

ANTI BULLYING POLICY

Review Date: January 2026

Reviewed by: SLT

Review Period: 12 months

Staff Responsibility: Head of Wellbeing

This Policy is applicable to all pupils, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

This policy has been written taking note of the non – statutory DfE advice

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying> (July 2017)

BULLYING: OVERVIEW

At Windermere School, every pupil and member of staff should feel safe from any abusive, threatening or unpleasant behaviour. Members of Staff should be able to operate on the clear understanding that pupils will behave towards them with courtesy, cooperativeness and obedience to legitimate rules and instructions. Pupils must be able to expect the highest standards in teachers' behaviour and attitudes towards them. Members of Staff should always set high standards for how pupils behave towards each other.

Our purpose in this area is to:

- provide a safe, secure environment for all pupils;
- encourage an atmosphere of respect for each member of our community;
- create a supportive climate and break down any code of secrecy;
- counter any idea that bullying is inevitably part of school life;
- work within an agreed set of procedures;
- involve the whole Staff and the pupils in eradicating bullying.

A WORKING UNDERSTANDING OF BULLYING

Bullying is a form of emotional or physical abuse that has three defining characteristics:

- **Deliberate**—A bully's intention is to hurt someone
- **Repeated**—A bully often targets the same victim again and again
- **Power imbalanced**—A bully chooses victims he or she perceives as either physically or mentally vulnerable

Bullying may be motivated by actual or perceived differences and directed towards gender, ethnic origin, physical/social disability, special educational needs, religion, culture, sex, homophobia or personality and can take many forms.

Physical bullying, such as hitting, pushing, punching, kicking, hit, spitting, pinching biting, hair pulling, as well as damaging or stealing others' property.

Verbal bullying, such as yelling and name-calling. 'Banter' is not appropriate where there is a power imbalance and will be treated as a form of bullying if this activity is sustained. It is the responsibility of the person giving banter to ensure there is no imbalance. It is not the fault of someone on the receiving end if they do not speak.

Relational bullying, such as excluding or getting others to hurt someone.

Cyberbullying involves using the Internet, cell phones, or other digital communication devices to post

or send hurtful text or images (see Policy 3.10ai – Cyberbullying)

Prejudice bullying (see Policy 3.10aii Anti Hate Crime) involves any form of bullying against particular groups, for example, on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities.

Peer-on-peer abuse involves children abusing other children (see Policy 3.7a – Safeguarding). This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual violence, such as rape and sexual assault
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- Up skirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm
- Sexting, which includes sending and receiving of sexually explicit photos, messages and video clips, by text, email or posting them on social media
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school’s first priority. Emotional bullying can be even more damaging. The School actively educates against all forms of bullying behaviour and supports its victims, and those involved in bullying

AN AGE SPECIFIC APPROACH FOR EYFS PUPILS

Achieving Positive Behaviour

We recognise that rough and tumble play is normal for young children and acceptable within limits. We regard these kinds of play as pro-social and not as problematic or aggressive.

We recognise that fantasy play also contains violent dramatic strategies with themes often referring to ‘goodies and baddies’ and as such offer opportunities for us to explore concepts of right and wrong.

Hurtful behaviour in the Under Fives

For children under five, hurtful behaviour is momentary, spontaneous and often without cognisance of the feelings of the person whom they have hurt. We recognise that young children behave in hurtful ways because they have not yet developed the means to manage intense feelings that overwhelm them. We do not engage in punitive responses to a young child’s rage as that will have the opposite effect.

Early Years

The Head Early Years is required to keep up-to-date with legislation, research and thinking on promoting positive behaviour and on handling children’s behaviour where it may require additional support.

They are also required to access relevant sources of expertise on promoting positive behaviour within the programme for supporting personal, social and emotional development and check that all staff have relevant in-service training on promoting positive behaviour.

