they are being bullied. Staff will reassure the young person that they are believed and are being taken seriously.

Respectme recommend that staff ask the following questions:

1. What was the behaviour?
2. What impact did it have?
3. What do I need to do about it?
4. What attitudes, prejudices or other factors have influenced the behaviour?

At this stage, staff will be very clear with young people about what happens next. The young person needs to retain some feeling of control over the situation. **It is vital that they are involved and updated on progress.**

Next steps may include:

- staff keep a 'sympathetic eye' on the pupil.
- one-to-one meeting(s) with their House team.
- use peer support strategies, and if the pupil wants it, we can arrange a meeting with the pupil(s) who carried out the bullying behaviour (restorative practice).
- involvement of parent/carer – this includes keeping them informed about what the school is doing to support their child.
- If appropriate, a referral for further assessment/support could be explored.

A pupil who has carried out bullying behaviour *ALSO* needs support. This may raise questions of 'why' as they will be seen as the pupil in the 'wrong'. Support is not the school being soft on bullying; it is, in fact, the common-sense approach to helping a pupil see that their behaviour was unacceptable and to modify it for the better. It has to be stressed that those who commit bullying offences have often been on the receiving end of these.

Our work with pupils who bully others:

- We interview the pupils involved in bullying separately.
- We listen to their version of events and talk to any witnesses.
- We reinforce the message that bullying is not acceptable and that we expect it to stop.
- We seek a commitment to this end.
- We affirm that it is suitable for pupils to let us know they are being bullied.
- We advise those involved that the situation will continue to be monitored to check that it has not started again.
- We contact the parents/carers of all parties to make sure they know about the bullying – this happens at an early stage.

- If the bullying is in relation to racism, homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying, we will deal with this sensitively and ensure that we do not 'out' a pupil without their consent.
- We offer support to those carrying out the bullying to ascertain what type of help they need to ensure that it stops.

Bullying outside the school premises

We know that bullying can occur outside the school gates, in the evenings and at weekends. It can be via mobile phones, social networking sites/chat rooms. The bullying may be carried out by pupils (and sometimes parents/carers) from our school, by pupils from other schools, or by people who are not at school at all. Where a pupil or parent/carer tells us of bullying off the school premises, we will consider:

- Talking to the pupils about how to avoid or handle bullying outside of school. On social media, they should block and report the perpetrator.
- Any relevant additional support.

Planning

We examine and use all available information to ensure that the promotion of equality and anti-bullying issues are contained within our development plans.

Equality Impact Analysis

When reviewing or creating new policies or services within our school, we consider all protected groups and whether any individual or group might require further support. The West Lothian Policy was updated in 2022. Incidents of bullying and actions taken are recorded via SEEMIS. This information can be used to better inform the school and help plan future strategies. The school will also review the policy every three years and update it accordingly. Baseline surveys will be conducted as part of our work towards the Rights Respecting Schools Silver award to assess the effectiveness of our policy. We also conduct a Wellbeing Check-In survey on behalf of West Lothian Council, which can be used in our assessment. This policy will be reviewed every three years.

Involvement

We actively encourage all our young people to participate in school and extracurricular activities and take positive action to ensure that the diverse school population is represented in activities and surveys. The LGBTQ+ Jigsaw, Pupil Councils/Parliament and Rights Respecting groups are central to this approach.

Gathering and Monitoring information

We examine our annual record of incidents and survey information.

We use information from surveys of pupils' views and opinions.

We take active steps to ensure all data on pupils' disabilities, ethnicity, caring and Care Experienced status is accurate and regularly reviewed.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Terminology

Race

The concept of a 'racial group' is derived from outdated approaches that claimed humans could be divided into racial groups based on shared language, nationality, and physical and behavioural traits. The current use of the terms 'race' and 'racial' has developed because these incorrect understandings of racial difference have become embedded in (a part of) the beliefs and behaviours of society. This social construct of race has continuing impacts today on institutional, personal and social behaviours, contributing to all forms of racism.

Racism

The term 'racism' is technically most applicable to prejudice or discrimination against groups which have historically been racialised (separated by skin colour), with implications around skin colour and specific forms of stereotyping. The background to racism in Britain lies in history. During the British Empire, theories that people could be divided into 'racial' groups linked to ethnicity became popular. This became known as 'race science', although, to this day, there is no evidence of race existing biologically. These theories, although untrue, made it easier for Britain to justify the horror of slavery and colonisation (the taking over of other countries). 'Other races' were portrayed as inferior and in need of 'help' from Britain to justify expanding the empire.

