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# Woodlands School Anti Bullying Policy

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**ANTI BULLYING POLICY STATEMENT FOR WOODLANDS SCHOOL**

We are a Rights Respecting School and this policy is underpinned by our continued work of our commitment to UNICEF and the UN Convention of Rights of the Child.

This policy links directly to the following articles of the UN Convention of the Rights of the child.

Children's rights and responsibilities:

- Article 3 - The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all things that affect children.
- Article 4 - Governments must do all they can to make sure every child can enjoy their rights.
- Article 6 - Every child has the right to life. Governments must do all they can to make sure that children survive and develop to their full potential.
- Article 12 - Every child has the right to have a say in all matters affecting them, and to have their views taken seriously.
- Article 13 - Every child must be free to say what they think and to seek and receive all kinds of information, as long as it is within the law.
- Article 14 - Every child has the right to think and believe what they want and to practise their religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights. Governments must respect the rights of parents to give their children information about this right.
- Article 15- Every child has the right to meet with other children and to join groups and organisations, as long as this does not stop other people from enjoying their rights.
- Article 19 - Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.
- Article 23 - A child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and independence, and to play an active part in the community. Governments must do all they can to provide support to disabled children.
- Article 28 - Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free. Secondary education must be available for every child. Discipline in schools must respect children's dignity. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.
- Article 29 - Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.
- Article 30 - Every child has the right to learn and use the language, customs and religion of their family, regardless of whether these are shared by the majority of the people in the country where they live.
- Article 37 - No child shall be tortured or suffer other cruel treatment or punishment. A child should be arrested or put in prison only as a last resort and then for the shortest possible time. Children must not be in a prison with adults. Children who are locked up must be able to keep in contact with their family.

**Introduction**

Woodlands School is a community special school, which provides an appropriate education for students aged 2-19 with severe and/or complex needs.

**Statutory Duty of Schools**

Head teachers have a legal duty under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among students and to bring these procedures to the attention of staff, parents and students.

This policy sets out our procedures for dealing with bullying and pays regard to the Department for Education publications *Bullying: Don't Suffer in Silence – an anti-bullying pack for schools.*

- Preventing and Tackling Bullying (DfE, updated July 2026)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE 2025)
- Equality Act 2010 — protected characteristics and prejudice-based bullying

This policy should also be read in conjunction with the Woodlands School Behaviour Support Policy.

**Policy**

The aim of the anti-bullying policy is to ensure that students learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment, without fear of being bullied. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will students be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available at schools.

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. The main types of bullying are:

- physical (hitting, kicking, theft)
- verbal (name calling, racist remarks)
- indirect (spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups).

- **Imbalance of power**
- **Prejudice-based bullying** (SEND, race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion)
- **Cyberbullying**
- **Child-on-child abuse** (KCSiE 2025)

The nature of their learning needs means that students with Severe and Complex Learning Difficulties may not have sufficient understanding or awareness that certain behaviours directed towards others may be undesirable or that they might be construed as bullying. Similarly, some students at Woodlands, who are the recipients of such behaviours may be unable to express or communicate their aversion to such behaviours or to tell adults. This means that all staff at Woodlands School have a duty to not only be aware of such behaviours and of any child involved, but also to respond appropriately to instances of bullying behaviours.

If necessary, Woodlands School can draw upon a range of skilled and knowledgeable professionals to help devise strategies to manage and reduce bullying behaviours and their effects.

**Implementation**

The students attending Woodlands School all have an Education, Health and Care Plan. This may mean that they are likely to have a limited ability to comprehend that they may be engaging in activities which have the characteristics of bullying behaviour. These may include wanting to be near a 'target' child or being interested in making physical contact with a student, such as touching a particular part of his or her body, or demonstrating potentially physically harmful behaviours, such as kicking or pinching the skin.

The student who is the target may show fear or anxiety when they see the student who targets them. This information must be shared amongst all members of the class team, as well as other members of staff who come in to contact with them.

Staff need to be skilful in observing the outcomes of the behaviours described above. It is important to refer to the Woodlands School Behaviour Support Policy.

All incidents of bullying should be reported using the schools electronic systems for recording incidents.

The proactive strategies being employed to overcome a student's potential or actual bullying behaviour must be recorded in a Behaviour Support Plan. This Behaviour Support Plan will be shared with the child's parents or carers, and must also be copied to the child's school file. Strategies need to be carried out over a specific time span and their effectiveness reviewed. It is important that strategies are shared with parents and carers of the students involved so that there is a consistency of approach at school and at home.

It is also important to help the student who is the target of bullying behaviour, particularly as he or she may have difficulty communicating about their experiences. The child should be able to communicate in his or her preferred mode. The students need to understand that they will always be "safe" if they do this.

**Bullying and Woodlands School Curriculum**

In all work with students, staff emphasise the importance of developing social skills, including respect for the feelings of others. Where students have difficulties interacting appropriately with their peers or with adults, then staff aim to help them develop an awareness of why particular behaviours are valued socially and what is inappropriate. Woodlands School curriculum builds on this through a wide range of activities including Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL).

Staff are important role models for the students. The behaviour of adults towards each other and towards the students is a potentially highly effective tool for preventing and for decreasing bullying behaviours in students with Severe Learning Difficulties.

**Cyberbullying**

Cyberbullying is uncommon at Woodlands because pupils have limited and closely supervised access to the internet. However, digital interactions can still occur through shared or supported devices, and pupils may experience unkind messages or misunderstandings online. Staff monitor all online activity and teach simple, accessible rules for safe digital behaviour **as situations arise**, giving guidance at the moment pupils need it. Any concerning online behaviour is addressed immediately to keep pupils safe.

**Staff Training**

All staff receive annual training on bullying prevention, child-on-child abuse, online safety, SEND-specific behaviour patterns and safeguarding procedures. New staff receive training during induction. Training ensures that staff understand how bullying may present in pupils with severe and complex needs and how to respond effectively.

**Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

The school will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.