INTRODUCTION

Bullying affects everyone, not just the bullies and the victims. It also affects those other children who watch and less aggressive pupils can be drawn in by group pressure. Bullying is not an inevitable part of school life or a necessary part of growing up and it rarely sorts itself out. No one person or group, whether staff or pupil, should have to accept any form of bullying. The School believes that its pupils have the right to learn and staff have the right to work in a supportive, caring and safe environment without the fear of being bullied.

All institutions contain some members of the community with the potential for bullying behaviour. In a well-disciplined and organised school, it is possible to minimise the occurrence of bullying. The School also has a clear policy on the promotion of good behaviour and citizenship, where it is made clear that bullying is a form of anti-social behaviour, it is wrong and it will not be tolerated. As such, any bullying complaints will be dealt with firmly, fairly and promptly.

SUSPECTED OR REPORTED BULLYING

If bullying is suspected we will talk with the suspected victim to find out about events and behaviours. We will discuss and agree an action plan which is agreeable to the victim to ensure matters do not intensify as a result. Relevant Staff member will be involved and kept informed of actions taken.

If any degree of bullying is identified, help, support and counselling will be given as is appropriate to both the victims and the bullies:

We support the **victims** in the following ways by:

- Offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with a suitable member of the school community if they choose.
- Discussing the issues with the victims' parents/guardians.
- Offering continuing support when they feel they need it.
- Making any appropriate arrangements to make their lives easier when at school; it should be noted that it will be done so as to allow the pupil to gain in confidence and integrate back into the community with comfort.

We also discipline, yet try to help the **bullies** in the following ways by:

- Talking about what happened, to discover why they became involved.
- Discussing the events and appropriate actions with the bullies' parents/guardians.
- Continuing to work with the bullies in order to reduce/eliminate prejudiced attitudes

PROCEDURES

We recognise that codes for interacting with other people vary between cultures and require staff to be aware of, and respect those used by members of staff. We require all staff, volunteers and pupils to provide a positive model of behaviour by treating children, parents and one another with friendliness, care and courtesy.

Cases of bullying/suspected bullying that are observed in class, around the School or in the boarding houses must always be taken seriously and discussed immediately with the relevant Tutor/HoS or HoM.

Discussions will normally involve the member of Staff who originally reported the incident; if this is (for good reason) not the case, the Tutor/HoS will report back to the member of Staff who reported the incident.

All cases will be recorded on SIMS, using an incident form (appendix 5)

Junior School

- The Tutor of the pupil or pupils involved will liaise with the Head or Deputy Head of Junior School, and/or DSL, if felt necessary, and decide on appropriate action.
- The Head of Junior School will be notified of any cases of bullying or of any on- going situation. In very serious cases, the Head of Junior School will, in consultation with others, take the final decision about how the matter is to be dealt with and resolved (see Policy 3.9a Behaviour and 3.9ai Behaviour Handbook).

Senior School

- The HoM or HoS of the pupil(s) involved will liaise with the Tutor if felt necessary and decide on appropriate action.
- The Deputy Head (Pastoral) or DLSs will be notified of any serious case of bullying or of any on-going situation and this will be recorded on MyConcerns. In very serious cases, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) or Head will, in consultation with others, take the final decision about how the matter is to be dealt with (see Policy 3.9a Behaviour and 3.9ai Behaviour Handbook).

DISCIPLINARY STEPS ACROSS SCHOOL:

The perpetrator will be interviewed and:

- They will be warned officially to stop offending.
- Informing and meeting with the bully's parents/guardians.
- If they do not stop bullying they will be suspended for a short fixed period.
- If the perpetrator will not end such behaviour, a disciplinary hearing will take place with the Head or Deputy Head and a decision made whether to permanently expel the pupil (see 3.9ai Behaviour Handbook)
- In all cases the school will ensure that they take into account any extraneous circumstances that may influence a pupil's behaviour.

RAISING AWARENESS

STAFF

All staff will be trained periodically so that the principles of the School policy are understood, their legal responsibilities are known, actions are discussed with reference to different cases and how to resolve and prevent these problems reoccurring.

Windermere School are keen to support the staff body in resolving any bullying issues, this may be through in-House support or by investing in specialised skills.

The Pastoral and Safeguarding Teams will regularly assess the needs of their pupils including those with special educational needs or disabilities. Also, special consideration will be given to pupils who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) so that their journey through school is seamless and they feel safe and respected in our community.

PUPILS

Through all lessons but specifically in the Life Skills programme, Reflections and Assemblies the community will be encouraged to discuss the difference between people and the importance of avoiding prejudiced based language.

In safe environments such as tutor groups pupils are encouraged to talk about incidents and how they believe people should behave. Everyone is encouraged at Windermere School to play their part in preventing bullying in our community including times when they are bystanders and need to challenge the behaviour of others.

THE SCHOOL UNDERTAKES TO:

- Organise the community in order to minimise opportunities for bullying, e.g. provide increased supervision at problem times.
- Use any opportunity to discuss aspects of bullying, and the appropriate way to behave towards each other, e.g. the Life Skills programme, Reflections, Drama productions and literature discussion.
- Raise awareness of bullying with the staff team through appropriate and timely training on the bullying policy and their responsibility to resolve and prevent problems.
- Not use teaching materials or equipment, which give a bad or negative view of any group because of their ethnic origin, sex, etc.
- Ensure that no initiation ceremonies take place where the intention is to cause pain, anxiety or humiliation.
- Encourage pupils to follow the School Expectations and treat everyone with respect.
- Encourage pupils to discuss how they get on with other people and to form positive attitudes towards other people, including a review of what friendship is really about.
- Monitor for patterns in bullying, considering pupils, places and times, and use the information to alter systems and reduce the incidences of bullying in the future. The Deputy Head supported by the HoS will take responsibility for the monitoring.
- Monitor activity on the network and Internet in school to identify any cyber-bullying. This will be carried out by the DSL for Online Safeguarding.
- Have a firm but fair discipline structure
- Discuss bullying issues with the staff team when appropriate.
- Support any pupils who are being bullied and give help, guidance and support to pupils who may bully others
- Treat bullying as a serious offence and take every possible action to eradicate it from our School.
- Deal quickly, firmly and fairly with any complaints, involving parents where necessary.
- Review the School Policy and its degree of success.

APPENDIX 1

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL AND ITS STAFF

Windermere School believes that children flourish best when their personal, social and emotional needs are met and where there are clear and developmentally appropriate expectations for their behaviour. Windermere School does not condone or sanction corporal sanction in accordance with the School Standards and Framework Bill (amendment) 1998.

Staff should follow the advice to staff in conjunction with this policy – appendix 3.

Every effort should be made to follow up each case to ensure that the victim is given support and to prevent any recurrence.

The bully will be judged as someone who also needs support and will be worked with closely following any appropriate sanction.

If felt necessary and in consultation with the parents, both the victim and the bully will be offered counselling from an external agency. In the majority of cases this will be financed by the parents.

Staff dealing with individual bullying incidences should make clear to parents of victims and bullies the actions being taken, why we are taking them and what the parents can do to help us and reinforce our actions.

In dealing with the bully, staff should make it clear that the behaviour is unacceptable and also stress the serious consequences of repetition. Staff should not 'bully the bully'.

Pupils must be made aware of whom they can talk to in confidence (Boarding House Teams and Tutors, other members of staff who they know well etc.) and must know that the information will be acted upon discreetly and sensitively.

Staff need to be aware of areas of the School where bullying might take place and be sensitive to the times and situations when it may occur.

Opportunities should be taken in the delivery of pastoral care and as appropriate in Assemblies to explain School policy on bullying. Staff may also make use of opportune moments in the curriculum to highlight the issue of bullying and to reinforce this message.

