

Willow School Policy



Anti-bullying policy

Date: September 2024

Review Date: September 2026

Aim and Objectives

Our aim is to provide a learning environment free from any threat or fear which will enable us to support the aspirations, achievement and welfare of everyone in the school community.

To achieve this Willow school objectives are:

- To reduce and eradicate wherever possible instances in which children are subjected to bullying in any form, including racist bullying, homophobic or gender variant bullying, of children who may be vulnerable (for example Autistic, SEND, EAL) and cyber bullying.
- To establish appropriate ways of dealing with bullying and provide after-care should an incident occur.
- To ensure that all children, staff and parents are aware of this Policy and fulfil their obligations to it.

Bullying Definition

Although a specialist school like Willow may not experience bullying in the same manner as a mainstream school, it would be naïve not to address the issue in a positive manner. The behaviours of some of our pupils and the vulnerability of others make it essential that the school remains sensitive to the subject. We should also be aware that although not deliberate, bullying for some of our students can be upset by others noises in a cause and effect manner which excludes deliberate intent and empathy.

We can define bullying as deliberate behaviour or aggression by one or more people, which produces damaging or hurtful effects, physically or emotionally, either directly or indirectly through means such as online gaming and social media, to any individual. It is often repeated over a period of time and it is usually difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

Values and Beliefs Underlying this Policy

At Willow School we believe that:

It is important that everybody across the school understands that bullying is unacceptable;

- The school recognises the detrimental effect on pupils who may be subjected to bullying and will work actively to minimise the risks.
- Both those who are bullied and those who bully will be treated in a supportive manner;
- A personalised programme will be created to ensure children feel safe after an instance of bullying.
- The harmful effect on pupil performance which can be induced by bullying is recognised and the school is committed to combating all bullying behaviour.

Persons Covered by the Policy

All pupils on the school roll will be covered by this policy, along with all employees of the school.

Preventative Work in School

The school will make every effort to combat bullying behaviours by establishing and maintaining the following:

- The setting of appropriate targets within a pupils Individual Education Programme.
- The range of rewards and sanctions outlined in the school behaviour policy, including the methods of acknowledging good behaviour.
- Allocation of specific roles and responsibilities in order that incidents may be detected, behaviour monitored and appropriate after-care delivered.
- All incidents will be recorded and collated and periodically reviewed.
- Communication of the policy in order to ensure that staff, parents, children and governors are aware of the policy and their individual responsibilities.
- Staff training to ensure that all responsibilities in respect of this policy can be delivered in a competent, caring and efficient manner.
- Establishing appropriate staff-pupil forums in order that current issues with regard to bullying can be discussed on a regular basis (pastoral time, PSHE work, Assemblies).
- Examination of preventative measures (e.g. supervision levels) in an effort to reduce the risks of bullying behaviour occurring.
- In relation to use of ICT no student should be accessing without supervision. (Further details of this can be found in the Acceptable Internet Usage and Online Safety Policy)
- Adopting a no mobile phone rule during school hours. (Further details of this can be found in the E-Safety Policy)

Dealing with Bullying

We believe that bullying is completely unacceptable. Cases of bullying are not common, each and every case is dealt with urgently and thoroughly. If children are found guilty of bullying, they are dealt

with appropriately. This will include helping them to understand why their behaviour is wrong and how they can change it.

Stages in Managing Bullying in School

- Children are encouraged to tell staff, teaching or non-teaching, of any incident of bullying relating to themselves or other children. Individual class teachers will use a variety of ways to ensure that children have the opportunities to raise such issues, if necessary, confidentially.
- Staff will make every effort to watch and listen carefully for any signs of bullying and be prepared to act firmly against it.
- When an incident of alleged bullying is reported or observed it will be investigated initially by the class teacher, who will then report it to the Headteacher/DSL. If it is a serious incident (involving bodily harm), the matter may be referred directly to the Headteacher/DSL
- When investigating the incident, the member of staff will listen carefully and make accurate notes on what has happened. Both parties will be listened to, and if necessary, third parties as required. Staff will deal sensitively with the investigation in order to avoid making the situation worse for the victim of the bullying.
- If bullying is revealed, staff will deal with the bullies in an appropriate way, with reference to the sanctions outlined in the school Behaviour Policy. There will be an emphasis on helping the bully to identify why their behaviour is wrong and looking at how they can change it.
- All incidents of bullying will be recorded through BromCom by the end of the working day.
- The school will contact parents if it is deemed that a bullying event has occurred. This will always happen if bullying is repeated on a regular basis. Parents of children who repeatedly demonstrate bullying behaviour will be invited into school to discuss how they can support the school at home by helping with their child's behaviour management programme. If there is no improvement, it may be necessary to involve other agencies. Cases of very serious or repeated bullying could ultimately lead to exclusion for school.
- The school will strive to make each child feel safe again, after instance of bullying, through a bespoke differentiated personal program. The program will focus on self-esteem and personal development through PSHE. Assessment tools such as three houses can be used to access student mind-set.

