

Woodlands Schools



Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy includes the EYFS, Little Acorns and before and after school provision

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Anti-Bullying Policy & Procedures

This policy has been written with reference to Safe to Learn: embedding anti-bullying work in school and DfE advice Preventing and Tackling Bullying – July 2017 and Cyberbullying: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff (2014).

Woodlands Schools and Little Acorns nursery are based upon respect, good manners and fair play. We are committed to providing a safe and caring environment that is free from disruption, violence and any form of harassment so that every one of our pupils can develop his/her full potential. We expect our pupils to treat members of staff with courtesy and co-operation so that they can learn in a relaxed, but orderly, atmosphere. We encourage all pupils to care for and support each other.

The Schools pride themselves on their respect and mutual tolerance. Parents/guardians have an important role in supporting the staff in maintaining high standards of behaviour. It is essential that school and homes have consistent expectations of behaviour and that they co-operate closely together. This policy is available to parents of pupils and prospective pupils on our website and on request. It is also communicated to all staff and pupils.

Bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination will not be tolerated. We treat all our pupils and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff and the school. Any kind of bullying is unacceptable and any instances will be recorded and, where appropriate, will result in disciplinary action.

The staff challenge any assumption that bullying is an acceptable part of school life and that nothing can be done to change this state of affairs. We believe that bullying is uncivilised and unacceptable and should be eradicated.

This policy applies to all pupils in the school, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Aims and Objectives

1. To oppose any view that bullying is an inevitable part of school life.
2. To provide an educational environment in which all children feel safe and secure.
3. To create an atmosphere where children have the confidence to discuss any incidence of bullying without fear of reprisal and in the secure knowledge of protection.
4. To ensure the good and appropriate communication between school and home.
5. To instil in all pupils the concept that bullying at school, at home and in the community is uncivilised and unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Definition of Bullying

Relationships and friendships within school can be the cause of unhappiness and upset to a pupil. The Schools endeavour to respond to these issues through our pastoral support system, as well as the discussion of friendship issues as part of the PSHE programme. In School assemblies we focus on how we should treat each other and what we should do if we see children being unkind. We are a caring and welcoming environment where pupils are encouraged to discuss issues and to support each other. There is open discussion of the issue of bullying and promotion of understanding of what constitutes bullying. All pupils understand that any allegation of bullying is serious and that bullying will not be tolerated.

Bullying can be defined as "behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally" (Guidance on Preventing and Tackling Bullying, Department for Education, 2017). To ensure that single incidents do not become the first of a series, these are recorded in pastoral records to enable the identification of potential patterns of behaviour.

Put another way, bullying is the intentional hurting, harming or humiliating of another person by physical (including any threat of or use of violence of any kind), sexual, verbal (including via email, social media and SMS or other instant messages), and emotional (including by excluding, being sarcastic, name-calling, tormenting or spreading malicious rumours) means. It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone, or actions that fall short of direct participation, where someone encourages others to bully, or joins in with laughing at a victim. Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and intimidatory.

Bullying could be prejudice-based and involve actions or comments that are sexual or sexist, homophobic, racist, which focus on religion or cultural or family background, special educational needs, disabilities or physical attributes (such as hair colour or body shape) or it may be because a child is LGBT or adopted, in foster care or acting as a child carer.. It may also be unpleasant in other ways.

We recognise the importance of staff training in tackling bullying in all its forms and ensure our staff are aware of the types of bullying and the effect this can have on children through regular training, staff meetings, weekly discussion of individual children and weekly pastoral reporting and creating a culture which recognizes and addresses bullying.

Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time and can involve anyone - pupils, other young people, staff and parents.

Equality Act 2010 Protected Characteristics

The School recognises the nine protected characteristics as defined by the Equality act 2010 as being:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The schools recognise that bullying may take many forms and will always take appropriate action as defined in this policy including the recording of any incidents that breach the Protected Characteristics outlined in law above.

Definition of Cyberbullying

Woodlands Schools pay due regard to Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff (2014). Cyberbullying can be defined as "the use of information and communication

technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others"(Belsey, <http://www.cyberbullying.org/>). It is an aggressive, intentional act carried out repeatedly over time, often against a victim who cannot easily defend himself/ herself.

