



WILLOW TREE Academy



THE LEAF CENTRE



Anti-Bullying Policy

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Review Cycle	annually
Review Date	November 2026

Mission Statement:

Willow Tree Academy: Together Anything is Possible.

INTRODUCTION

Willow Tree Academy recognises there is a need to safeguard the welfare of all those within the school community and to encourage cooperation, tolerance and harmony.

All schools within the Willow Tree Academy are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We have high expectations of all pupils and strive to create a climate in which all children can fulfil their potential.

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at any school within the Willow Tree Academy. If bullying does occur, all pupils should know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Each school within the academy is a telling school and anyone who knows that bullying is happening should be able to inform a member of staff in confidence. There is an expectation that our children will be upstanders rather than bystanders.

DEFINITION

Please be mindful that children by nature will fall out from time to time and we will help them to resolve their issues but bullying and violence will not be tolerated. The Anti Bullying Alliance definition of bullying is: **The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online.**

Those who bully aim to hurt by means of force, intimidation or ridicule in order to control others or perhaps to inspire a reaction that escalates the situation.

Increasingly these incidents are perpetrated online, parents need to be aware of platforms that their children are accessing online and their age restrictions. It is advised that parents establish parental locks on devices.

FOCUS OF BULLYING

The focus of bullying can be more or less anything that distinguishes an individual and represents a deviation from a presumed norm, e.g. body shape, hair colour. It can focus on personal backgrounds, including parents' jobs, houses and lifestyles and can sometimes derive from deep seated local feuding with disagreements between adults passed to children who then act them out in school.

Bullying can focus on sexual attractiveness or the perceived lack of it and sexuality based on LGBTQ+ or misogyny. Bullying can also focus on race, nationality, culture, religion or a mixture of these. Herringthorpe Junior School strives to celebrate diversity and difference and we welcome pupils and families from all backgrounds.

This is now known as child on child abuse as per changes to Keeping Children Safe in Education, Sept 2022.

HOW BULLYING IS CONDUCTED

There are differences in how bullying is conducted. It can be painfully obvious, but it can also be underhand and subtle. It can be one student against another or involve several students. Direct physical bullying and threats of bullying are usually more evident than verbal intimidation and manipulation. Online bullying by pupils which is perpetrated when at home will be dealt with by school in the same way as incidents which may happen in school as this impacts on the whole child.

THE EFFECTS OF BULLYING

The most common effects of bullying are:

- withdrawal which may lead to reduced participation in school and other activities, isolation or self-harm
- poor self-esteem which prevents pupils from forming positive relationships and can lead to feelings of worthlessness and betrayal
- anxiety and depression, which can lead to intermittent and long-term absence from school, resulting in under-achievement
- loss of identity
- guilt that the target 'allowed' it to happen
- poor mental health

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF BULLYING

The pupil may:

- be frightened of walking to or from school
- be unwilling to go to school
- begin to perform poorly in school
- become withdrawn
- have books, clothing or possessions that are damaged
- become distressed/stop eating
- cry easily/have nightmares
- become disruptive/aggressive
- have possessions which go missing
- begin stealing (to pay the bully)

AIMS OF OUR ANTI-BULLYING WORK

Across the Willow Tree Academy we endeavour:

- to ensure all staff, the governing body, pupils and parents have an understanding of bullying and its consequences
- to emphasise through all aspects of our curriculum that bullying will not be tolerated
- to ensure that there are clear procedures and systems for reporting and recording bullying, which are understood and followed by all staff
- to ensure pupils and staff learn to keep themselves and others safe
- to ensure that students learn to recognise and respect the differences between groups of people within the school community
- to help students develop self-confidence, self-esteem and to fulfil their potential within school
- to give our children the confidence to speak out when they see that something is wrong: be an "upstander" rather than a "bystander."
- to support and re-educate those pupils who are both the targets and perpetrators of bullying, providing them with a range of strategies they can use if they are at risk of bullying others or are being bullied themselves
- to create a school which all members of the community can come to without fear of violence, aggression or intimidation of any kind

Pupils are taught that any kind of aggressive behaviour, either verbal or physical is unacceptable. Children will often fall out and can be hurtful to one another but incidents of bullying are rare and will always be treated seriously.