This impacted the racial stereotypes we see today, where minority ethnic people are often treated as though they are 'different' in comparison to the 'normal' White Scottish community. This sense of difference underpins racism. Racial prejudice can be obvious or hidden, and sometimes, the people who hold this prejudice lack the knowledge they need to recognise it in themselves. Someone doesn't have to feel particularly hostile towards people from a minority ethnic group to have racist attitudes or to act in a racist way. Racism has persisted for so long and is so tied up with the way society and organisations operate that it has become embedded across all areas of life in nations like Scotland. We can see its impact through continuing racial inequalities in areas such as employment, income and housing.

Internalised racism

The impact of racist social structures on an individual's perception of their own power, potential, entitlements and behavioural roles. This reduces the ability of individuals and communities to assert their rights and challenge those structures.

Institutional racism

Racism is created within an organisation by rules, customs, processes and practices which have been planned without regard to the potential impacts on people from minority ethnic groups. This may or may not coincide with directly racist actions on the part of an institution or its employees. The impacts of the institution's work and the way it operates are racist, regardless of whether the people within the institution have racist attitudes themselves.

Racial microaggressions

Racial microaggressions are subtle, regular interactions that reflect bias or stereotypes (similar to what is sometimes called 'everyday racism'). They often take the form of demeaning, disrespectful or insulting comments, which are often unintentional and therefore harder to challenge. The impact of racial microaggressions builds over time to create a constant hostile environment for those experiencing them.

White privilege

Advantages which automatically apply to a person because they are White, in a society which is designed around the worldview of a White majority ethnic group. Whiteness is one of several factors which can confer advantage or disadvantage, such as class, gender, ability, language, citizenship and education. At its most basic, the advantage arises from White people being well represented in all areas of life and, particularly for those in the majority ethnic group, the protection which Whiteness provides them against the experience and threat of racism.

BME / BAME / Black and ethnic minorities

While the term 'ethnic minority' can refer to any or all groups which are not part of the majority ethnic group (in Scotland, this would be White Scottish or White British groups), the inclusion of Black in BME (Black Minority Ethnicity) / BAME (Black and Asian Minority Ethnicity) reflects the specific impacts of colour-based racism and the experiences of those who face it. In Scotland, 'Black' is often used to describe a political identity shared by people from a wide range of backgrounds who face colour-based racism. This is distinct from the Black ethnicity category in the Scottish census.

Cultural

A cultural group is a group of people who feel bound together by social customs, activities, beliefs, behavioural norms and values.

Ethnic group

An ethnic group is a group of people bound together by shared characteristics, which might include language, culture, history, ideology, national origin, nationality, or ancestry.

Exoticize

To reduce something or someone perceived to be 'different' to a glamorous or romantic stereotype, presenting a simplistic view of the 'exotic' aspects of their appearance or culture.

Hidden bias prejudice that is not outwardly deliberate but nonetheless affects attitudes and behaviour; it occurs because the person responsible has not consciously understood or acknowledged how stereotypes affect their own perceptions and actions.

Ethnocentrism

A tendency to believe that your own ethnic group and its cultural beliefs, traditions and practices are of central importance, and to make judgmental assumptions about other ethnic groups based on that belief.

Intersectionality

Intersectionality theory explains how the full range of characteristics someone possesses impacts their experience of inequality. Much of the early prominent academic work on this is by Kimberlee Crenshaw, focusing on how anti-discrimination law and theory often fail to protect Black women whose experience of inequality and discrimination is distinct from the experiences of both White women and Black men.

Xenophobia

Prejudice against people who are viewed as being 'foreign' or 'from another country'. This term is particularly applied to prejudice against people from White minority ethnic groups who may face stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination, particularly those who can be identified by others as recent migrants (over time, the visible signs of belonging to a minority ethnic community such as accent or names usually change to the point where the children and descendants of migrants are no longer viewed as 'different' from the majority ethnic White Scottish population).

Sectarianism

Most people understandably associate Sectarianism with religion. The reality of prejudice, however, means that your family background, the football team you support, the community you live in, the school you attend and even the colour of your clothing can mark you out as a target for sectarian abuse, whatever your beliefs may be.

Appendix 2 - Frequently Asked Questions

This appendix has been reviewed and contributed to by students of many backgrounds. It was decided, through focus groups, that the racial terms should be censored as opposed to being written out or written as the 'x-word'. This decision was made by the students to ensure that the word being referred to is clear, whilst not written the racial slur out as this could encourage others to use it.

If I were describing someone, should I say "Black" or "coloured"?

BLACK.

The word 'coloured' reminds people of a time when things were extremely unequal in Britain between Black and White people.

Sometimes people seem frightened to use the word Black and think it might be rude or even racist, but it is not.

Is it okay to call someone a 'n*r'?***

NO DEFINITELY NOT! The use of the 'N-word' has a long, difficult history. It comes from the word "negro", which was merely a description, meaning "Black" in Spanish. Its meaning then evolved in the 17th century to become a derogatory term used by those who owned enslaved people.