Cyber-bullying could involve communications by various electronic media, including for example:

- Texts, instant messages or calls on mobile phones;
- The use of mobile phone camera images to cause distress, fear or humiliation;
- Posting threatening, abusive, offensive or humiliating material or comments on websites (including blogs, personal websites and social networking sites;
- Using any type of messaging service to contact others in a threatening or abusive manner; or
- Hijacking/ cloning e-mail accounts.

Supporting Children as they learn to build relationships

One of our prime responsibilities in school is to help children to learn how to build strong and cohesive relationships with their peers. On occasions, these relationships break down and sometimes children make mistakes in their behaviour towards others. When such an event occurs, members of staff must deal with the situation swiftly and fairly, pointing out the mistakes that have been made and, where appropriate, using sanctions detailed in the Behaviour and Discipline Policy.

The members of staff should write an account of the incident to inform the Class Teacher and the Head Teacher or Nursery Manager as appropriate.

If this or a similar breakdown in relationships occurs again, it should be dealt with appropriately and the Teachers should also speak to the children concerned and notify the Head Teacher. The perpetrator of the unrest should be made aware that persistent behaviour of this sort could be considered as bullying and if that is the case, then parents will be informed. The issues should be discussed at the next staff meeting and a record will be made. This will ensure that staff members are aware of previous incidents and that all are vigilant for signs of further unrest.

The School's response to bullying

At Woodlands Schools we always treat bullying very seriously. It conflicts sharply with the school's social and moral principles, and potentially with its policy on equal opportunities, and will not be tolerated. Bullying can be so serious that it causes physical, emotional and psychological damage, eating disorders, self-harm and even suicide. Whilst bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and to violent and threatening behaviour. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying: everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are victims of bullying will be supported. Pupils who have engaged in bullying behaviour will be subject to appropriate disciplinary sanction and will also, where possible, be supported in learning different ways of behaving.

Bullying which occurs on school trips or outside of the school's premises will not be tolerated any more than bullying on school premises

Signs of Bullying

Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is being bullied include:

- Unwillingness to return to school;
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet;
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually poor work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoiled by others;
- Books, bags, money and other belongings suddenly go "missing", or are damaged;
- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary);
- Diminished levels of self confidence
- Frequent complaints of symptoms which may relate to stress or anxiety, such as stomach pains or headaches;
- Unexplained cuts and bruises;
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance or late arrival to class;
- Choosing the company of adults rather than peers;
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact;
- Difficulty in sleeping or experiencing nightmares; or
- Talking of suicide or running away from home or school.

Although there may be other causes of some of the above symptoms, a repetition or combination of these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents and teachers and reported/ recorded as appropriate (see below).

Bullying and Cyberbullying – Preventative Measures

Bullying can cause serious psychological damage to the victim and can even lead to suicide if the action is allowed to go unchallenged (although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour). We take the following preventative measures in order to ensure that bullying does not become a problem:

- School assemblies at the beginning of each academic year focus on the school's expected standards of behaviour and what children should do if they are upset or hurt by someone else;
- Review of curriculum content and strategies to counter bullying in areas such as ICT, PSHE, drama, assemblies, projects, stories, literature, historical events and current affairs;
- All the pupils are encouraged to tell a member of staff at once if they know or suspect that bullying is taking place;
- Our induction process ensures that all staff members are given guidance on the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and how to react to and record allegations of bullying;
- All reported incidents are recorded and investigated at once. We always monitor reported incidents. Records of any incidents are kept securely in the Head Teacher's office in order that patterns of behaviour can be identified and monitored;

- Increasing awareness of all staff through additional training so that the principles of the school policy are understood, legal responsibilities are known, action is defined to resolve and prevent problems, and sources of support are available;
- Where appropriate, the school can invest in specialist skills to understand the needs of their pupils, including special educational needs or disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) pupils including, but not limited to, the protected characteristics defined above;
- A weekly focus on relationship issues in our staff meetings;
- Taking action to reduce bullying at times and in places where it is most likely;
- Improved communications with the parents of bullies and victims
- Increased pupil awareness of staff vigilance
- Our E-Safety Policy and regular guidance in lessons helps the children to understand the dangers of Cyber-bullying and how to keep names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details safe;
- Where appropriate, working in partnership with parents and external agencies (e.g. Educational Welfare Officer, Police, Social Services, Educational Psychologist, and Child Guidance).

Parents are invited to attend Internet Safety Information workshops which highlight the opportunities available and the risks posed by the internet. The danger of Cyberbullying is discussed at this meeting and children are taught about this in their ICT lessons.

