



**Woodbrook Vale School  
Policy Document**

**Anti-Bullying Policy**

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## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 provides that schools have measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst students. At Woodbrook Vale these measures are also part of the school's policies on: behaviour; safeguarding; equality; acceptable use of ICT. This Anti-Bullying policy takes account of DfE guidance on 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying in Schools' (July 2017).

### **The Nature of Bullying**

We aim for a high level of concern for others and recognise the effect of our behaviour on them. We expect staff and students to be aware of the differences between individuals and to treat each other with courtesy, sensitivity and respect. In line with "Helping Children Achieve More" (2010), Woodbrook Vale School is determined that students will stay safe and, as far as possible, be happy.

We all have the right to safety and security and to be treated fairly. No one in our community has the right to be hurtful towards other people. This includes the bullying of school staff whether by parents, students or other staff.

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time (Several Times on Purpose) that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying is different from other kinds of behaviour e.g. friendship fall outs, disagreements or one-off incidents.

Bullying can take many forms and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on the grounds of race, culture, appearance, religion or belief, disability, Special Educational Need, appearance, gender, identity or sexual orientation. Bullying may occur because of home circumstances such as a child being adopted or having caring responsibilities. We are particularly keen to educate our students about the differences that constitute 'protected characteristics', and in cases where bullying of this nature occurs, we have educational material to support our restorative education programme. An example of the educational material we use can be found in Appendix 2.

Further information relating to protected characteristics is outlined in our Equality Information and Objectives Statement which should be read in conjunction with this policy.

## Bullying can be:

Physical (including property)	Pushing, hitting, pinching, kicking and damaging, stealing and hiding personal property.
Verbal	Name calling, shouting, teasing, insulting, threatening.
Psychological Actions (silent and indirect)	Social exclusion, leaving someone out, not talking to them, spreading rumours, rude gestures, staring, deliberate irritation.
Cyber-Bullying	The use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) to deliberately upset someone else

## Cyber-Bullying

The rapid development of, and widespread access to technology, has provided a medium for 'virtual bullying' which can occur in or outside of school. Cyber-Bullying is when a young person is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by another young person over the internet, through social networking sites or through text messaging and the wider use of technology. Cyber-Bullying can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience as people forward on content at a click. Like other forms of bullying, Cyber-Bullying can have a detrimental effect on young peoples' learning, confidence and self-esteem.

Bullying of any sort will not be tolerated at Woodbrook Vale, including but not limited to, racist, sexist, homophobic, bi-phobic, transphobic bullying and bullying based on disability.

The school Cyberbullying policy can be found in Appendix 1 of this policy.

## **Objectives:**

We aim to make everybody in the school community aware of how to respond appropriately to bullying:

- By providing mechanisms such as a designated email address (aba@wbvs.co.uk) phone call or online entry, through which students feel confident in reporting incidents of bullying.
- Preventing incidents of bullying by providing supervision before, during and at the end of the school day.
- Promoting the Anti-Bullying policy during assemblies, form time, Personal Development lessons and support students through methods such as mentoring, social skills and friendship groups and buddying.
- Responding appropriately and promptly to reported, or witnessed, incidents of bullying.
- Providing educational material to support better understanding of the protected characteristics, the impact of bullying, and to develop compassion, empathy and tolerance in our students.
- Involving parents and external agencies, such as, Love 4 Life, RELATE and the school nurse, where appropriate.
- Providing staff training and updates through staff CPL opportunities.

## **What should we all do?**

We should treat others as we want to be treated by them – with courtesy, fairness and respect.

We should respect all others regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

We should offer support to someone who is being bullied or who is in distress. Watching and doing nothing is like taking the side of the student showing bullying behaviour. It makes the target feel isolated and alone.

Students should be encouraged to:

- Be proud of being an individual;
- Tell themselves they do not deserve to be bullied. The student with bullying behaviour is at fault – not them;
- Be assertive – say 'NO'. Walk away;
- Ignore comments and teasing;
- Avoid fighting back – it always makes things worse;
- Report if they are being bullied – through email (aba@wbvs.co.uk) or by telling a friend, Diana Award ambassador, a student leader, a trusted adult in school or a parent;
- Report when they see others being bullied in the same way as if they were being bullied themselves.

Parents should be encouraged to:

- Listen to their child;
- Signpost their child to the school's online reporting system or report through this means themselves;
- Limit access and monitor their child's access to the internet and social networking sites;
- Talk to their child's form tutor or Head of Year when concerned;
- Discourage their child from retaliating and escalating the situation.

The relevant staff in school will:

- Monitor the online reporting system;
- Listen seriously to any reported incidents – the victim needs to have the situation acknowledged;
- Establish the seriousness of the incident(s) and make sure that a record is kept (usually on CPOMS), including action taken and outcomes;
- Respond in line with the school's behaviour policy and the Student Leaders' Anti Bullying Procedures Flowchart – see Appendix 3;
- Support the victim and put in place the appropriate support needed;
- Inform other staff who need to be aware of the situation.

The staff who will be involved in the first instance may be:

- Form tutor
- Head of Year
- Deputy Headteacher
- Student Welfare Assistant
- Intervention and Behaviour Co-ordinator

The Governing Board has an appointed trustee with oversight of the school Anti-Bullying policy and procedures.

The personalities and reasons for bullying will vary and it is appropriate for us to sanction bullying incidents once we have taken into account the details and circumstances for each incident. Our aim is for those involved in bullying to recognise their wrongdoing and to change the way that they deal with relationships.

In the case of reported bullying, we will follow the Student Leaders' reporting procedures, arranging for those with bullying behaviour and witnesses to be interviewed to establish the truth of what has occurred. Written statements will be obtained. Parents will be informed and involved. It may be appropriate for those with bullying behaviour to be brought together to discuss what has happened, but discretion will be used by staff in determining whether this is

the correct action. Additionally, in some cases, we will arrange for a restorative conversation between the student displaying bullying behaviour and the victim, to help them understand each other's perspectives and to create a restorative agreement. There will be a period of monitoring following an incident, with an agreed review point to ensure that the situation has been resolved.

In almost all circumstances, sanctions as outlined in the school behaviour policy will be used. Students may be excluded for a fixed term and readmitted on a contract of appropriate behaviour in future. In the final resort the school may permanently exclude a student with persistent bullying behaviour.

### **Curriculum and pastoral support for the Anti-Bullying policy:**

- Activities to enable student feedback and therefore enable the school to improve its anti-bullying work e.g. student voice questionnaires and student leadership work;
- An extensive programme of induction is provided to encourage a confident and secure transition from Year 6 to Year 7;
- Form tutors are in place to maintain daily support for every student;
- Anti-Bullying is included in the school's expectations booklet;
- Anti-Bullying is promoted through Personal Development lessons and assemblies;
- Anti-Bullying week is used to promote our anti-bullying systems and the theme identified by the Anti-Bullying Alliance for that year;
- A student welfare officer is available each day to provide mentoring support for vulnerable students;
- Lunchtime supervisors and Learning Support Assistants provide support during break and lunchtimes, which includes a nurture group for vulnerable students.
- RELATE and the School Nurse provide weekly and two weekly sessions for vulnerable students who require support. In addition, we work closely with: Attendance officers; the Loughborough Inclusion Partnership; the police; the Youth Offending Team and social care.
- Student leaders regularly discuss Anti-Bullying. The work of this group is to: regularly review anti-bullying systems in school; to promote new methods of reporting bullying concerns; to support the student leaders' Anti-Bullying initiatives.
- Year 9 students are identified as mentors for more vulnerable Year 7 students as part of the transition process.

### **Bullying outside school premises**

The school has the power to discipline students for misbehaving outside the school premises "to such an extent as is reasonable." This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises. Where bullying outside of school is reported to school staff it will be investigated and acted on. The school will consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police.

## **Criminal Law**

Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, some types of harassment or threatening behaviour and communication **are** a criminal offence. These include Hate Crimes and Hate Incidents. If the school thinks that an offence may have been committed it may seek assistance from the police.

## **Recording bullying**

Incidents of bullying will be monitored by keeping accurate records, including actions and outcomes. All incidents of reported bullying will be recorded in line with the school's behaviour policy by the Pastoral team on CPOMS (Child Protection Online Monitoring Service) and Go4Schools. All classroom based staff have access to Go4Schools. Year teams will discuss behaviour records on a weekly basis. The pastoral team, led by the Deputy Headteachers, is responsible for analysing patterns and bullying trends.