All staff are vigilant in school and within the grounds to identify actual or potential cases of bullying. targets are asked not to retaliate, but to inform a member of staff immediately.

COMBATING BULLYING

Every school in the Willow Tree Academy is aware that bullying must be tackled on two levels, by focusing on preventative work, but also by responding appropriately when incidents do occur. We are working hard to encourage children and young people to positively manage their own behaviour. We teach our students that as well as having rights, the choices they make will also bring responsibilities.

We use the following strategies to ensure that we have a clear, consistent and effective approach to bullying:

- A strong ethos across the Willow Tree Academy, promoting tolerance and respect for difference and diversity.
- Positive leadership from senior staff and governors on tackling bullying.
- A designated member of staff who will be responsible for coordinating anti-bullying issues.
- A clear anti bullying policy. The policy will be reviewed regularly by staff, governors, parents and pupils
- A planned approach in PSHCE Curriculum in a context which promotes self-esteem and confidence in relationships.
- Planning and promoting teaching and school routines which encourage learning and positive behaviour.
- Regular training for all staff to raise and maintain awareness, to alert them to indicators which may suggest bullying and to equip them with ways of responding to it
- Periodic consultation with pupils to inform the school's knowledge of bullying : "Children's voice."
- Adequate supervision of the children when on the school site.
- Increased supervision levels and, as appropriate safe areas, for pupils who feel threatened at break times.
- Rewarding non-aggressive behaviour and encouraging cooperative behaviour through the use of restorative practice in school.
- The use of Individual Behaviour Plans for those children experiencing interpersonal and peer relationship difficulties.
- Close monitoring of those children with Special Educational Needs.
- Sharing proven good practice with colleagues across the academy.

EDUCATION

Pupils will be given the opportunity to increase their awareness of both the effects and consequences of bullying through some or all of the following:

- Curriculum areas – English, Drama, RE, PSHE, History etc
- Assemblies / Schools Councils
- Circle times on issues such as friendship, prejudice, assertiveness, coping strategies
- Firm and appropriate disciplinary procedures
- Students are encouraged to develop their own class rules.
- Greater interaction between classes/Year groups
- Friendship week

DEALING WITH BULLYING INCIDENTS/ALLEGATIONS

Where a pupil reports/alleges a bullying incident to an adult, or an adult witnesses an incident, the following are agreed school procedures:

- All incidents will be recorded, including the facts of the incident, action taken and a report of the follow up interviews using CPOMs: perceived bullying category.
- It may be that in exceptional circumstances there is a risk of injury to an individual in those circumstances physical intervention may be required. Staff would follow the school's policy on Positive Handling.
- Both the target(s) and bully(ies) should be interviewed separately to establish the facts without apportioning blame
- We will contact the parents of both the target(s) and bully(ies)
- Appropriate sanctions and support will be discussed and agreed upon.
- The opportunity should be available after the investigation for both the target(s) and bully(ies) to discuss their difficulties with a responsible and confident adult.
- In the light of the investigation it may be appropriate to review existing behaviour policy and/or procedures.

INTERVIEWING THE target

A record will be kept of the conversation and will be recorded on CPOMs as an action to the perceived bullying incident afterwards. Staff will be aware at all times of possible Child Protection issues. Confidentiality will not be promised.

- Staff will listen objectively and without favour to what is being said. The pupil(s) will be encouraged to share what they are feeling.
- Staff will ascertain who has been involved, including bystanders.
- Staff will discuss with the target(s) what they would like to see happen and arrangements for the future.
- Staff may offer coping/preventative strategies if appropriate.
- A realistic time scale for investigating and reporting back to the target(s) will be given.