We discuss in staff meetings ways in which we can reduce the risk of bullying at times and in places where it is most likely. Within PSHE lessons, children will be reminded that they must speak out if they are being bullied, or they have witnessed someone else being bullied – doing this is not sneaking or weakness, or trouble making. Silence and secrecy nurture bullying – to be seen to act is as important as taking action.

Procedures for dealing with reported bullying

Woodlands Schools ensure that all instances of or concerns about bullying and cyber-bullying on and away from school premises are easy to report and that they are recorded properly. Records of instances of bullying and allegations of bullying will be kept on file in the Head Teacher's office and also on pupil files and files relating to safeguarding where appropriate, in order to enable the school to identify patterns of behaviour and to evaluate the effectiveness of our anti-bullying policy.

If an incident of bullying is reported, the following procedures will be adopted:

- The member of staff to whom it was reported, or who first discovers the situation, will control the situation, reassure and support the pupils involved;
- He/she will inform the Class Teacher and an appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team as soon as possible;
- The victim will be interviewed on his/ her own (or, if appropriate, with a suitable person present for support) and the member of staff involved will then write an objective account of events;
- The bully/ bullies, and all others who were involved, will immediately be interviewed individually (or, if appropriate, with a suitable person present for support) and the member of staff holding the interviews will ensure that they will be recorded appropriately;

The incident should be recorded, signed and dated before it is given to the Head Teacher who is responsible for keeping all records of bullying and other serious disciplinary offences, securely in a locked cabinet in his/ her office.

- The victim will be interviewed again at a later stage by the Head Teacher or Deputy Head, separately from the alleged perpetrator. He/ she will be offered support to develop a strategy to help him or herself. It will be made clear to him/ her why revenge or retaliation is inappropriate;
- The alleged bully will be interviewed again at a later stage by the Head Teacher or Deputy Head, separately from the victim, and it will be made clear why his/ her behaviour was inappropriate and caused distress. He/ she will be offered guidance on modifying his or her behaviour. The school's Behaviour and Discipline Policy may also be invoked. Sanctions under the Behaviour and Discipline Policy might include, for example, removal from the class, withdrawal of privileges or suspension from school. The school may exclude a pupil, either temporarily or permanently, in cases of severe or persistent bullying or in the event that the support put in place for the bully does not result in the modification of behaviour to an acceptable level.
- The parents/ guardians of all parties will be informed and may be invited into school to discuss the matter. Their support will be sought;
- A way forward, including where appropriate disciplinary sanctions and counselling, should be determined, and where possible agreed with all parties. This should recognise that suitable support is needed both for pupils who are being bullied and for pupils who bully others, as well as dealing with disciplinary measures in accordance with the school's Behaviour and Discipline Policy if appropriate;
- As part of this process, a meeting involving all the parties, with close staff supervision, may be convened to help develop a strategy which enables all concerned to close the episode;
- A monitoring and review strategy will be put in place and put on record;
- In very serious cases, it may be necessary to make a report to the Police or to Social Services. However, in many cases it will be possible to resolve such issues internally under this policy and the Promoting Good Behaviour and Discipline Policy.

EYFS Children

Even the youngest children at Woodlands Schools are encouraged to behave towards each other with kindness and consideration. They have to learn to look after their own possessions and to respect those of others. We expect them to be honest, helpful and polite, and to work hard and to listen to others. The Nursery Manager, where applicable, is responsible for the day-to-day management of behaviour of this area. The Head of Foundation Stage has overall responsibility for behaviour management in EYFS.

We explain to children why some forms of behaviour are unacceptable and hurtful to others. We rarely need to impose sanctions but sometimes we may remove a treat for hurtful behaviour. Parents are always informed when any sanction or reproof is needed and, in cases of repeated instances of hurtful or inappropriate behaviour, they will be invited into the nursery or school to discuss the situation with the Nursery Manager, where applicable, or the Head of Foundation Stage. The Head Teacher is always advised of repeated occurrences.

Complaints Procedure

Parents are encouraged to use our Complaints Procedure (which is published on our website) if they feel that their concerns about bullying (or anything else) are not being addressed properly. Parents of children in Little Acorns Nursery should be aware that they have the right to refer a complaint directly to Ofsted if they are unhappy with the way in which their complaint has been handled. The Complaints Procedure explains how to complain to Ofsted.

Grievance Policy

Staff wishing to complain about bullying in the workplace should refer to the Staff Handbook.