Prevention of Bullying

As a school we are committed to providing a happy, safe and secure environment for all our children. One way we try to achieve this is by the adoption of positive strategies to prevent or discourage bullying.

These are some of the strategies we employ;

- We foster group work and co-operative learning.
- We provide opportunities for children to discuss their feeling and concerns with staff.

- We promote an atmosphere of openness.
- Teaching students how to stay safe online.
- School will offer parents/carers e-safety guidance.
- We provide opportunities to explore issues related to bullying and other inappropriate behaviour in creative writing, art and drama.
- We make efforts to supervise children carefully and with appropriate staff ratios.
- We listen carefully to children.

Cyber Bullying

Cyberbullying, along with all other forms of bullying, will not be tolerated at Willow School.

Preventing and addressing cyber bullying

- To help prevent cyber-bullying, we will ensure that pupils understand what it is and what to do if they become aware of it happening to them or others. We will ensure that pupils know how they can report any incidents and are encouraged to do so, including where they are a witness rather than the victim.
- The school will actively discuss cyber-bullying with pupils, where applicable, explaining the reasons why it occurs, the forms it may take and what the consequences can be. Class teachers will discuss cyber-bullying with their class groups.
- Teaching staff are also encouraged to find opportunities to use aspects of the curriculum to cover cyber-bullying. This includes personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, and other subjects where appropriate.
- All staff, governors, and volunteers (where appropriate) receive training on cyber-bullying, its impact and ways to support pupils, as part of safeguarding training.
- The school also sends information/leaflets on cyber-bullying to parents so that they are aware of the signs, how to report it and how they can support children who may be affected.
- In relation to a specific incident of cyber-bullying, the school will follow the processes set out in the school behaviour policy. Where illegal, inappropriate or harmful material has been spread among pupils, the school will use all reasonable endeavours to ensure the incident is contained.

- The DSL will consider whether the incident should be reported to the police if it involves illegal material, and will work with external services if it is deemed necessary to do so.

Involvement of Pupils

It is important that children recognise the difficulties staff may encounter in ensuring that the Anti-Bullying Policy is effectively enforced. In this regard, children are expected to:

- Report all incidents of bullying to a member of staff and record it on BromCom.
- Act in a respectful and supportive manner to their fellow pupils, reporting any suspected incidents which the victim may be afraid to report.
- Support the aims and objectives of this statement and keep the school rules.
- Refrain at all times from any behaviour which could constitute the bullying of fellow pupils.
- Well-being Warriors, a group of students, which will take on various roles within the school to support all students to develop their understanding in behaving in a respectful and supportive manner towards their peers

Involvement of Parents

We believe that parents should be involved with all aspects of their children's education. This also applies to behaviour.

The school relies very much on children and parents alerting classroom staff or the Pastoral Team of a problem. Early identification of any problem helps us to solve them more quickly. Parents should be aware that the school needs to be informed if there are problems or worries at home that might affect a child's work or behaviour.

Parents can help the school by:

- Stressing to children the importance of sociable behaviour.
- Reporting to us any misgivings they have concerning behaviour.
- Actively endorsing and supporting the Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Noting that it is never appropriate to use physical violence against, or in any other way seek to bully, a bully.

Post incident support

When an incident of bullying has occurred it is imperative that all parties receive some form of support both the alleged perpetrator and victim. The support the student receives should be bespoke to the individual however listed below are different avenues that we suggest should be explored:-

- Reflection time for all parties either together or separate

- Wellbeing student sessions
- Feedback questionnaire tailored to situation
- Advocate system as defined by student preference to monitor and support
- Behaviour monitoring longer term (number of incidents)
- Support from our Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA)

Evaluation and Review

This policy will be periodically reviewed and updated. Ultimate responsibility for its introduction and implementation will rest with the Headteacher, who will consult with the Governing Body. However, all staff, children and parents have an active role to play in the development and maintenance of the policy.