INTERVIEWING THE BULLY/BYSTANDER

Research suggests that by telling the bully(ies) how the target(s) is feeling, this raises their awareness of the pain they are causing and can cause a positive change in their behaviour. This is part of our school ethos: a restorative approach. A record will be kept of the conversation and will be recorded on CPOMs afterwards. Staff will be aware at all times of possible Child Protection issues. Confidentiality will not be promised. The following approaches may be used as appropriate to the incident:

- Staff interviewing the bully(ies)/bystanders will not apportion blame, but rather approach the pupils in a restorative manner.
- Staff will explain they would like to talk to the student(s) as they are aware of some issues with the target(s).
- Staff will ask the bully and or bystander to recount the incidents in their own words. This will be repeated back for clarification.
- Where it is concluded that bullying has occurred the bully will be informed that their actions are not acceptable and that their parents/carers will be contacted.
- Staff will ask the student(s) if they can understand why (name of target) is upset by this and will explain that the bully(ies)/bystanders are responsible for those feelings by their actions and this is not acceptable.
- The staff member will ask the bully how they think these issues can be resolved.
- Staff will agree to meet with all the students involved again after an appropriate time to see how the situation has changed.
- Appropriate contact will be maintained with both sets of parents/carers until the situation has been resolved.

This investigation findings will determine other positive interventions and targeted actions to support with repairing relationships such as:

- Circle time
- Conferencing circle [Restorative Practice*]
- Peer mentoring
- Peer mediation
- Buddying
- a class/form change after discussions with all involved
- Support from external agencies, e.g. Educational Psychology Service, NSPCC, Childline
- School Council
- Individualised friendship programmes
- Additional PSHE sessions targeted at specific issues
- The appropriate encouragement of peer disapproval e.g. behaviour panel

Any sanctions invoked following the incident will be in line with the school's behaviour policy.

We are aware of the need to deal with allegations or incidences of bullying sensitively. We also appreciate the importance of dealing with all the children and young people involved in a way which communicates disapproval where appropriate, but also treats them with dignity.

WORKING WITH PARENTS/CARERS

We will work with parents/carers to minimise the likelihood of further bullying type incidents.

We will endeavour to give parents every opportunity to discuss their concerns as soon as practicable. We will emphasise the importance of working together to solve problems and create realistic solutions that are acceptable to all concerned. A lack of parental support can make conflict resolution much more difficult and is regrettable, particularly if children then mirror the negativity and unhelpful attitude they have seen.

All schools within the Willow Tree Academy appreciate there will be occasions when the parents and carers of one or both sets of pupils involved will feel the school has not sanctioned appropriately. Parents or carers will be given the opportunity to share their concerns and if appropriate, staff will discuss the decisions to impose the particular sanction(s) with them. All sanctions must be specific to the individual and any needs that they may have.

Where a parent is dis-satisfied with the school's handling of a situation then the Headteacher will seek to resolve the situation informally. In the event of a formal complaint then the agreed complaints procedure for the school will be invoked. Should the press be contacted regarding the bullying incident then the school should work with RMBC publicity officers over any impending publicity.

*see Restorative practice policy

is it BULLYING?

