



## Bullying Policy (Whole School inc EYFS)

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## 1. Introduction

Woodbridge School expects all members of the school community to treat other people with courtesy and respect. Everyone has the right to be safe and secure, whether at school or elsewhere, and to be protected when vulnerable, so that all may flourish without fear of unfair treatment or harassment.

The school's approach to bullying is clear: it is always unacceptable. It damages children and the school will therefore do all it can to prevent it.

## 2. Policy statement

At Woodbridge School, our community is 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 to their 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. All pupils should care for and respect each other, inside and outside of School.

Woodbridge School prides itself on its respect and mutual tolerance. Parents/guardians have an important role in supporting Woodbridge School 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.

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 respect the staff, the School and each other in return. All forms of bullying are unacceptable at our school and any instances will be recorded and, where appropriate, will result in disciplinary action. Woodbridge School regards bullying as a most unpleasant aspect of life in any society and undertakes to prevent it in the School community. This aim is clearly declared to staff, pupils and parents in accordance with the DfE document: *Preventing and Tackling Bullying – advice for headteachers, staff and governors October 2014, updated July 2017*. The School ensures that all its safeguarding procedures are in line with The Children's Act 2004, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 and The Education Act 2002, and The Education

(Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and that the School promotes the welfare of all pupils within its care. Procedures are guided by this document so that all parties are committed to upholding it. Via the School Website, this policy is provided to parents of all pupils, to staff, and to boarding pupils; it is applicable to all pupils including those in the EYFS and applies to actions undertaken both inside, and outside of Woodbridge School.

### **3. Definitions**

*From DfE Preventing and Tackling Bullying:*

#### ***What is Bullying?***

*Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.*

*Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case.*

*Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.*

*Low-level disruption and the use of offensive language can in itself have a significant impact on its target. If left unchallenged or dismissed as banter or horseplay it can also lead to reluctance to report other behaviour. Early intervention can help to set clear expectations of the behaviour that is and isn't acceptable and help stop negative behaviours escalating.*

#### ***What is Cyber-bullying?***

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click.

The Education Act 2011 amended the power in the Education Act 1996 to provide that when an electronic device, such as a mobile phone, has been seized by a member of staff who has been formally authorised by the Head, that staff member can examine data or files, and delete these, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and

there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone.

If an electronic device that is prohibited by the school rules has been seized and the member of staff has reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, they must give the device to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable. Material on the device that is suspected to be evidence relevant to an offence, or that is a pornographic image of a child or an extreme pornographic image, should not be deleted prior to giving the device to the police. If a staff member finds material that they do not suspect contains evidence in relation to an offence, they can decide whether it is appropriate to delete or retain the material as evidence of a breach of school discipline.

Cyber-bullying is dealt with further in an additional policy.

### **The signs**

It is not always easy or even possible to tell whether someone is upset. Young people who feel under emotional pressure may find it hard to talk.

There may be changes in behaviour such as shyness and nervousness, demands for attention, feigned or real illness. Work and sleep patterns may change, they may lose their appetite or they may become easily upset or irritable, despondent or appear unhappy. There may be a lack of concentration or withdrawal, and a pupil who is being bullied or feels vulnerable may be reluctant or unwilling to attend school. They may have physical marks such as scratches, bruises, missing or ripped clothing and they may complain that their belongings keep going missing. The bullied person may spend a lot of time alone or find themselves left out of activities. Other pupils may snigger or nudge one another when the pupil being bullied enters the room or answers a question.

### **The effect**

Bullying can cause its victim anything from short term unhappiness and anxiety to psychological damage. Peer on peer abuse is never tolerated or passed off as "banter" or "part of growing up." In extreme cases bullying has been linked directly to victim suicide. Whilst bullying is not in itself a criminal offence, there are criminal laws which relate to harassment and threatening behaviour. The seriousness of bullying in causing psychological damage and even suicide must never be ignored.

