



**WILLOW TREE FEDERATION
COMMUNITY PRIMARY FEDERATION**



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Mission Statement

The children are at the heart of everything we do at Willow Tree Federation. We take a holistic approach to child development and we are privileged to support our children, families and the wider community to change and enhance lives. We celebrate the wide diversity of the backgrounds, beliefs, talents and interests of our children and we recognise learning happens in communities and empowers them. As a federation at the heart of its community, we understand and respect the positive impact we can have. We plant the seed that grows the future!

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The term Federation applies to all settings within the Willow Tree Federation, including the primary school, nursery school and child-care settings. At the Willow Tree Federation, we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Neither physical nor verbal bullying will be tolerated within the Federation. If bullying does occur, all pupils feel able to tell a member of Federation staff and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a TELLING setting. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff. