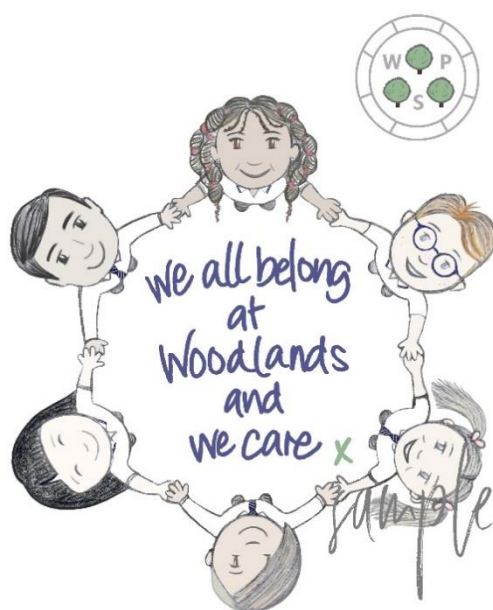




Woodlands Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy 2024



Kind ♥ Committed ♥ Inclusive

Woodlands Primary School Anti-Bullying Policy and Guidance 2024

Bullying is never acceptable in Woodlands Primary School.

At Woodlands, we aim to create an environment where bullying cannot thrive. We aim to ensure every response we take is reflective of our Vision, Promise and Values. This policy applies to all staff and pupils within Woodlands as well as our families and partner agencies.

The approach outlined in this policy reflects our broader Behaviour and Relationships Policy at Woodlands and is in-step with Renfrewshire Council's Policy on Anti-Bullying.

Our Vision

We all belong at
Woodlands and we care

Woodlands Primary is a school connected to its community where relationships are nurtured, people feel happy and like they belong.

Our Promise

We will welcome you as part of our community at Woodlands, we will listen to you, and we will work together to maximise everyone's wellbeing, learning and development.

Our Values

At Woodlands, we have high expectations for *all* pupils. We expect children to aim to be 'Wonderful Woodies' by demonstrating our school values:

Kind ♥ Committed ♥ Inclusive

Our values underpin everything we do and all decisions we make, always with the child at the centre. They are how we treat each other and communicate with one another. We expect pupils, staff, families, and school partners to display our values through all interactions. This begins with, and is modelled by, all adults in school.

Children's Rights

Our commitment to Children's Rights underpins our approach to anti-bullying at Woodlands. This means that our pupils have, in line with the UNCRC, the right to not be discriminated against, the right to have decisions taken in their best interest, the right to be kept safe from harm and the right to be given a voice.

The safety and inclusion of our pupils, their Right to an Education and their Right to be Safe, is paramount. Bullying is a barrier to enjoying your rights.

What is bullying?

Defining bullying can be a source of conflict for parents and schools as well as for pupils. At woodlands our focus is on what we do in response to behaviour and impact first. If we can do this, then we will know if it is bullying or not then.

The Scottish Government defines bullying as a combination of behaviour and impact, the impact on a person's capacity to feel in control of themselves. This is what we term as their sense of 'agency'. It is behaviour that can make people feel hurt, threatened, frightened, and left out. (Respect for All: National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People, Scottish Government 2019)

This behaviour can include:

- Being called names, teased, put down or threatened.
- Physical aggression.
- Having belongings taken or damaged.
- Being ignored, left out or having rumours spread about you.
- Things written about you in group chats.
- Being targeted because of who you are or who you are perceived to be.

The Impact can include:

- Physical or emotional harm.
- Fear.
- Anxiety/worry.
- Not feeling that you can be yourself.
- Although the actual behaviour may not be repeated, the threat may be sustained over time, typically by actions such as, looks, messages, confrontations, physical interventions, or the fear of these.

Bullying is usually intentional but there are occasions where language and actions can still harm someone and cause serious upset, regardless of what the person 'meant' by their actions.

We try to help each other understand we can be accountable for what we do, not just what we meant.

We have shared this definition with our parents, carers and families and have offered drop-in session to outline our definition and approach to anti-bullying. They are supportive of our approach.

Online bullying

Online bullying is the same type of behaviour, but it takes place online, usually on social networking sites or in group chats. A person can be called names, threatened, or have rumours spread about them online and in group chat.

Some pupils are taking part in group chats as young as Primary 4. These chats are rarely supervised by adults and as such can become unkind very quickly and children this age do not have the skills to manage the impact of this.

Unkind and hurtful comments in group chats are just as serious as ones made face to face.

It is the responsibility of parents and carers to teach their children how to behave online and how to safely use social media and devices. It is for parents and carers to set limits on screen time, what content they can access and to follow the expectations on use of mobile phones in schools.

We have had sessions for parents on online conduct and parental responsibility, most of our parents, carers and families agree that this is their role, but many lack confidence and knowledge. However, in line with our school's promise, we will always seek to listen and work together.

Anti-Bullying Guidance

Responding to Bullying

'Children who are bullied do not feel like themselves, they feel like they have something taken away from them. They feel they lose the ability to manage what is happening to them and worry a great deal about what might happen if they tell, if they speak up or if they ignore it.' (Brian Donnelly 2021 <https://orbistc.com/anti-bullying/>).

What you do about bullying is more important than how you define it.

If we respond to the behaviour and the impact, we will be able to discover if it was bullying. We do not try to figure out if it was bullying before responding. We act as soon as something happens.

Our staff will respond to any concerns or allegations of bullying by asking:



This is helpful as it breaks incidents and allegations down into a manageable solution focussed process. All staff in Woodlands can respond to bullying and must always share this with the leadership Team for advice, support and guidance.