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

**It is important that those reporting peer on peer abuse should never made to feel that they are creating a problem.**

## **4. Policy**

Woodbridge School will undertake to:

**4.1** Make explicit to staff, governors, pupils and parents how to deal with incidents of bullying.

The whole School community is clear about the anti-bullying stance the School takes. **For parents, Woodbridge School will undertake that:**

- they are clear that the School does not tolerate bullying
- they are aware of procedures to use if they are concerned their child is being bullied or does not feel safe to learn, including the School's complaints procedure
- they have confidence that the School will take any complaint about bullying seriously and investigate/resolve as necessary, and that the School systems will deal with the bullying in a way which protects their child
- they are clear about ways in which they can complement the School on the anti-bullying policy or procedures.

**4.2** To provide opportunity for discussion about bullying by pupils and staff within the School's programme of pastoral care.

**Woodbridge School will undertake that:**

- all pupils are clear about the roles they can take in preventing bullying
- pupils are regularly reminded that they have a proactive role in safeguarding others; they should not stand passively by and allow unkind behaviour or bullying to take place, but instead **they should view their role as an active bystander as a very important one and take active measures (typically referring the matter to a member of staff) to support a victim**
- curriculum opportunities are used to address bullying (for example in the Senior School: for all in Years 7 to 13 through specific sessions in the PHSCEE programme, opportunistically through assemblies and tutorial sessions, and through the weekly Chapel services; for all in Years 7-9 through the teaching of Religious Studies, and for all in Years 7 to 11 through topics covered in the teaching of English. For examples in The Prep and Pre-Prep see appendices 2 and 3 respectively)
- staff are offered appropriate training and advice on the nature of bullying, and in handling incidents of bullying, and review this policy document at least once a year
  - Pastoral staff discuss and review incidents in Pastoral Meetings
- Older pupils within the Pupil Support team are offered appropriate training to offer advice and support to younger pupils

The School takes measures to reduce the risk of bullying at times and in places where it is most likely.

**4.3** To ensure that all pupils have access to an adult (teacher, tutor, Matron, Head of House, Head of Lower School and Deputy, Director of Sixth Form and Deputy, Boarding House Staff, Senior Management), or (Senior School only) a trained pupil (Pupil Support Group), in School to whom they may talk in confidence in the knowledge that something will be done immediately to redress the problem, and that the matter will be taken seriously and handled discreetly and sensitively. In addition to this, the Boarding House offers the opportunity to contact an independent listener.

**For pupils who experience bullying, and in line with Woodbridge School's behaviour policy, the School will undertake that:**

- they are heard
- they know how to report bullying and get help
- they are confident in the School's ability to deal with the bullying
- steps are taken to help them feel safe again
- they are helped to rebuild confidence and resilience
- they know how they can get support from others.

**4.4** To make the unacceptable nature of bullying and the consequences of any repetition clear to the bully and their parents.

**For pupils who engage in bullying behaviour, Woodbridge School will, in line with its behaviour policy, undertake that:**

- sanctions and support programmes hold them to account for their behaviour and help them to face up to the harm they have caused
- they are clear that 'initiation ceremonies' intended to cause pain, anxiety or humiliation fall under the umbrella of acts of bullying
- they learn to behave in ways which do not cause harm in future because they have developed their emotional skills and knowledge
- they learn how they can take steps to repair the harm they have caused.
- they are clear that peer on peer abuse is never tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up.”

**4.5** To make clear to parents of both victims and bullies the actions which are being taken by the School, the reasons for doing so and the extent of the support which parents can offer to reinforce those actions.

**4.6** To always listen to concerns of parents although it is important to remember that a one-off incident does not constitute bullying.

**4.7** To follow up each incident so as to ensure that the victim is given as much support as possible and also to prevent a recurrence of the behaviour. In particular the pastoral leader who oversees the incident should undertake a subsequent review of the effectiveness of the School's intervention. This will typically include review meetings with the victim(s) and perpetrator(s).