The school undertakes regular student and parent voice. As part of this, questions will be asked specifically about the way in which school deals with bullying. Additional feedback is gained from within the school community through the anti-bullying subgroup of the school council and through Personal Development. The OFSTED framework's criteria on 'Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare' require the school to demonstrate the impact of its Anti-Bullying policy. The Deputy Headteacher holds responsibility for this.



## Cyber-Bullying Policy

### Introduction

At Woodbrook Vale School we believe that every child has the right to feel safe and that bullying is always unacceptable. As a school, we embrace the advantages of modern technology in terms of educational benefits. However, the school is mindful of the potential for bullying to occur. As such, the school recognises that it must take note of bullying perpetrated outside school which spills over into school and has a responsibility to investigate and respond to any incidents of Cyber-Bullying.

### Aims

Our aim is to safeguard students by educating them how to protect themselves in both the real and virtual world. We do this through the whole school curriculum, assemblies, tutor time, targeted workshop sessions and informing parents via updates through newsletters. All staff should be aware of this policy and how to respond to incidents so that students feel safe and confident in seeking support.

### Definition of Cyber-Bullying

- Cyber-Bullying can be defined as the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), to deliberately upset someone else;
- It can be an extension of face-to-face bullying, with technology providing the instigator with another route to harass their target;
- However, it differs in several significant ways from other kinds of bullying: the invasion of home and personal space; the difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages and the size of the audience;
- Cyber-Bullying takes different forms: threats and intimidation; harassment or 'cyberstalking' (e.g. repeatedly sending unwanted texts or instant messages); vilification/defamation; exclusion or peer rejection; impersonation; unauthorised publication of private information or images. If an image is shared / posted without someone's consent, then this can be an act of bullying, especially if it is forwarded to others.
- Some Cyber-Bullying is clearly deliberate and aggressive, but it is important to recognise that some incidents of Cyberbullying are known to be unintentional and the result of simply not thinking about the consequences. Bystanders can easily become perpetrators by passing on or showing images or taking part in group discussions. Students who actively support Cyber-Bullying should also be dealt with in line with this policy.

**There are particular features of Cyber-Bullying that differ from other forms of bullying and should be recognised when determining how to respond effectively.**

**The key differences are:**

**Impact** – the scale and scope of Cyber-Bullying can be greater than other forms of bullying.

**Targets and perpetrators** – the people involved may have a different profile to traditional bullies and their targets.

**Anonymity** – the person being bullied may not always know who is attacking them.

**Evidence** – Unlike other forms of bullying, the target of the bullying will have evidence of its occurrence.

### **Prevention**

The school will educate and instil values in all members of the school. These are reinforced by: a Personal Development programme which includes specific units around internet safety; assemblies; targeted whole school activities. The school employs an Acceptable Use Policy, and internet safety is a priority throughout the curriculum.

Students can report incidents of Cyberbullying to any member of staff.

It is crucial to the school's success when dealing with Cyber-Bullying that all members of the community are made aware that it is unacceptable and that it is the responsibility of all to take action if they are aware that it is happening.

### **Anti-Cyber-Bullying Code: Advice to students**

Being sent an abusive or threatening text message, or seeing nasty comments about yourself, family or friends can be upsetting. This '**SMART**' code gives you tips on how to protect yourself and advice on how to report any Cyber-Bullying that may occur:

- **SAFE** – Keep safe by being careful not to give out personal information when you are online. Personal information includes your email address, phone number and password.
- **MEETING** – Meeting someone you have only been in touch with online can be dangerous. Online friends are still strangers even if you have been talking to them for a long time.
- **ACCEPTING** – Accepting emails, IM messages, or opening files, pictures or texts from people you don't know, or trust, can lead to problems.
- **RELIABLE** – Someone online might lie about who they are and information on the internet may not be true. If you like chatting online, it's best to only chat to your real-world friends and family.
- **TELL** – Tell your parent, carer or a trusted adult if someone or something makes you feel uncomfortable or worried, or if you or someone you know is being bullied online.

