

Woodlands Schools



Anti-Bullying Policy

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

Excellence for all through teaching, learning, opportunity and achievement

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Anti-Bullying Policy & Procedures

Woodlands Hutton Manor and Little Acorns 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, bullying, harassment and discrimination so that every pupil can develop their full potential.

We expect pupils to treat members of staff and one another with courtesy, respect and co-operation so that everyone can learn and develop in a relaxed, safe and orderly atmosphere. We encourage all pupils to care for and support each other.

The School prides itself on respect and mutual tolerance. Parents and guardians have an important role in supporting staff in maintaining high standards of behaviour. It is essential that school and home have consistent expectations of behaviour and that they co-operate closely together.

This policy is available to parents of pupils and prospective pupils on the school website and on request. It is communicated to staff and pupils in an age-appropriate way.

Bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination will not be tolerated. We treat all our pupils and their parents fairly and with consideration and expect this to be reciprocated towards each other, the staff and the school.

Any kind of bullying is unacceptable. Instances and allegations of bullying will be recorded and investigated and, where appropriate, will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the school's Behaviour and Discipline Policy.

The staff challenge any assumption that bullying is an acceptable part of school life or that nothing can be done to change it. We believe that bullying is unacceptable and should be addressed promptly and effectively.

This policy applies to all pupils at Woodlands Hutton Manor, including children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, Little Acorns and pupils attending before and after school provision.

Aims and Objectives

The aims of this policy are:

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, secure and respected.
3. To create an atmosphere where children have the confidence to discuss any incidence or concern about bullying without fear of reprisal and in the secure knowledge that they will be listened to and supported.
4. To ensure good and appropriate communication between school and home.
5. To instil in all pupils the understanding that bullying at school, at home, online and in the community is unacceptable.
6. To ensure that allegations and concerns about bullying are taken seriously, investigated appropriately and acted upon.
7. To support pupils who experience bullying.

8. To help pupils who have engaged in bullying behaviour to understand the impact of their behaviour and to develop appropriate ways of behaving.
9. To ensure that staff recognise the signs of bullying and understand how to respond and record concerns.
10. To monitor incidents and identify patterns so that preventative action can be taken.

Definition of Bullying

Relationships and friendships within school can sometimes be the cause of unhappiness or upset to a pupil. The School endeavours to respond to these issues through our pastoral support system and through discussion of friendship issues as part of the PSHE programme.

In school assemblies and throughout the curriculum, 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 support each other. There is open discussion of bullying and promotion of understanding about what constitutes bullying.

Not every disagreement, argument, friendship difficulty or instance of unkind behaviour will constitute bullying. Children, particularly in the primary years, are developing social and emotional skills and may make mistakes or experience disagreements.

Such behaviour is nevertheless taken seriously and will be addressed appropriately.

For the purposes of this policy, bullying is understood as:

Behaviour by an individual or group which causes, or is intended to cause, harm, intimidation, humiliation or offence to another individual or group. Bullying may be repeated over time and may involve an imbalance of power or a situation in which the person experiencing the behaviour finds it difficult to defend themselves or stop it.

Bullying may be:

- physical;
- verbal;
- emotional or psychological;
- social or relational;
- sexual or sexist;
- prejudice-related;
- online or cyberbullying; or
- a combination of these.

Bullying may involve direct or indirect behaviour.

It can include:

- physical aggression or violence;
- threats or intimidation;
- name-calling;
- insulting or humiliating comments;
- persistent teasing or tormenting;
- deliberate exclusion;

- manipulating friendships;
- spreading malicious rumours;
- encouraging others to bully or exclude another pupil;
- laughing at or joining in with bullying behaviour;
- damaging or taking another pupil's possessions;
- deliberately humiliating another pupil;
- threatening or abusive communications;
- sharing material intended to cause distress or humiliation; or
- other behaviour which deliberately or seriously harms, intimidates or humiliates another person.

Bullying can be hidden and subtle or overt and intimidating.

A power imbalance may arise from differences in age, size, physical strength, popularity, social status, confidence, group membership, access to information or technology, or other circumstances.

The School recognises that **a single serious incident may require a bullying response**, even where there is insufficient evidence of repetition. Individual incidents will be recorded where appropriate so that the School can identify whether a pattern subsequently develops.

Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time and can involve pupils, other young people, staff or parents. Concerns involving adults will be dealt with under the appropriate school procedures, including safeguarding or staff procedures where applicable.

Equality Act 2010 Protected Characteristics

The School recognises the protected characteristics defined by the Equality Act 2010 as:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex; and
- sexual orientation.

The School recognises that bullying may be related to a person's actual or perceived characteristics or circumstances.

Prejudice-related bullying may include behaviour or comments relating to:

- race, colour, nationality or ethnic background;
- religion or belief;
- disability or special educational needs;
- sex;
- sexual orientation;
- gender reassignment;
- appearance or physical characteristics;
- family or cultural background;

- a child being adopted or in care;
- a child acting as a young carer; or
- any other personal characteristic or difference used to target, exclude, intimidate or humiliate a pupil.

The School will take appropriate action where bullying or other unacceptable behaviour relates to a protected characteristic.

Such incidents will be recorded appropriately and monitored so that the School can identify patterns and take preventative action.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying carried out through electronic communication or digital technology.

It may include:

- texts, instant messages or calls;
- abusive or threatening messages;
- use of mobile phone cameras to cause distress, fear or humiliation;
- posting threatening, abusive, offensive or humiliating material or comments online;
- abusive or threatening communications through messaging services;
- excluding someone deliberately from online groups;
- sharing photographs, videos or other material without appropriate permission;
- creating or using false accounts to impersonate or humiliate another person;
- sharing private or personal information;
- encouraging others to participate in online abuse;
- deliberately damaging someone's reputation online; or
- other digital behaviour intended to harm, intimidate, humiliate or offend.

Cyberbullying may take place outside school and outside school hours. Where online behaviour affects the welfare, safety, relationships or education of pupils, or the wider school community, the School may need to respond.

The School will address cyberbullying in accordance with this policy, the Behaviour and Discipline Policy, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the Online Safety Policy as appropriate.

Supporting Children as they Learn to Build Relationships

One of our prime responsibilities in school is to help children learn how to build strong and cohesive relationships with their peers.

Relationships sometimes break down and children may make mistakes in their behaviour towards others.

When this occurs, members of staff will deal with the situation swiftly and fairly, explaining the behaviour that was inappropriate and, where appropriate, applying the sanctions detailed in the Behaviour and Discipline Policy.

The member of staff should record significant incidents and inform the Class Teacher and Head Teacher or Nursery Manager as appropriate.

Where a similar incident occurs again, staff should consider whether there is an emerging pattern and notify the appropriate senior member of staff.

The pupil responsible for the behaviour should understand why their behaviour was inappropriate and what is expected of them in future.

Where persistent or targeted behaviour develops, the School will consider whether it meets the definition of bullying and will respond accordingly.

The School will not wait for a situation to become severe before taking reasonable preventative action.

The School's Response to Bullying

At Woodlands Hutton Manor we always treat bullying seriously.

Bullying conflicts sharply with the School's social and moral principles and with our commitment to equality and respect. It will not be tolerated.

Bullying can have a serious effect on a pupil's wellbeing, relationships, confidence, attendance and ability to learn. The School therefore aims to identify and address bullying at an early stage.

No pupil deserves to be bullied. Every pupil has the right to be treated with respect and to feel safe at school.

Pupils who experience bullying will be supported.

Pupils who have engaged in bullying behaviour will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action where necessary and will also, where possible and appropriate, be supported in learning different ways of behaving.

The School will seek to ensure that:

- the behaviour stops;
- pupils are safe;
- the pupil who has experienced bullying is supported;
- the pupil responsible understands the impact of their behaviour;
- parents are appropriately involved;
- safeguarding concerns are identified and addressed; and
- incidents are monitored to ensure that the situation does not recur.

Bullying occurring on school trips, residential visits, sporting activities, before or after school provision or outside school premises may be addressed under this policy where it affects the safety or welfare of pupils or the school community.

Recognising Possible Signs of Bullying

Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is experiencing bullying include:

- unwillingness to attend or return to school;
- increased anxiety;
- becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet;

- changes in established friendships;
- avoiding particular pupils, places or activities;
- failure to produce work or an unusual deterioration in work;
- work appearing to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others;
- books, bags, money or other belongings going missing or being damaged;
- changes in established habits;
- diminished self-confidence;
- frequent complaints of physical symptoms which may be associated with stress or anxiety;
- unexplained injuries;
- frequent absence or lateness;
- choosing the company of adults rather than peers;
- changes in body language or eye contact;
- difficulty sleeping or nightmares;
- increased distress around mobile phones or online activity;
- reluctance to participate in social activities; or
- talking about running away or otherwise expressing significant distress.

Some of these signs may have causes other than bullying. However, a repetition or combination of signs should prompt appropriate enquiry and, where necessary, recording and investigation.

Any concern suggesting that a child may be at risk of significant harm must be dealt with in accordance with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Bullying and Cyberbullying – Preventative Measures

The School seeks to prevent bullying through a combination of education, pastoral support, supervision, staff training and effective communication.

Preventative measures include:

- assemblies focusing on expected standards of behaviour and what pupils should do if they are upset or hurt by someone else;
- PSHE teaching about relationships, respect, kindness, inclusion and dealing with conflict;
- age-appropriate teaching about online safety and cyberbullying;
- curriculum content and strategies in Computing, PSHE, drama, assemblies, projects, stories, literature and other appropriate areas;
- encouraging pupils to tell a member of staff if they know or suspect that bullying is taking place;
- induction and ongoing training for staff on this policy and the response to allegations of bullying;
- regular discussion of individual children and relationship issues within staff meetings;
- appropriate supervision of areas and times where bullying may be more likely;
- clear communication with parents;
- pupil awareness of staff vigilance;
- teaching children how to keep personal information and passwords safe;
- parent information and Internet Safety workshops where appropriate;
- encouraging pupils to speak out if they are being bullied or have witnessed bullying;
- monitoring incidents and identifying patterns;
- working with parents and, where appropriate, external agencies; and
- reviewing the effectiveness of preventative measures.

The School emphasises to pupils that reporting bullying is not sneaking, weakness or trouble-making.

Silence and secrecy can allow bullying to continue. Pupils are encouraged to speak to a trusted adult if they experience or witness bullying.

Reporting Concerns About Bullying

All instances or concerns about bullying should be easy for pupils to report.

A pupil may speak to:

- their Class Teacher;
- another teacher;
- a member of the pastoral team;
- the Head Teacher;
- the Nursery Manager or Head of Foundation Stage, where appropriate;
- another trusted adult in school; or
- their parent or guardian, who can then contact the School.

Staff receiving a report should:

1. listen carefully;
2. take the concern seriously;
3. reassure the pupil;
4. consider any immediate safety or safeguarding concerns;
5. record the concern appropriately; and
6. inform the appropriate Class Teacher and senior member of staff.

Pupils should not normally be expected to resolve allegations of bullying themselves.

A child should not be required to confront the pupil they have reported as part of the investigation.

Procedures for Dealing with Reported Bullying

Woodlands Hutton Manor will ensure that concerns about bullying and cyberbullying, whether occurring on or away from school premises, are appropriately recorded and investigated.

If an incident or allegation of bullying is reported, the following procedures will normally be adopted.

Immediate Response

The member of staff to whom the concern is reported, or who first discovers the situation, will:

- establish whether anyone is at immediate risk;
- control the situation where necessary;
- reassure and support the pupils involved;
- take any immediate steps necessary to protect pupils; and
- inform the Class Teacher and an appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team as soon as possible.

Initial Account

The pupil who has reported the concern should be spoken to separately and given an opportunity to explain what happened.

The account should be recorded objectively.

Staff should distinguish between:

- what the pupil has directly experienced;
- what they have been told by another person; and
- what staff have personally observed.

Speaking to Other Pupils

The pupil or pupils alleged to have engaged in bullying behaviour should be spoken to separately.

Other relevant pupils or witnesses may also be spoken to.

Where appropriate, a suitable person may be present to provide support.

Pupils should not normally be interviewed collectively where doing so could intimidate, influence or distress them.

Evidence

Where appropriate, the School may consider relevant evidence including:

- written accounts;
- school records;
- messages or communications;
- photographs or other digital material;
- witness accounts; and
- relevant information from parents or carers.

Digital evidence should be handled appropriately and with regard to safeguarding, privacy and data protection requirements.

Assessment

The School will consider all relevant information and determine an appropriate response.

The School will consider:

- the nature and seriousness of the behaviour;
- its impact on the pupil;
- whether the behaviour was deliberate;
- whether there has been repetition or a pattern;
- whether there is an imbalance of power;
- whether the behaviour relates to a protected characteristic;
- whether there are safeguarding concerns;
- whether other pupils may be affected; and

- whether action under another school policy is also required.

A concern will not automatically be dismissed simply because there is no independent witness.

Recording

The incident or allegation should be recorded, signed and dated where appropriate and provided to the Head Teacher or designated senior member of staff.

Records of bullying and serious behaviour incidents will be kept securely and in accordance with the School's information management and data protection arrangements.

Where appropriate, information may also be recorded on pupil or safeguarding records so that relevant patterns and safeguarding concerns can be identified.

Support for the Pupil Experiencing Bullying

The pupil will be offered appropriate support.

This may include:

- regular check-ins with a trusted adult;
- pastoral support;
- support with friendships;
- increased supervision;
- changes to routines or arrangements where necessary for safety;
- support with online safety;
- help to develop strategies for dealing with future incidents; and
- referral for additional professional support where appropriate.

