WOODLANDS SCHOOL - PEER ON PEER ABUSE POLICY – CHILD FRIENDLY

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PEER ON PEER ABUSE POLICY 1

Feeling safe and happy at school 2

What is peer-on peer abuse? 3

Bullying 3

Sexting 4

Sexual harassment 4

Relationships 5

How do I know if someone is being abused? 6

What do I do if someone else is being abused? 6

What do I do if I am being abused? 7

Who can I talk to? 7

How can I help stop abuse from happening? 8

PEER ON PEER ABUSE POLICY

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 12 - Every child has the right to have a say in all matters affecting them, and to have their views taken seriously.
- 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.

Feeling safe and happy at school

At Woodlands School, we want to make sure that you feel looked after, safe and happy when you are in and out of school.

Sometimes we don't know if something bad is happening, so you need to tell us.

This policy looks at child-on-child abuse (peer abuse), and what you can do when you feel you are being abused, or when you notice someone else being abused.

We can help you by:

- Teaching you what child-on-child abuse (peer abuse) is.
- Teaching you what to do if you feel like you are being abused, or if someone else is being abused.
- Making sure you know the grown-ups you can speak to if you are worried.

What is peer-on peer abuse?

A **peer** is someone who might be your friend, a child at school with you, or another child you may know.

Abuse is something which usually physically or emotionally **hurts** another person by using behaviour that is meant to **scare**, **hurt** or **upset** that person.

Sometimes, it can be hard to know when abuse is happening, because **not all** abuse will hurt, scare or upset you, and you might not know it is happening. It's really **important** you know when you are being abused so we can make sure it stops.

There are lots of different types of abuse. It is important you know what these types of abuse are so you know what to do if you see them.

Bullying

Bullying can be different things, and isn't just hitting or kicking another person. **Emotional bullying** is hurting someone's feelings, leaving them out or bossing them about.

Physical bullying is punching, kicking, spitting, hitting or pushing someone.

Verbal bullying is teasing someone, calling them names or using rude hand signs. People can also use verbal bullying to be **racist** or **homophobic**.

Racist means bullying someone because of their skin colour, race or what they believe in.

Homophobic means bullying someone because of their gender or sexuality; calling someone gay or lesbian to hurt their feelings would be homophobic.

Sexist means bullying someone because of their sex (whether they are a boy or a girl).

Cyber bullying involves sending horrid messages over the internet or by text message.

Bullying can be done through **another person**, by one person sending another person to say nasty things.

Sexting

This is sending **inappropriate pictures, videos or messages** – they can sometimes be called 'nude pics', 'rude pics' or 'nude selfies', but can also be rude messages.

Pressuring someone into sending these pictures, videos and messages is **abuse**.

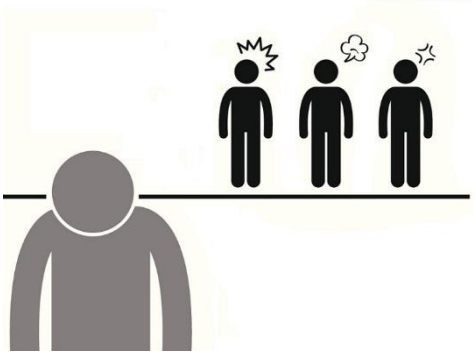
Even if you are not the person who is sending them, it is **illegal** to have these kind of pictures or videos of a person if they are under 18 years old.

Sexual harassment

Sometimes, people can **act sexually towards others** and it might make them feel uncomfortable.

This can happen **online**, on social media, through messages and **face-to-face**. It might make someone feel **scared**, **embarrassed**, **uncomfortable** or **upset**. It could be:

- Someone making **sexual comments**, like telling sexual stories, saying **rude things** or saying sexual things about someone's **appearance** or clothes.
- Calling someone **sexual names**.
- **Sexual jokes** or teasing.
- Being physical, like **touching** which makes you feel uncomfortable, messing with your clothes, or **showing pictures** or **drawings** which are of a sexual nature.



- Being sexual online, like **sharing sexual pictures** and **videos,** or posting sexual comments on social media.
- It might also be **sexual threats** or pushing you to do something sexually that you don't want to or aren't ready for.