Staff should be aware of any hate crime language and actions, which are a form of bullying (see Policy 3.9aⁱⁱ Anti-Hate Crime)

Staff should, as always, watch for early signs of distress in pupils - deterioration of work, spurious illness, isolation, desire to remain with adults, erratic attendance. They may be the early signs of bullying - though there may be other causes.

Staff will be trained in dealing with incidences of bullying and how to deal effectively with both the bully and the bullied. Staff will also be trained in being vigilant to all types of bullying including cyber-bullying. <https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/free-cpd-online-training>

We recognise that babies and very young children are unable to regulate their own emotions, such as fear, anger or distress, and require sensitive adults to help them do this.

APPENDIX 2

ADVICE TO PUPILS – WHAT DO YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT BULLYING TO KEEP YOURSELF SAFE AND THOSE AROUND YOU?

The School aims to create a friendly, happy environment where every pupil can feel safe from any abusive, threatening or unpleasant behaviour. You can help us to achieve this by doing all you can to watch out for, avoid, report and help to prevent BULLYING.

We all have our part to play in preventing bullying at Windermere School. It should be remembered that bullying can cause life-long psychological damage to a person.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Some types of bullying are obvious: e.g. physical attacks on people, such as pushing, nudging, barging, mobbing in a queue - all intended to hurt or upset the victim. There is also non-physical bullying, e.g. verbal abuse making fun of someone's name, pretending to be a friend when you behave badly towards a person, commenting on looks negatively, intelligence, size or race; taking someone's bag or other possessions; threatening someone; excluding someone from a group or from a particular event or activity; being 'bitchy' to someone; extorting someone's homework to copy; putting pressure on someone to 'lend' money. Bullying can happen in person or online via social media or by texts etc.

But there are also types of behaviour which are not so obviously 'bullying'; they may seem to be excusable as 'just having fun', but they cause distress or pain, and so are unacceptable, such as 'gentle' ribbing, tripping up someone 'for fun', throwing around someone's pencil case. There is a very fine line between friendly teasing where the 'victim' shares the joke, and the kind of teasing which upsets the victim even if he or she tries not to show it. This is often viewed as 'merely banter' and there can be an expectation on the recipient to participate. Pupils receive guidance will receive periodic guidance on this matter so they better understand how to perceive their own behaviour from the point of view of the recipient.

WHO DOES THE BULLYING?

- Sometimes an individual will hurt another, who may be younger, smaller or weaker.
- Sometimes a group of people may cause the problem - perhaps led by one dominant person with whom the others want to keep in favour.
- Often there is a regular victim who is teased by nearly everyone - even you.

WHY DO PEOPLE BULLY?

- By making someone else feel/look small, you can feel more powerful, 'better' or 'bigger'.
- By making fun of someone, you get others laughing - so you feel 'clever' and approved of.
- You may want to keep in with an individual, or a group, and you think showing how 'big' you are will help you achieve this.
- You may simply not realise the hurtful effect your words/actions are having on someone.
- You may get involved in a conflict with someone else that gets out of hand.
- You may feel angry or hurt about something and take out your feelings on someone who irritates you or gets in your way.
- Rarely, there may be a 'victim' who seems deliberately and persistently to 'ask for' trouble who pushes you too far one day.

WHAT DO YOU DO ABOUT BULLYING?

- Don't be unpleasant yourself! That means watching your own behaviour to make sure you are not guilty of any of the types of unpleasantness mentioned above - or any others.
- As far as you can, persuade others not to be unpleasant; don't join them.
- If you yourself are bullied, do not retaliate; that puts you in the wrong, and makes it easy for the bully to claim that the incident was as much your fault as his or hers.
- If you tend to be picked on, avoid the times and places where this is most likely to happen; try always to walk with a friend;
- If you find someone's behaviour unacceptable or threatening, whether to you or to someone else **REPORT IT** to someone in authority: a teacher, your parents, or if you are happier, a senior pupil. Persuade a friend to go with you to do this if you are worried about accusations of telling tales or any other retaliation.
- **Remember:** your silence makes it easier for bullies to bully.
- **Remember:** bullying can cause life-long psychological damage. It is important that we all take responsibility for any bullying behaviour we see and report it quickly.
- **Most incidents of bullying can be quite easily sorted out if they are reported in time. The School is committed to eliminate bullying as far as humanly possible; everyone will help.**

WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU ARE BEING BULLIED?