The pupil will be reminded that retaliation or revenge is not an appropriate response and that they should seek adult help.

The School will avoid making the pupil who has experienced bullying responsible for solving the situation.

Response to the Pupil Responsible for Bullying Behaviour

The pupil alleged to have engaged in bullying behaviour will be given an appropriate opportunity to explain their actions.

Where bullying behaviour is established, the pupil will be made aware of:

- why the behaviour was inappropriate;
- the impact it has had on another person;
- what behaviour is expected in future; and
- the consequences of further incidents.

The Behaviour and Discipline Policy may be invoked.

The School will, where appropriate, provide support to help the pupil modify their behaviour and develop more positive ways of interacting with others.

Parents and Guardians

Parents or guardians of the pupils involved will be informed where appropriate.

They may be invited to attend school to discuss the matter and their support will be sought.

The School will share information appropriately while maintaining the confidentiality of other pupils.

Parents and guardians are asked not to approach or attempt to discipline another child directly. Concerns should be raised with the School so that they can be dealt with appropriately.

Disciplinary Consequences

Where appropriate, disciplinary sanctions will be applied in accordance with the Behaviour and Discipline Policy.

Depending upon the circumstances and seriousness of the behaviour, consequences may include:

- a formal warning;
- loss of privileges;
- changes to activities or arrangements;
- removal from a class or activity;
- increased supervision;
- suspension; or
- exclusion in accordance with the School's applicable procedures.

Any sanction will be proportionate to the circumstances and will take account of the pupil's age, needs and individual circumstances.

Severe or persistent bullying may result in significant disciplinary action.

Follow-up and Monitoring

A monitoring and review strategy will be put in place following significant bullying incidents.

The School will check that:

- the behaviour has stopped;
- the pupil experiencing bullying feels safe;
- appropriate support remains in place;
- the pupil responsible is meeting behavioural expectations; and
- there are no further related incidents.

Further action will be taken if concerns continue.

Safeguarding

Bullying can sometimes be part of, or connected to, wider safeguarding concerns.

Staff must remain alert to concerns involving:

- serious physical harm;
- threats of serious harm;
- sexual harassment or sexual violence;
- discriminatory abuse;
- serious online abuse;
- coercive or controlling behaviour;
- exploitation;
- self-harm or significant emotional distress; or
- any other concern that a child may be at risk of harm.

Where a bullying concern raises a safeguarding issue, the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy must be followed.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead should be consulted where appropriate.

Bullying records should be linked with safeguarding records where this is necessary and appropriate to protect the child and understand the wider context.

The School will follow current statutory safeguarding guidance, including Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Serious Incidents and External Agencies

In very serious cases, it may be necessary to make a referral to external agencies, including the Police or children's social care.

Examples may include serious violence, credible threats of serious harm, serious harassment, sexual offences, serious hate-related incidents, significant online abuse or other conduct which may constitute a criminal offence or safeguarding concern.

The decision to involve an external agency will be made in accordance with the circumstances of the case and the School's safeguarding procedures.

In many cases, concerns can be addressed internally through this policy, the Behaviour and Discipline Policy and appropriate pastoral support.

Record Keeping and Confidentiality

The School records bullying incidents and allegations so that it can:

- identify patterns of behaviour;
- monitor individual pupils;
- identify areas or times where bullying may be more likely;
- monitor prejudice-related incidents;
- evaluate the effectiveness of the policy; and
- identify any wider safeguarding concerns.

Records should be:

- factual;
- objective;
- proportionate;
- dated;
- securely stored; and
- accessible only to those with a legitimate reason to see them.

The main School record of bullying and serious behaviour incidents will be held securely by the Head Teacher or designated senior member of staff.

Relevant information may also be retained within pupil or safeguarding records where appropriate.

Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis and in accordance with the School's data protection arrangements.

Staff must not promise absolute confidentiality where information needs to be shared to safeguard a child.

Staff Training and Responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility to contribute to a school culture in which bullying is recognised and addressed.

Staff will be made aware of:

- this policy;
- the School's Behaviour and Discipline Policy;
- safeguarding procedures;
- signs that a pupil may be experiencing bullying;
- the different forms bullying can take;
- cyberbullying and online safety;
- prejudice-related bullying;
- appropriate recording and reporting procedures; and
- sources of support available to pupils.

The School will use staff meetings, training and pastoral discussions to increase staff awareness and identify emerging concerns.

Staff should report concerns promptly rather than assuming that another member of staff will deal with them.

