



Anti-Bullying Policy

August 2025

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Definition of Bullying

"Bullying is face-to-face and/or online behaviour which impacts on a person's sense of physical and emotional safety, their capacity to feel in control of their life and their ability to respond effectively to the situation they are in."

"The behaviour does not need to be repeated, or intended to cause harm, for it to have an impact. Bullying behaviour can be physical, emotional or verbal and can cause people to feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out."

Bullying is both behaviour and impact; what someone does and the impact it has on a person's capacity to feel in control of themselves.

Types of Bullying

- **Physical:** Hitting, kicking, tripping, pushing, or damaging belongings.
- **Verbal:** Name-calling, teasing, putting down, or threatening.
- **Emotional:** Spreading rumours, ignoring, excluding, or ostracising.
- **Cyberbullying:** Sending abusive messages, sharing harmful images, or creating fake accounts online.

Prejudice-Based Bullying

Bullying can be motivated by prejudice based on protected characteristics, such as:

- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying represents a serious and pervasive form of harassment that utilises electronic communication to bully a person, typically by sending messages of an intimidating or threatening nature. Unlike traditional bullying, cyberbullying can occur at any time, reach a wide audience, and leave a permanent digital footprint. This can include, but is not limited to, spreading rumours or embarrassing photos on social media, sending threatening or abusive text messages, creating fake profiles to impersonate or harass others, and excluding individuals from online groups. The anonymity afforded by the internet can embolden perpetrators, while the constant accessibility of digital platforms can leave victims feeling continuously vulnerable and unable to escape the harassment.

The impact of cyberbullying can be devastating, leading to emotional distress, anxiety, depression, and even self-harm. Recognising the unique challenges posed by cyberbullying, our school is committed to fostering a safe and respectful digital environment. We will actively educate young people about responsible online behaviour, the consequences of

cyberbullying, and strategies for seeking help. We will also implement clear procedures for reporting and addressing incidents of cyberbullying, ensuring that victims receive appropriate support and that perpetrators are held accountable for their actions.

When is it not bullying behaviour?

Children and young people falling out or having disagreements is a normal part of growing up and building relationships. Accidental bumps and knocks, not liking someone, or expressing unpleasant thoughts or feelings regarding others can be painful or discomforting. It is important that they have opportunities to discuss how they feel and to develop resilience and emotional literacy in managing their relationships. Early intervention and prevention including the embedding of whole school relational approaches are key elements of an approach focused on ensuring we get it right for all our children and young people.

Reporting and Responding to Bullying

- **Reporting:** Young people, parents, and staff can report bullying incidents to any trusted adult in the school, or to their Pastoral Care teacher via the QR codes or anonymous post-boxes in the Pastoral Base.
- **Recording:** All reported bullying incidents will be recorded and investigated.
- **Investigation:** The school will investigate all reported incidents of bullying to determine the facts and the impact on the young people involved.
- **Response:** The school will respond to bullying incidents in a fair and consistent manner, taking into account the needs of all young people involved and our Promoting Positive Relationships policy.
- **Support:** The school will provide support to young people who have been bullied, those who have engaged in bullying behaviour, and witnesses to bullying.

The reasons why young people may get involved in bullying behaviour are many. Some examples include:

- to impress or establish leadership amongst a peer group
- to create a group identity by attacking an outsider
- pressure to conform
- lack of social skills
- jealousy
- have been bullied themselves
- family and/or social problems
- lack of education or understanding of the impact of bullying.

Those who carry out bullying actions or are at the receiving end may display certain behaviours, for example:

- deterioration of work
- faked illness

- erratic attendance
- low self esteem
- loss or lack of self-respect
- isolating themselves from others
- desire to remain with adults
- out of character behaviour(s) or acting out to impress peers.

A young person may not be engaging consciously in bullying behaviour, but its impact is still felt and this is taken seriously. The level of awareness of a child who is bullying is a significant factor in how it is dealt with. Young people who experience bullying or discrimination will be listened to and supported. Young people who engage in bullying behaviour or discrimination will be treated fairly and consistently using a range of measures, outlined in this policy. An allegation of bullying is serious and to ensure we do our job properly we have to gather evidence, primarily in the form of speaking to the young people involved. With this evidence we can then take actions to deal with the young people concerned and keep staff and parents/carers informed.

Responsibilities

Young people are expected to:

- Treat all members of the school community with **Respect** and not bully others
- Report all incidents of bullying/inequality and suspected incidents that other pupils may be afraid to report. They should do this in the first instance to their classroom teacher or Pastoral Care teacher
- Share any threatening or abusive notes or messages/threads with their Year Group DHT
- Support each other and seek help to ensure that everyone feels safe, and nobody feels excluded or afraid in school.

Class Teachers are expected to:

- Create a positive classroom environment that is safe, inclusive, built on **Respect**, and where diversity is valued; fostering a sense of **Belonging**
- Treat all allegations of bullying seriously and address any allegation of bullying/inequality witnessed. All incidents should be reported using the school referral system
- Low level incidents should usually be dealt with in the classroom setting. If a situation is more serious, e.g. prejudice-based bullying or assault then the offending young person will be dealt with by the Faculty Head before referring the young person onward for further investigation by Pastoral Care or Senior Leadership.