Some like to point out that Black rappers use the N-word in their songs as if that means non-Black people can use it as well. The position of the speaker is important because we are social beings navigating complex social dynamics. The N-word was used historically to dehumanise Black people, to justify their murder at the hands of non-Black people. Some Black people have chosen to re-appropriate the word as a form of resistance. But for many, hearing or seeing the word is extremely hurtful and triggering. Non-Black pupils and teachers may equally be sensitive as they are aware of the pain it causes. In our school, we have a clear policy, as found in the Equality Policy, of never saying the word. We also have a zero-tolerance policy towards any racist language in our school.

How should I refer to African people when discussing the slave trade?

The appropriate term, which we used to call 'slave' in the past, is now 'enslaved person'. This brings into focus that these were human beings, as 'slave' means property. When referring to those Africans stolen from Africa or taken across the Middle Passage, they should be called 'captives' as they were not enslaved people until they were sold at the ship's destination.

Is it alright for a young person of colour to use the 'N-word'?

No, as we have a zero-tolerance policy for the word being used in school. This means that, under no circumstances, should the word be used by a young person, either in conversation or in writing.

You should:

- Highlight we RESPECT **ourselves** and **others**.
- Explain why the young person is dehumanising themselves.
- Report incident.

Is it okay to call someone a 'P**i'?

NO DEFINITELY NOT! The 'P-word' is a racist word, no matter how, when and why people say it, even if they are using it to describe a local shop or newsagent. The word has been used as a weapon to hurt people of Southeast Asian ethnicities and to make them feel different, unwelcome and not valued; it is very painful to those who it is targeted towards. We have a zero-tolerance policy towards racist language in our school.

Is it okay to call someone a 'C*y'?***

NO DEFINITELY NOT! The 'C-word' is a racist word, no matter how, when and why people say it, even if they are using it to describe a Chinese takeaway. The word has been used as a weapon to hurt Chinese people and to make them feel different, unwelcome and not valued; it is very painful to those it is targeted towards. We have a zero-tolerance policy towards racist language in our school.

Are 'P*key' and 'G*ppo' racist words?

G*ppo and P*key are extremely racist and offensive towards anybody from any of the Traveller groups; both have a history of being used to hurt and offend people. These words should never be used, even if they are towards someone who is not a Gypsy or Traveller. We have a zero-tolerance policy towards racist language in our school.

Who are Gypsies, Roma and Travellers?

Gypsies and Travellers are some of Britain's oldest and longest-established ethnic and cultural groups. Gypsies first arrived here more than 500 years ago. That means that they have been a part of British life long before even William Shakespeare and Queen Elizabeth I were born.

There are several different groups of Travellers in Britain, these include:

- Gypsies of England and Wales
- Scottish Gypsies/Travellers
- Irish Travellers
- Occupational Travellers – Show people/Fairground, Circus
- New Travellers
- Boat People
- Roma

What is an Asylum Seeker?

An Asylum Seeker is someone who has been forced to leave and flee their home country because their life is in danger, perhaps because of political or religious reasons or because of war. All people have the right to seek asylum in a country of their choice, even if it is far from their home country, in line with the United Nations. Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) states that everyone has the right to seek and enjoy asylum from persecution in other countries. Once they have arrived in the UK, they will have lodged an asylum claim with the Home Office, and they are considered asylum seekers whilst they await a decision on that claim. Once the claim is accepted, they become a refugee.

What is an immigrant?

An immigrant is someone who consciously decides to leave their home and move to a foreign country with the intention of settling there.

Is Islam a threat to Britain?

There have been some very high-profile terrorist attacks that have been carried out by the Muslim Extremist groups such as Al-Qaeda or ISIS, and the negative way that Islam and Muslims are now written about in the media has led a lot of people to think that ALL Muslims are terrorists or a threat to safety. These attacks were carried out by a few extremists in the Islamic faith, and there are 1.7 billion Muslims in the world, so it is wrong to blame every Muslim for the actions of a few. Muslims preach a very peaceful religion, and there are extremists in every faith. It is islamophobic to suggest that someone is dangerous just because they are Muslim.

Can racism ever be just 'banter'?

No! Using someone's skin colour or ethnicity as an insult has a strong effect. It implies that being of that background is negative, attacks something that person cannot change, and targets not just the individual but other members of their family, community, or group, too.

What are gender stereotypes?

A gender stereotype is a widely held belief or generalisation about the behaviours, characteristics, and roles associated with women and men. Female stereotypical roles include being emotional, caring and in need of protection. Male stereotypical roles include being rational, career-driven and strong. These assumptions can be negative (e.g., women are irrational, men are insensitive) or seemingly benign (e.g., women are nurturing, men are leaders). However, all stereotyping can harm individuals.

What is 'incel culture'?