**4.8** To maintain a log of incidents.

- At the Prep a behaviour log is kept and reviewed at least yearly
- At the Senior School a register is kept and reviewed at least yearly by the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and the pastoral team, to help identify any trends in bullying behaviour. Trends can inform PSHCE content, relevant outside speakers and such.

**4.9** To treat a bullying incident as a child protection concern where there is a reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. In such cases the Designated Safeguarding Lead will report their concerns to MASH for subsequent action.

**4.10** To investigate incidents of bullying involving our pupils which take place outside school hours, on school visits and trips or that otherwise occur outside of school. The School has the right to take disciplinary measures in respect of such acts.

**Under no circumstances will the School tolerate any forms of bullying and all incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.**

## **5. Compliance and Monitoring arrangements**

The School will record all bullying incidents and sanctions in accordance with this policy which will be used to monitor behavioural issues within the School and to evaluate the effectiveness of this policy.

The School will consider whether there are patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour among pupils which may indicate that there are possible cultural issues within the School which may be enabling inappropriate behaviour to occur. When patterns are identified, the School will decide an appropriate course of action, which may include more staff training, incorporating learning points into pupil's PSHCE lessons, or amending this policy.

This policy will be subject to a thorough review process including consideration at the Education Committee on an annual basis. This will ensure that practice across the whole school is in line with *this* policy, the Complaints procedure and with current guidance and legislation.

## Appendix I

### Detailed Procedure, Senior School (including School House):

1. Any incident of bullying must be reported to the pupil's Tutor or to the Head of Lower School or Deputy, a Head of House, Head of Boarding or Director of Sixth Form or Deputy. Incidents may be reported via any member of staff (whether teaching, administrative or support), prefects, pupils or parents/guardians. The Tutor/Head of House/Head of Lower School or Director of Boarding will report the incident to the Deputy Head (Pastoral) or Director of Sixth Form. A written record will be made by the member of staff managing the incident, cataloguing each stage of the investigation and recording any conversations with pupils, staff or parents. A formal response will also be given to parents.
2. When it is deemed necessary, by the Deputy Head (Pastoral) or Director of Sixth Form, written accounts will be required from all those involved and added to the record. Records of instances of bullying and allegations of bullying will be kept on the Deputy Head (Pastoral)'s files and also the 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.
3. Disciplinary sanctions applied to bullies will be in line with the School's behaviour policy. A note of any action taken will be added to the record. Such sanctions might include making an apology to the victim; a social behaviour contract; time spent with pastoral leaders talking about how to amend behaviour; lunchtime, after school or Saturday detentions; exclusion. In addition, the Director of Boarding will reserve the right to gate the pupil for an appropriate time. Counselling might also be offered, not as a sanction, but by the Deputy Head (Pastoral) or outside agencies by arrangement.
4. In serious cases, and only after the Head and/or Designated Safeguarding Lead have been involved, it may be necessary to make a report to the Police or to Social Services. In serious cases (and where bullying by an individual continues) the Head may decide to exclude from School, or the Boarding House, the person or persons responsible in line with the School's Behaviour, Rewards, Discipline and Exclusion Policy. However, in many cases it will be possible to resolve such issues internally under this policy and the School's Behaviour Policy.
5. A copy of the complete record of the incident will be sent to the central bullying register.
6. Through examination of the register and through regular communication between the Deputy Head (Pastoral), Director of Boarding, Director of Sixth Form, Head of House, Head of Lower School, Tutors, School Nurse and Pupil Support Group, Woodbridge School aims to identify any pupil who either seems to be a victim of bullying or is repeatedly being a bully.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Additional notes relating to Woodbridge School Prep:**

#### **Curriculum opportunities used to address bullying**

The School endeavours to deal with the problem of bullying proactively. Pupils are made aware of the dangers of bullying through PSHCEE lessons, themed assemblies and Woodbridge School Prep's Anti-bullying Plan which is on display around the School and is referred to in assemblies.