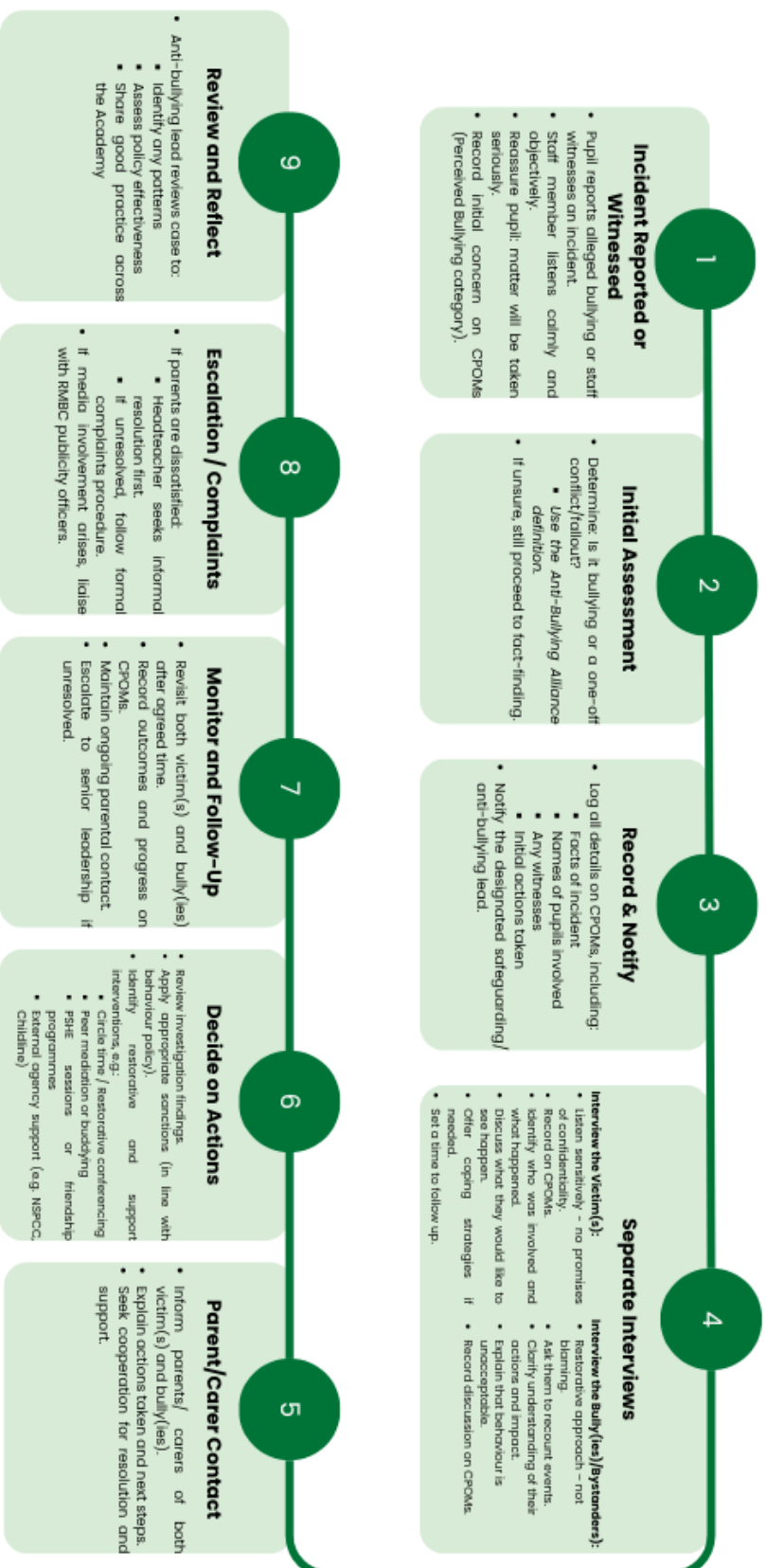
When someone says or does something
unintentionally hurtful
and they do it once, that's
RUDE.

When someone says or does something
intentionally hurtful
and they do it once, that's
MEAN.

When someone says or does something
intentionally hurtful and they *keep doing it*—
even when you tell them to stop or show
them that you're upset—that's
BULLYING.



WILLOW TREE ACADEMY PATHWAY FOR ADDRESSING AND REPORTING BULLYING: STAFF



REMEMBER

Always maintain safeguarding awareness. Record all actions and conversations accurately on CPOMs. Encourage all pupils to be upstanders, not bystanders. Promote respect, inclusion, and restorative resolution.

APPENDIX C

How We Educate Our Pupils

We believe education is the key to preventing bullying.

Across all our schools, children are taught to understand what bullying really means and the impact their behaviour can have on others.