Incels are a radicalised group of men who label themselves as 'involuntary celibates', or Incels for short. They believe in extremely dangerous views about women.

"The men taking part express misogyny and an unfulfilled sense of entitlement to sex that women are withholding from them. Some incels advocate violence against women - and the men who are lucky enough to be in happy relationships." – [BBC News](#).

In several countries, the group have been recognised formally as terrorists due to their violent actions. Language associated with this group includes:

- Sigma – referring to a supposed classification for men who are successful and popular, but also silent and rebellious. Lone-wolf type men. A term born from the misogynistic "manosphere."
- Chads – nickname given to muscular, popular men who are presumed to sleep with lots of women.
- Stacys – nickname given to perceived 'hyper feminine', 'attractive', and 'unattainable' women who only date 'Chads'.
- Beckys – nickname given to 'average'/'unattractive' women.
- Femoids/Female Humanoid Organism (FHO) – dehumanising names for women in general.
- Looksmax - The practice of trying to enhance one's appearance via methods ranging from buying nicer clothes to gym training to radical facial reconstruction through surgery. Some of the men who engage in looksmax thinking might be traditionally handsome; either way, they tend to believe the secret to their happiness lies in maxing out stats across several key aesthetic areas.
- Mewing - A technique attributed to a British orthodontist named Mike Mew that involves putting pressure on the roof of your mouth with your tongue to try to change the shape of your face. This fits into the broader 'looksmax' approach to self-modification in the name of love and romance.

Is it alright to use different pronouns than a person prefers or a 'deadname' when speaking to/about someone?

Pronouns are a way for individuals to express their true selves. A 'deadname' is a term referring to the name a person previously went by before they changed it.

If it is accidental, this is completely ok. We are all humans.

However, these incidents are not ok:

1. Repeatedly getting it wrong without trying to rectify it.
2. Purposefully getting it wrong.
3. Using their preferred pronouns/name around them but not using them at other times.

Is 'THAT'S SO GAY!' or 'THAT'S BENT!' acceptable?

It is bringing shame to the word, which is harmful. Although younger learners may not know what they are saying or what the word means, they are learning that there is a connection between the word 'gay' and 'bad' or 'rubbish'. It is harmful and always homophobic.

"Even if you didn't mean anything by it, it's really important that I let you know that it sounds homophobic and could really hurt people who hear it, as you are adding shame and negativity to the word."

Is it alright to call people disability slurs such as 'r*tard', 'm*ngo', 'sp*d' (short for special education), or 'sp*stic'?

No, it is dehumanising language.

You should:

- Highlight we RESPECT everyone, and everyone has the right to feel SAFE.
- Explain why it is dehumanising.
- Report incident.

Is it all right to use the words 'Ned' or 'Chav'??

No, it is dehumanising language.

You should:

- Highlight we RESPECT ourselves and others, and everyone has the right to feel SAFE.
- Explain that poverty is not a source of shame; rather, the existence of poverty itself is shameful.
- Explain why it is dehumanising.

Are there any other words/phrases that I shouldn't be using?

Old terminology	Appropriate terminology
'Eskimo'	Indigenous Arctic peoples
'Hermaphrodite'	Intersex
'Red Indian'/'Native Indians'	Native Americans or First Nations Peoples

Appendix 3 - Anti-Racism

- Extensive research on racism has shown its impacts on mental health and wellbeing, and having a safer and braver space for pupils to process their racialised experiences is crucial to heal and develop resilience.

[Racism - the Threat to our Mental Health \(theantiracisteducator.com\)](https://theantiracisteducator.com)

- A place for racial literacy, as understanding the systemic underpinnings of racism can help to manage the emotions of depression and anxiety it causes.
- To empower every pupil wishing to become better anti-racist allies. The school will foster compassion for others; honesty about oneself; curiosity to learn about race equality and diversity in Scotland and beyond; and independence in one's ability to productively challenge racism in the school and the wider community.

Training, in partnership with West Lothian council, is available here: [Anti-Racism – Forth Valley & West Lothian Regional Improvement Collaborative \(glowscotland.org.uk\)](https://glowscotland.org.uk)

Appendix 4 - Resources

Here are some useful resources for young people, parents/carers and staff:

- www.respectme.org.uk
- <http://www.kidscape.org.uk/parents/mychildisabully.html>
- http://www.respectme.org.uk/cyberbullying_intro_txt.html
- www.lgbtyouth.org.uk/home.htm
- <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/supportinglearners/positivelearningenvironments/inclusionandequality/challengingsectarianism/resources/index.asp>
- Addressing inclusion - <http://respectme.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Addressing-Inclusion-FINAL-NOV-17-1.pdf>
- [Breaking the mould: Principles for an anti-racist curriculum | Resources | Education Scotland](#)