Awareness of bullying is also developed through stories in English, events covered in History, Geography and Religious Education lessons.

#### **Detailed procedure, Woodbridge School Prep**

Any incident of bullying must be reported to the pupil's class teacher. Incidents may be reported via any member of staff (whether teaching, administrative or support), leaders, pupils, or parents/guardians. The class teacher will report the incident to the Head of Woodbridge School Prep. A written record will be made by the member of staff managing the incident, cataloguing each stage of the investigation.

1. When it is deemed necessary by the Head of Woodbridge School Prep, written accounts will be required from those involved and added to the record. Class teachers, the Deputy Head or the Head of Woodbridge School Prep will make the pupils' parents aware of the matter, as appropriate
2. Disciplinary sanctions applied to bullies will be in line with the School's behaviour policy. A note of any action taken will be added to the record. Counselling, though not as a sanction, might also be offered.
3. In serious cases, and only after the Head of Woodbridge School Prep, the Head and Designated Safeguarding Lead have been involved, it may be necessary to make a report to the Police or to Social Services. In serious cases (e.g. where bullying by an individual continues) the Head of Woodbridge School Prep, with the agreement of the Head, may decide to exclude from School the person or persons responsible. However, in many cases it will be possible to resolve such issues internally under this policy and the School's Behaviour Policy.
4. A copy of the complete record of the incident will be sent to the central bullying register.

5. Woodbridge School aims to identify any pupil who either seems to be a victim of bullying or is repeatedly being bullied. This may include regular communication between the Head of Woodbridge School Prep, Class teachers, Matron and parents through examination of the register.

Woodbridge School Prep has a child-friendly anti-bullying plan which has been made into a poster. This has been put in every classroom and can be found at Appendix 5 of this policy.

## **Appendix 3**

### **Additional notes relating to Woodbridge School Pre-Prep:**

#### **Curriculum opportunities used to address bullying**

The Head of Woodbridge School Prep sets the climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely.

The Head of Woodbridge School Prep ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong and that it is unacceptable behaviour. The Deputy Head draws the attention of the children to this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, it may be that a decision is made to use an assembly as the forum in which to discuss with other children why this behaviour was wrong and why a pupil is subject to a School sanction. It may be that a particular Year Group is the focus for discussion.

All staff at Woodbridge School Pre-Prep regard bullying as a serious issue and seek to prevent it from taking place. Teachers use a range of methods to help prevent bullying and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. They use PSHCEE role-play, stories etc. within the formal curriculum to help pupils understand the feelings of bullied children and to practise the restraint required to avoid lapsing into bullying behaviour. Circle Time is used to praise, reward and acknowledge the success of all children and thus to help create a positive atmosphere.

#### **Detailed procedure, Woodbridge School Pre-Prep**

1. Children are regularly reminded of what constitutes unacceptable behaviour including bullying. An age appropriate guide to behaviour is visible in all classrooms. "The Golden Rules" can be seen at Appendix 6 of this policy. The Behaviour Policy is also considered alongside this policy.
2. Any incident of bullying must be reported to the Head of Woodbridge School Prep. Incidents may be reported via any member of staff (whether teaching, administrative or support), pupils or parents. A written record will be made by the member of staff managing the incident, cataloguing each stage of the investigation.
3. Parents are informed and involved in discussions regarding appropriate ways to resolve the situation.
4. A copy of any complete written record made of the incident will be sent to the central bullying register.
5. In serious cases the Head of Woodbridge School Prep will refer the matter to the Head.

## **The role of pupils**

Pupils are encouraged to tell anybody they trust if they are being bullied and if the bullying continues, they must keep letting people know.

### **What to do**

If a child is being bullied, or feels tempted to bully, he/she should tell:

- An adult on playground duty;
- Their class teacher or any other member of staff;
- The Head of Woodbridge School Prep.

If a child knows of someone who is being bullied, he/she should tell an adult they trust.