This is done through:

- PSHE lessons and assemblies that explore friendship, respect, empathy and kindness
- Circle time and class discussions where children can share experiences and learn to resolve conflicts peacefully
- Role-play and drama to help pupils see things from others' perspectives
- Anti-Bullying and Friendship Weeks promoting our "Be Kind" message
- Restorative practice to help pupils take responsibility for their actions and make things right

Children learn that their words and actions have power - they can hurt or heal, include or exclude.

We encourage every pupil to choose kindness, take responsibility, and be an upstander who helps others.



Working Together

We value open communication between home and school.

If you have concerns:

- Speak to your child's class teacher or pastoral lead.
- If you are not satisfied, contact the Headteacher.
- Formal complaints can be made through the school's Complaints Policy.

Our Message to Children At Willow Tree Academy we say:

**BE AN UPSTANDER,
NOT A BYSTANDER.**

Stand up for yourself and others - together we make our schools safe and happy places to learn.



**WORKING TOGETHER
TO PREVENT AND
TACKLE BULLYING**



CONTACT US

HERRINGTHOPRE JUNIOR SCHOOL

01709 828 168

GREASBROUGH PRIMARY SCHOOL

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ROUGHWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

01709 740 254

ROCKINGHAM JUNIOR AND INFANT SCHOOL

01709 740 266



**WILLOW TREE
Academy**



Our Commitment

At Willow Tree Academy, we believe every child has the right to feel safe, valued and respected.

We are committed to creating a caring, friendly and inclusive environment where all pupils can learn and thrive.

***BULLYING OF ANY KIND IS NEVER
ACCEPTABLE AND WILL ALWAYS BE DEALT
WITH PROMPTLY AND SERIOUSLY.***

Our Shared Responsibility

We are a telling community - we encourage pupils to speak up if they see or experience bullying.

We expect all members of our school community - pupils, parents and staff - to work together to:

- Report concerns quickly
- Support children in making positive choices
- Model respect, kindness and empathy

What Is Bullying?

We follow the Anti-Bullying Alliance definition:

"THE REPETITIVE, INTENTIONAL HURTING OF ONE PERSON OR GROUP BY ANOTHER PERSON OR GROUP, WHERE THE RELATIONSHIP INVOLVES AN IMBALANCE OF POWER."

Bullying can be:

- Physical - hitting, pushing, taking belongings
- Verbal - name calling, threats, teasing
- Emotional or psychological - excluding others, spreading rumours
- Online (cyberbullying) - via phones, gaming, or social media

It is important to remember that children may sometimes fall out or disagree, but bullying is deliberate and repeated.

What Bullying Can Be About

Bullying can target differences such as:

- Appearance or body shape
- Race, religion or culture
- Gender or sexuality (including LGBTQ+)
- Disabilities or special educational needs
- Family background or lifestyle

At Willow Tree Academy, we celebrate diversity and teach pupils to respect differences.



Signs Your Child May Be Experiencing Bullying

Look out for changes such as:

- Not wanting to go to school
- Unexplained injuries or damaged belongings
- Becoming withdrawn or anxious
- Loss of appetite or trouble sleeping
- Sudden changes in behaviour or school performance

If you notice any of these signs, please talk to us.



What to Do if You're Concerned

If your child tells you they are being bullied, or you suspect bullying:

- Listen carefully and reassure them.
- Record what has happened - who, what, when, where.
- Contact the school as soon as possible - speak to your child's class teacher or a senior member of staff.
- We will investigate fully, keep you informed, and work with all pupils involved to find a solution.

How We Deal With Bullying

When bullying is reported:

- The incident is recorded on CPOMs (our safeguarding system).
- Both the victim and the bully are spoken to separately and supported.
- Parents/carers are contacted and involved in the process.
- We use a restorative approach to help pupils understand the impact of their actions.
- Sanctions and support plans are put in place if necessary.
- The situation is monitored and followed up to make sure it stops.