Faculty Heads are expected to:

- Support class teachers in implementing the anti-bullying policy within their subject area
- Monitor the effectiveness of classroom strategies and provide guidance as needed

- Ensure consistent application of the anti-bullying policy across the faculty
- Assist in the initial investigation of reported bullying incidents within their faculty
- Liaise with Pastoral Support and Senior Leadership regarding serious or persistent cases
- Ensure all faculty members are trained in the school anti-bullying policy and procedures
- Promote best practices within their faculty and promote *Belonging* and *Respect*.

Pastoral Support are expected to:

- Conduct thorough investigations of reported bullying incidents, gathering information from all parties involved
- Provide support and guidance to both victims and perpetrators of bullying
- Develop and implement intervention strategies to address bullying behaviours
- Provide ongoing support to young people affected by bullying
- Act as an advocate for young people and families, ensuring their voices are heard
- Liaise with external agencies when necessary
- Analyse data on bullying incidents to identify trends and inform prevention strategies
- Develop and deliver school-wide anti-bullying programs and initiatives
- Maintain detailed records of all bullying incidents in Pastoral Notes
- Work restoratively with all those involved.

Senior Leadership are expected to:

- Develop, implement, and regularly review the school's anti-bullying policy and ensure the policy is communicated effectively to all members of the school community
- Allocate resources and support for anti-bullying initiatives
- Monitor the effectiveness of the school's anti-bullying strategies and ensure staff take responsibility for implementing the policy and addressing bullying incidents
- Ensure consistent and fair application of disciplinary procedures
- Engage with parents/carers, community organisations, and external agencies to promote a school environment built on *Belonging* and *Respect*
- Lead training in anti-bullying approaches for all staff
- Ensure all reporting of bullying incidents is completed as required by local and national guidelines
- Review all serious bullying incidents.

Parents/carers can help by:

- Supporting our anti-bullying/equalities procedures
- Encouraging their children to be positive members of the school community

- Discussing with their child's Year Head or Pastoral Care teacher any concerns that their child may be experiencing
- Helping to establish an anti-bullying culture outside of school
- Speaking to the school if their concerns are serious and ongoing
- Monitor use of mobile phones and other forms of electronic devices.

The findings of any investigation should be reported back to the young person and their parent/carer and, where appropriate, strategies towards a positive resolution for all stakeholders should be agreed upon.

Young people who are exhibiting bullying behaviours will also be supported to:

- Identify the feelings that cause them to act this way
- Develop alternative ways of responding to these feelings
- Understand the impact of their behaviour on other people
- Repair relationships

Consequences

If a young person is found to have been involved in a bullying incident, any of a range of measures will be applied, dependent on the severity of the incident(s) and always with the approval of senior staff members.

Such measures include, but are not limited to:

- Lunchtime or after school detention
- Removal from/change of class (temporary or permanent)
- Suspension from school (this will apply to all incidents of physical behaviours)
- Restorative justice measures, including face-to-face restorative meetings with those harmed by behaviours
- Ongoing input from Pastoral Care or Year Group DHT to support development of appropriate interpersonal skills

Prevention

As a Gold Accredited Rights Respecting School, the school takes a proactive approach to preventing bullying by:

- Promoting a positive and inclusive school climate in line with our values of **Belonging** and **Respect**
- Providing education on bullying and its impact across the curriculum, but with a key focus in *Learning for Sustainability* classes and ethos assemblies
- Encouraging young people to report bullying incidents

- Implementing a restorative approach to address bullying behaviour which places the rights of the child at its centre.

Our young people have a range of opportunities to engage in training that supports building their capacity to respond to and support those who are displaying or experiencing bullying behaviours. This includes our S4-S6 Mentors in Violence Prevention programme and Senior Healthier Minds Peer Champions.

Review and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed and evaluated bi-annually to ensure its effectiveness in preventing and addressing bullying.

Additional Resources

- respectme: Scotland's Anti-Bullying Service
- Childline
- Young Scot
- ParentLine Scotland
- The 360 Degree Safe Scotland self-review tool

UNCRC

Article 2: This article states that all children should be protected from discrimination, regardless of their race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or any other status. This is relevant to the document's focus on preventing and addressing prejudice-based bullying.

Article 3: This article states that the best interests of the child should be a primary consideration in all actions concerning children. This is relevant to the document's emphasis on child-centered approaches to preventing and responding to bullying.

Article 12: This article states that children have the right to express their views freely in all matters affecting them, and their views should be given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity. This is relevant to the document's emphasis on engaging children and young people in the development and implementation of anti-bullying policies and practices.

Article 16: This article states that every child has the right to privacy. This is relevant to the document's guidance on recording and monitoring bullying incidents, which emphasizes the importance of respecting children's privacy.

Article 19: This article states that all children should be protected from all forms of violence, abuse, and neglect. This is relevant to the document's focus on preventing and addressing bullying, which is a form of violence against children.

Article 28: This article states that all children have the right to education, and education should be directed to the development of the child's personality, talents, and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential. This is relevant to the document's focus on ensuring that bullying does not hinder children's access to education and their ability to thrive in school.

Article 29: This article states that education should be directed to the development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. This is relevant to the document's emphasis on promoting a school climate that values respect, equality, and inclusion.

Article 31: This article states that all children have the right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to their age, and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts. This is relevant to the document's focus on ensuring that bullying does not prevent children from enjoying their leisure time and participating in activities outside of school.



Curiosity

We Question
Create
Explore



Belonging

We Connect
Include
Contribute



Ambition

We Empower
Strive
Persevere



Respect

Of Self
Others
Planet

Woodfarm High School

Curiosity • Belonging • Ambition • Respect