## **The role of parents**

Parents have a responsibility to support the School's anti-bullying policy, actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the School. Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied or suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's teacher immediately or The Head of Woodbridge School Prep. If they remain dissatisfied, they should follow the school's complaints procedure.

### **What happens next?**

Trusted adults can advise and support the child and explain how the matter can be addressed. In the first instance, anyone who exhibits bullying behaviour will be asked to talk about their actions and encouraged to find ways to change it. Everyone involved has responsibility for helping them to do this. Sometimes bullies do not realise how upsetting their behaviour has been. Victims may need to deal with their feelings and will be offered methods of support. When bullying has been reported and action has been taken, the situation will be monitored carefully to prevent it recurring.

## Appendix 4: Woodbridge School Prep's Anti-Bullying Plan

It is important for everyone in Woodbridge School Prep's community to feel safe, happy and secure.

**Bullies, of any sort, will not be tolerated. We want The Prep to be a 'bully free' zone.**

### **What is Bullying?**

Bullying can be verbal, physical or psychological. It can happen face to face or through cyberspace. Some examples are:

#### **Physical**

- Hitting another person.
- Ganging up on someone.
- Pushing, shoving or tripping someone up to cause harm or embarrassment.
- Hiding or damaging someone's property.

#### **Verbal**

- Sneering at someone or encouraging others to do the same.
- Constant criticism from someone because of the way they look or behave
- Leaving someone out of games or conversations
- Being unkind or aggressive; no swearing must take place.
- Making it clear you do not like someone and asking others to follow your lead.

If you are bullied or notice bullying, you need to take action to stop it, **you can tell:**

- A teacher (your class teacher or the teacher on duty at break time).
- Mrs Mitchell, Mrs Martin, Miss Theobald, Matron the Office staff, or any other member of staff.
- Your parents.
- A friend.

It is up to everyone from the youngest to the oldest to make sure bullying is not tolerated in our school. This requires courage to stick up for your friends and tell the truth. To tell on a bully is good for everyone – the victim, the bully and the whole school community.

**REMEMBER THE RULE: We are kind and helpful – we don't hurt anybody's feelings**

**\*\*\*Treat others as you know they would like to be treated\*\*\***

*Reviewed by Mrs Mitchell September 2020*

## Further resources:

Specialist Organisations:

[Anti-bullying Alliance \(ABA\)](#): Brings together more than 65 organizations with the aim of reducing bullying and creating safer environments in which children and young people can live, grow, play and learn.

Beatbullying is the leading bullying prevention charity in the UK and provides anti-bullying resources, information, advice and support for young people, parents and professionals affected by bullying.

[Kidscape](#): Kidscape is a charity working UK-wide to keep children safe from bullying and sexual abuse.

[Childnet International](#): Specialist resources for young people to raise awareness of online safety and how to protect themselves.

The Diana Award: <http://diana-award.org.uk/>

Childline: <http://www.childline.org.uk/pages/home.aspx>

NSPCC: <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

Young Minds: <http://www.youngminds.org.uk/>

Family Lives: <http://www.familylives.org.uk/>

[Ditch the Label: One of the largest pro equality and anti-bullying charities in the world.](#)  
[www.ditchthelabel.org](http://www.ditchthelabel.org)

Reference:

DfE *Preventing and Tackling Bullying*: [Preventing and tackling bullying](#)

DfE *Supporting children and young people who are bullied: advice for schools*: [Supporting children and young people who are bullied: advice for schools](#)

DfCSF guidance *Safe to Learn – Embedding Anti-Bullying Work in Schools* [http://www.schools-out.org.uk/policy/docs/DCSF\\_Homophobic\\_Bullying/Summary\\_Safe\\_to\\_Learn.pdf](http://www.schools-out.org.uk/policy/docs/DCSF_Homophobic_Bullying/Summary_Safe_to_Learn.pdf)

[DfE Keeping Children safe in Education \(2021\)](#)