Relationships

Any relationship you have should be **good** and **happy**. A bad relationship might make someone feel **scared**, **confused**, **worried** and even **unsafe**. It's really important that you know the **difference** between a good relationship and a bad relationship.

Good relationships

- You are **comfortable** around that person.
- You can be **honest** with that person.
- You can say how you **fee**l, what you are **thinking** and you **listen** to each other.
- You **support** each other and treat each other **nicely**.
- You feel **safe**.
- You **trust** that person.
- You are **equal** – you don't boss each other around or tell each other what to do.
- You feel **looked after**.

Bad relationships

- The person might **push** you, **hit** you or **destroy** your things.
- The person might **tell you what to do**, what to wear or who you can see.
- You might feel **scared** – they might say they will hurt you if you don't do something. They might also say they will hurt you if you do something too.
- The person **calls you names**, makes you feel bad in front of other people and makes you **feel bad about yourself**.
- The person gets **angry easily** and you don't know what will make them angry – it might make you feel **nervous**.
- The person might **pressure** you to do things **you don't want to** or aren't ready for, like sex, or using drugs and alcohol.
- The person **might not take no for answer** when you say you don't want to do something.

How do I know if someone is being abused?

It might be hard for you to know if you are being abused and you **might not really understand** it is happening. It is important you can **recognise** when behaviour isn't appropriate.

It's also important that you can notice when **someone else** might be being abused.

Some signs might be:

- Not going to school.
- Having injuries, like bruises.
- Feeling sad and down.
- Feeling like they can't cope.
- Feeling withdrawn or shy.
- Getting headaches or stomach ache.
- Feeling nervous.
- Not being able to sleep, sleeping too much or getting nightmares.
- Feeling panicked.
- Using alcohol or drugs.
- Changing looks to look much older.
- Being abusive to someone else.

Remember: you can feel all of these things too. Listen to how you feel, and know that these signs can mean you are being abused.

What do I do if someone else is being abused?

If you see someone else being abused, it is important that you **help** that person.
You should **never walk way** and ignore the problem if you see someone else being abused, because the person might keep upsetting them.
If you can, and it is **safe** to do so, tell the person abusing you to **stop**, but never get angry or hit them.

Tell a grown-up, such as a teacher, as soon as you've seen someone being abused.

Grown-ups can **stop the abuse** and make that person feel happy again.

You should **never feel scared** to tell someone about abuse.
Sometimes, you might not **see someone being abused**, but you might be **worried** about them. Or, you might think they are being abused by **someone you don't know**, or someone

they have **told** you about. It's really important you **tell someone** even if you are worried, but haven't **seen** any abuse.

What do I do if I am being abused?

The first thing you should do is **tell someone you trust**. This could be a family member, a friend or a teacher.

You can also **tell the person abusing you** to leave you alone. If telling them to leave you alone would **make you feel too scared or worried that they might hurt you**, make sure you **tell someone** so they can help.
You should **try not** to:

- **Do** what the person says.
- Let what the person says or does **upset** you.
- Get **angry** or hit them.

Always remember that if you are being abused, it is **not your fault** and you are **never alone**. You shouldn't be scared to **talk to someone** if you are being abused. If you talk to a grown-up, we can **make the abuse stop**.

Who can I talk to?

It is important you **tell someone** as soon as you are being abused, or you notice someone else being abused.

Speaking to someone like your mum, dad, carer or teacher will mean that we can make sure the **abuse stops** and doesn't happen again.

The list below shows the **grown-ups** at our **school** that you can speak to:

<u>Any of the grown ups in your class or in school</u>
<u>Karen – the Headteacher</u>
<u>Sarah – the Deputy Headteacher</u>

How can I help stop abuse from happening?

We can all help stop abuse at our school by:

- Making sure we **understand** how we should **act** towards others.
- **Helping** others when they are in need.
- Being **kind**, **friendly** and **respectful** to others.
- Thinking about people's **feelings** before we say or do something.
- Taking part in school activities, like assemblies, PSHE lessons and circle time, which talk about child-on-child abuse (peer abuse).
- **Talking to someone** when we are worried.

You should know that abuse is never OK and it is serious. It is not funny, or part of growing up. If you abuse someone, you will get into trouble.

Let's make <u>Woodlands School</u> a happy place!

This policy supports Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2026) and the Woodlands Safeguarding Policy.