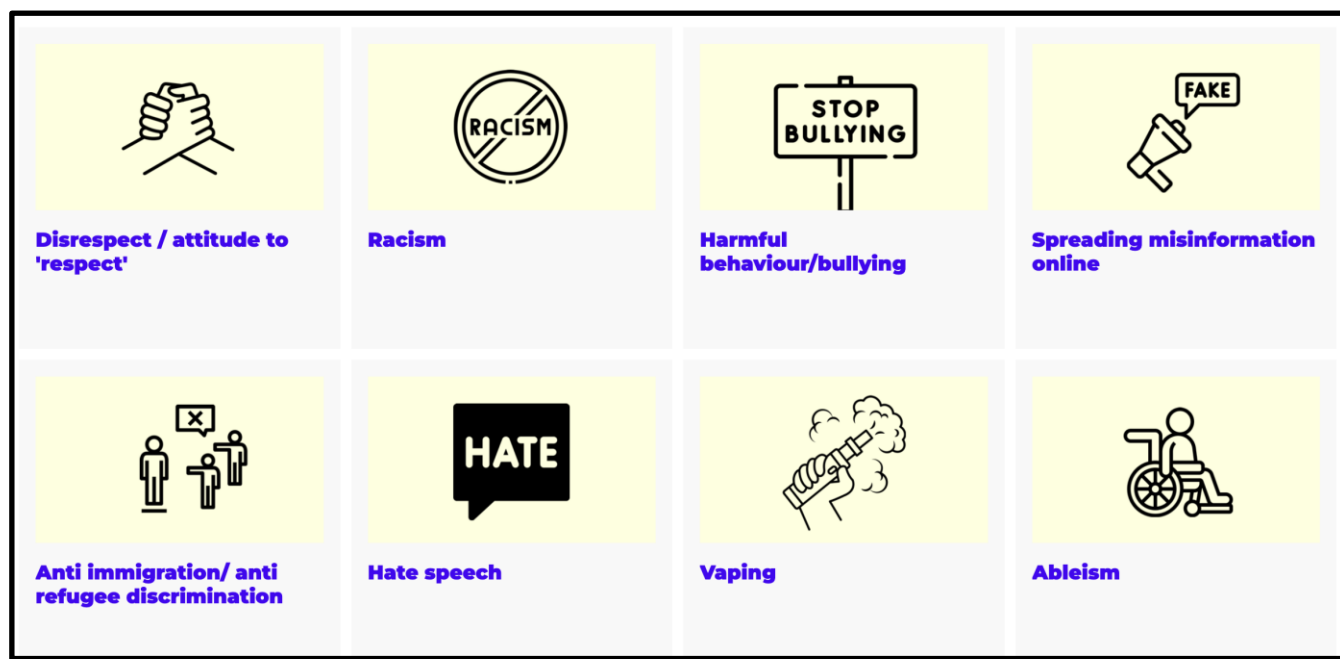
## **Procedures for dealing with reported Cyber-Bullying**

1. If a student or friend of a student receives an abusive email, text or message via social media, they should report the matter to a member of staff as soon as possible.
2. No matter how upsetting these messages may be, students should save the message with a screenshot and should not delete messages.
3. Depending on the nature of the allegation, the incident will be dealt with in the first instance by the Head of Year; however, more serious allegations may involve the SLT and/or the police.
4. Incidents will be investigated fully and fairly with statements being taken from all parties.
5. The Anti-Bullying Policy and Student Leaders' procedures will be followed, with the incident and outcome being logged electronically on a central database.

## Appendix 2:

Educational material is in place to support students involved in an incident of abusive or harmful behaviour. We endeavour to reduce repeat incidents by providing students with an opportunity to reflect and learn from the incident, developing tolerance, empathy and a better understanding of attitudes underpinning the bullying behaviours.

An example of some of the content can be seen below:



### Appendix 3:

The student version of our procedures for reporting Bullying and Hate Incidents has been created by our Student Leadership Team. Students have led on this, eliciting feedback from all year groups. The Student Leaders' aim is to improve transparency of the reporting procedures, in order to ensure students are confident in the robustness of the measures we have in place.