The Head Teacher has overall responsibility for ensuring that the policy is implemented and reviewed.

The Nursery Manager, where applicable, has responsibility for day-to-day behaviour management within Little Acorns.

The Head of Foundation Stage has overall responsibility for behaviour management within EYFS.

EYFS and Little Acorns

Even the youngest children at Woodlands Hutton Manor are encouraged to behave towards each other with kindness and consideration.

Children are taught to:

- look after their own possessions;
- respect the possessions of others;
- be honest;
- be helpful;
- be polite;
- listen to others; and
- recognise that their behaviour can affect other people.

Young children may not understand the concept of bullying in the same way as older pupils. Staff will therefore respond to repeated or harmful behaviour in an age-appropriate manner, considering the child's developmental stage and individual needs.

Staff will explain to children why particular behaviour is unacceptable or hurtful.

Sanctions in the Early Years will be appropriate to the child's age and understanding. Parents will be informed where a sanction or significant intervention is required.

In cases of repeated hurtful or inappropriate behaviour, parents may be invited into the nursery or school to discuss the situation with the Nursery Manager, where applicable, or Head of Foundation Stage.

The Head Teacher will be advised of repeated or significant concerns.

Any safeguarding concern involving an EYFS child must be dealt with in accordance with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Prevention Through the Curriculum

The prevention of bullying is supported through the School's wider curriculum and pastoral provision.

Appropriate opportunities may include:

- PSHE;
- Computing and online safety;
- assemblies;
- stories and literature;
- drama;
- group work;
- discussion of relationships;
- emotional literacy;
- work on empathy and respect;
- discussions about difference and inclusion; and
- age-appropriate discussion of discrimination and prejudice.

Pupils will be encouraged to understand that:

- everyone deserves to be treated with respect;
- differences should not be used as a reason to exclude or hurt others;
- witnesses have a role in reporting bullying;
- seeking help is a positive and responsible action; and
- adults in school are available to listen and provide support.

Working with Parents and Guardians

The School recognises the important role parents and guardians play in preventing and responding to bullying.

Parents are encouraged to contact the School promptly if they have concerns.

The School will seek to:

- listen carefully to concerns;
- investigate appropriately;
- communicate with families as appropriate;
- explain actions taken where it is possible and appropriate to do so;
- support the pupil; and
- monitor the situation.

Parents and guardians are asked to work with the School and to avoid direct confrontation with other pupils or families.

Where appropriate, the School may provide or signpost information about online safety and cyberbullying.

Monitoring and Review of the Policy

The Head Teacher will monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this policy.

The School will review records to identify:

- repeated incidents;
- patterns involving particular pupils;
- patterns involving particular locations or times;
- cyberbullying trends;
- prejudice-related incidents;
- areas requiring increased supervision;
- emerging safeguarding concerns; and
- whether preventative measures are effective.

The policy will be reviewed annually, or earlier where there are significant changes to legislation, statutory guidance or the School's circumstances.

The review will take account of:

- recorded incidents;
- staff feedback;

- pupil feedback where appropriate;
- parental feedback;
- safeguarding information;
- relevant government guidance; and
- the effectiveness of interventions.

Complaints Procedure

Parents are encouraged to use the School's Complaints Procedure if they feel that their concerns about bullying, or the School's response to bullying, have not been addressed properly.

The Complaints Procedure is published on the School's website.

Parents of children in Little Acorns Nursery should refer to the applicable complaints information for the nursery, including information concerning their right to refer a complaint to Ofsted where appropriate.

The Complaints Procedure explains the stages and arrangements for making a complaint and any relevant external referral arrangements.

Grievance Policy

Staff wishing to raise concerns about bullying or inappropriate behaviour in the workplace should refer to the Staff Handbook and the School's applicable staff grievance or complaints procedures.

Concerns involving safeguarding allegations about an adult must be dealt with under the School's safeguarding procedures.

Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside, where applicable:

- Behaviour and Discipline Policy;
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- Online Safety Policy;
- Equality Policy;
- PSHE Policy;
- Complaints Procedure;
- Staff Handbook and applicable grievance procedures;
- SEND/inclusion arrangements; and
- relevant risk assessments and procedures for trips and activities.

This policy has been developed with reference to relevant Department for Education guidance and statutory requirements applicable to schools in England, including:

- **Department for Education – Preventing and Tackling Bullying;**
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026;**
- **Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014**, including requirements concerning behaviour and prevention of bullying;
- **Equality Act 2010;** and
- other relevant statutory safeguarding and education guidance applicable to the School.

The School will have regard to current versions of relevant guidance when implementing and reviewing this policy.