We separate behaviour and impact to help us explore what happened and what we need to do, then we bring these two parts together as part of our solution and response to incidents of bullying.

Looking at behaviour and impact as two distinct things, gives us a framework on how to respond to all incidents. This will tell us if we are dealing with unkind behaviour or bullying.

This approach will allow us to deal with each situation in a fair and even way.

- Unkind behaviour that makes someone feel worried, scared, or left out and unsure how to respond, is likely bullying.
- A hurtful or cheeky comment that makes me annoyed or a bit upset, isn't bullying, its unkind, mean behaviour. We will still treat this seriously.
- Some unkind behaviour has little or no impact. This does not mean the behaviour is acceptable. Pupils will be accountable for behaviour and language regardless of the impact. When it has had a serious impact, our responses will reflect this.
- Every situation is unique, and our response will focus on both aspects. We will explore and challenge any unkind behaviour and we will help people develop skills to manage and to respond to behaviour.
- Bullying is usually intentional but there are occasions where language and actions can still harm someone and cause serious upset. In cases such as this, an explanation as to why what they said or did was unacceptable should see the behaviour or language stop.

Some behaviours can be dealt with quickly and effectively by adults by focusing on what someone did and the impact it had. We will help our pupils understand that -

- They have options on how to respond.
- Everyone does not have to be friends.

- Learning how to manage friendships is a skill we all develop at school.
- Apologising means that your behaviour changes.
- Just because it is not bullying, it does not mean the language or behaviour is okay.

Bullying is more serious, and the affect can last longer than simply being upset. Bullying is both unkind, hurtful behaviour **and** a particular kind of lasting impact. Consequences for bullying will be appropriate to each situation and the pupils involved.

Guidance

How do we respond to children that are bullied?

It is important to gently ask the child what was the behaviour that made them feel this way. Sometimes the interpersonal nature of bullying makes it hard to focus on what someone did as well as how they made you feel. Adults need to know what behaviour they will be challenging so we can let others know it is wrong and why it is wrong. This allows us to do this and then move onto dealing with the impact.

We know that bullying takes away a child's sense of being themselves and being able to act. Therefore, the most important step we can take for a bullied child is to help them regain this sense of agency, to give them back some control.

We help restore agency by asking, 'What would you like me to do? What do you think should happen?'. The asking of this immediately puts them in a position where their voice can be heard.

Explore 'what do you think might happen if we try this/that?' and invite the pupil to begin problem solving, this life skill will be essential for them. This way they can understand the outcome and what you'll do in relation to the behaviour but also what you have done to support them.

Our pupils have told us very clearly, this is how they like adults to respond. This makes them feel included and listened to, this is essential for dealing with bullying.

How do we respond to children that are bullying?

Children and young people who bully need our support and guidance to make things better.

Learning to manage relationships, to deal with difficulties, and to learn about how other people can be affected by our actions, is an essential part of growing up.

We are committed to dealing with behaviour and impact, we never ignore bullying behaviour and there will always be natural consequences for this at Woodlands Primary School.

Pupils who are exhibiting bullying behaviour will be given help and support 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.

Bullying behaviour can see friendships and relationships affected, families under pressure and other natural consequences such as parents or carers called to the school, increased levels of supervision, inclusion in events affected and restorative sessions put in place.

Pupils who display bullying behaviour will be provided with clear expectations. This may include taking steps to repair a relationship, and where appropriate, supporting them to make amends.

We will challenge prejudice and offer the opportunity to learn and change behaviour. Consideration will be given to any factors that may impact upon a pupil's wellbeing, including whether any additional support for learning is required.

What have the pupils told us?

Our pupils have told us that they are aware of who they should tell if they're worried about bullying. They all know the 'answer' to that question. They are generally reluctant to talk about it, and they have shared some of the reasons for this:

- They fear an adult over reaction.
- They worry that they will get into trouble.
- They feel they won't be believed.
- Telling will make things worse.

The adult over reaction includes parents, carers, grandparents and teachers and staff. It is vital therefore that parents and school staff share the approach that we will listen, we will work together and our approach to bullying will reflect our values of being Kind, Committed and Inclusive.

We have shared this feedback with our parents, carers and families. The advice we offer any adult when they are worried about bullying is to follow the same process we follow in school.

If you are worried about your child

- Ask them to be specific about what behaviour they are concerned about
- Ask about how they feel about it, ask what the impact has been
- Always ask them what they would like you to do as a result
- Be guided by this, children who have been bullied need to feel a sense of control being regained. This is why it is essential for parents, carers and families to listen in this way.
- When you contact the school, tell them the behaviour, the impact and what you

have done and what you would like from them. Give them time to respond.

Families that have taken this approach have told us it is more effective, but they tell us that it is a harder approach to take given the strength of feeling around bullying. We will support our families to do this and recognise that it can be difficult but teaches our children valuable life skills, something valued by our families. Our parents, carers and families value partnership and communication. They feel that bullying is an area where that needs to be done to the highest standard.

Recording

In line with Renfrewshire Council guidance, all incidents assessed as bullying will be recorded on Seemis, our electronic management of information system. Staff can access the "Bullying Log" in Seemis through Management Bullying and Equalities. Each incident recorded should include the following details:

- Pupil information relating to those experiencing and displaying bullying behaviour.
- Details of alleged incident.
- Nature of incident including the characteristic of the type of behaviour.
- Procedures to monitor and review targets with dates as required.
- Progress of outcomes following review (within timescale set).

Parents/Carers of all pupils should be informed, and details recorded on Seemis Pastoral Notes. It is essential that Staff refer to the Pastoral Notes and the Bullying Log when recording new incidents to compare information and highlight patterns of behaviour.