Remember that your silence is the bully's greatest weapon!

- Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied, and that it is **WRONG!**
- Be proud of who you are. It is good to be individual.
- Try not to show that you are upset. It is hard but a bully thrives on someone's fear.
- Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
- Be assertive - shout "No!" and walk confidently away. Go straight to a teacher or member of staff.
- Fighting back may make things worse. If you decide you want to fight back, talk to a teacher or parent/guardian first.
- Generally, it is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. You will get immediate support.
- Tell the bully why you object to their behaviour.

Teachers will take you seriously and will deal with bullies in a way that will end the bullying and will not make things worse for you.

IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE IS BEING BULLIED:

- **Take action!** Watching and doing nothing looks as if you think what the bully is doing is acceptable. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own.
- If you feel you cannot get involved, tell an adult immediately. Teachers have ways of dealing with the bully without getting you into trouble
- Do remember it is the bully's behaviour which you disagree with, do not be tempted to bully the bully.

APPENDIX 3

ADVICE TO STAFF - IF YOU DO COME ACROSS BULLYING, WHAT CAN YOU DO?

FIRST STEPS: DO

- Remain calm; reacting emotionally may add to the bully's fun and give the bully control of the situation.
- Take the incident seriously and take action.
- Reassure the victim; do not make him or her feel inadequate or foolish.
- Discuss with HoS (daytime incidents, Senior School), HoM (evenings and weekends, Senior School), DSLs, Deputy Head (Pastoral) or Head of Junior School and decide together on a way forward.
- Ensure that the incident is noted and recorded on SIMS.
- If interviews take place ensure two adults are present, one taking notes on an interview form, the other asking questions. The child should be allowed to contact a parent or another member of staff if they want.

AFTER TAKING APPROPRIATE INITIAL ACTION:

DO

- Make sure the incident does not live on through reminders from you;
- Try to think ahead to prevent a recurrence of the incident if you have uncovered the 'trigger factor'

DO NOT

- Be over-protective and refuse to allow the victim to help him or herself;
- Assume that the bully is bad through-and-through; his or her behaviour in this respect is unacceptable, but they have virtues in other areas - try to look objectively at the behaviour with the bully;

APPENDIX 4

ADVICE TO PARENTS

- Look for unusual behaviour in your children. For example, they may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to their normal standard.
- Always take an active role in your child's education. Enquire how their day has gone, who they have spent their time with, how lunchtime was spent etc.
- If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the School IMMEDIATELY. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- Remember that bullying can cause lifelong psychological damage act immediately if you suspect your child is being bullied.
- It is important that you advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse!
- Tell your own son or daughter there is nothing wrong with him or her. It is not his or her fault that they are being bullied.
- Make sure your child is fully aware of the School policy concerning bullying, and that they should not be afraid to ask for help.

ADDITIONAL ADVICE AND SUPPORT

The National Bullying Helpline

<https://www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk/>

NSPCC

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/bullying-and-cyberbullying/>

Young Minds

<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/feelings-and-symptoms/bullying/>

Kooth: For online mental wellbeing

www.kooth.com (Online counselling service)

Childline

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/types-bullying/bullying-cyberbullying/>

Samaritans

<https://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/if-youre-worried-about-someone-else/how-support-someone-youre-worried-about/>

APPENDIX 5

DAY TIME INCIDENT FORM

Date of Incident:

Date on which this form was completed:

Member of Staff/Adult reporting:

DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT -

ACTION YOU HAVE TAKEN

ACTION NEEDED AND BY WHOM

PEOPLE TO BE INFORMED

PUPILS FILES TO WHICH THIS DOCUMENT NEEDS FILING



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