

Woodbridge School ANTI-BULLYING

Policy Statement

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*. Procedures are guided by this document so that all parties are committed to upholding it. This policy is provided to parents of all pupils, to staff, and to boarding pupils.

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 or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted 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.

Definition of Bullying, and its effect

Bullying, including racial, religious, cultural, sexual/sexist, homophobic and disability bullying, is the wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone. It can take a number of forms: physical or verbal, obvious or subtle and can take place over an extended period of time.

Cyberbullying (the sending or posting of harmful or cruel messages, texts or images using the internet or other (digital) communication devices) fulfils all the above, but in addition has other components to it and is dealt with further in a separate policy document.

Bullying can cause its victim anything from short term unhappiness and anxiety to psychological damage. 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.

Overarching procedure:

1. To make explicit to staff, 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.

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, including the role of bystanders, and therefore that pupils do not identify bullying as a problem in the School.
- 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 PSHE programme, opportunistically through 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 Abbey and Queen's House see appendices 2 and 3 respectively)
- staff are offered appropriate training and advice in handling incidents of bullying, and the School takes measures to reduce the risk of bullying at times and in places where it is most likely.

3. To ensure that all pupils have access to an adult (teacher, tutor, Chaplain, Matron, Housemaster, 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.

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. To make the unacceptable nature of bullying and the consequences of any repetition clear to the bully and his or her 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.

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.

6. 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.
7. To maintain a central register across all three sites of incidents of bullying, reviewed at least yearly by Senior Management, to help identify any trends in bullying behaviour.

Appendix 1: Detailed Procedure, Senior School:

1. Any incident of bullying must be reported to the pupil's Tutor or to a Housemaster/ Housemistress or Head of Sixth Form. Incidents may be reported via any member of staff (whether teaching, administrative or ancillary), prefects, pupils or parents/guardians. The Tutor/ Housemaster/ Housemistress will report the incident to the Senior Master, Senior Mistress or Head of Sixth Form. A written record will be made by the member of staff managing the incident, cataloguing each stage of the investigation.
2. When it is deemed necessary, by the Senior Master, Senior Mistress or Head of Sixth Form, written accounts will be required from all those involved and added to the record.
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.
4. In serious cases (and where bullying by an individual continues) the Headmaster may decide to exclude from School the person or persons responsible.
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 Senior Master, Senior Mistress, Head of Sixth Form, Housemasters/ Housemistresses, Tutors, Chaplain, Matron 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 The Abbey:

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 PSHE lessons, themed assemblies and The Abbey'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 and current affairs.

Detailed procedure, The Abbey

1. 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 ancillary), leaders, pupils, or parents/guardians. The class teacher will report the incident to the Master of The Abbey. A written record will be made by the member of staff managing the incident, cataloguing each stage of the investigation.
2. When it is deemed necessary by the Master, written accounts will be required from those involved and added to the record. The Master will make the pupils' parents aware of the matter.

3. In serious cases (e.g. where bullying by an individual continues) the Master, with the agreement of the Headmaster, may decide to exclude from school the person or persons responsible.
4. A copy of the complete record of the incident will be sent to the central bullying register.
5. Through examination of the register and through regular communication between the Master, Second Master, Class Teachers, Matron, Chaplain and parents, Woodbridge School aims to identify any pupil who either seems to be victim of bullying or is repeatedly being a bully.

Appendix 3: Additional notes relating to Queen's House Curriculum opportunities used to address bullying

The Head of Queen's House sets the climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely.

The Head of Queen's House ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong and that it is unacceptable behaviour. The Head of Queen's House 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 being punished. It may be that a particular Year Group is the focus for discussion.

All staff at Queen's House regards bullying as a serious issue and seeks 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 PSHE, 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, Queen's House

1. Any incident of bullying must be reported to The Head of Queen's House. Incidents may be reported via any member of staff (whether teaching, administrative or ancillary), pupils or parents. When it is deemed necessary, by The Head of Queen's House, a written record will be made by the member of staff managing the incident, cataloguing each stage of the investigation.
2. Parents are informed and involved in discussions regarding appropriate ways to resolve the situation.
3. A copy of any complete written record made of the incident will be sent to the central bullying register.
4. In serious cases The Head of Queen's House will refer to The Master of The Abbey and The Headmaster.

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 Queen's House.

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 Queen's House. 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.

BULLYING: ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM; information for staff, parents and pupils

The forms it usually takes (this list is not exhaustive):

- Aggressive or insulting gestures;
- Exclusion from peer group, ie rejection and isolation.
- Extortion under intimidation - coercion of a victim to do an act unwillingly.
- Verbal abuse - everything from swearing, nasty nicknames, personal insults, racial or sexist taunts and slander to outright threats.
- Physical assaults - from tripping up, wrestling, punching and/or kicking - to vandalism to property, spiteful practical jokes and unpleasant initiation ceremonies.

Under these headings come:

Persistent teasing, Unofficial fagging, Name calling, Sexual harassment, Malicious gossip, Queue barging, Theft or damage to possessions, Outright physical attacks, Cyberbullying

Who Are The Bullies?

There is no stereotype but certain features often recur. They tend to: be impulsive and have aggressive attitudes they can't control; want to dominate others - especially younger or weaker; break rules more than most; have some leadership qualities; be below average in popularity (except with own group); lack empathy; lack guilt (they may persuade themselves that somehow the victim deserves his fate); be low achievers (though not always), even as adults; derive their pattern of behaviour from home (again, not always).

Who Are The Victims?

They are often: new to the class or the school; different in appearance, speech, background culture from the rest; suffering from low esteem; amusing to others in their reactions when bullied (loss of control, tantrums); nervous, anxious, timid. In some cases it may be appropriate to ask trained older pupils to befriend the victim of persistent bullying. The victim may need some assertiveness training and certainly advice on how to avoid similar incidents in future.

There are passive and there are provocative victims. They are all likely eventually to under-perform academically.

Dealing With Bullying. Woodbridge School undertakes to:

- Take every incident seriously and act upon it.
- Talk sensitively to both victim and bully.
- Report serious bullying to both sets of parents (calmly, clearly and reassuringly).
- Provide to the victim a level of protection that the School deems appropriate.
- Offer support to a wider form/tutor group as necessary.
- Support the victim to reduce or remove any feelings of foolishness or inadequacy.
- Make clear to the bully the School's disapproval and that his/her bullying must stop.
- Encourage the bully to see the victim's point of view. Empathy is the key to his/her improvement.
- With a gang, deal with the pupils separately. A skilled tutor can usually encourage a bully to talk. It is often unwise to make a separate example of the leader.
- The bully/bullies may also require subsequent support.

Punishment needs great care and must go hand in hand with counselling. Poorly managed, it may make things worse for the victim.

- Allegations must be substantiated.
- The bully may have had some provocation and needs to be heard through.
- Sanctions must be appropriate and not be based on aggression.

Further resources:

Specialist Organisations:

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

[Beatbullying](#): 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.

Reference:

DfE *Preventing and Tackling Bullying*:

<http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/p/preventing%20and%20tackling%20bullying.pdf>

[0bullying%20%20%20advice%20for%20headteachers%20staff%20and%20governing%20bodies.pdf](#)

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Governor Agreement	

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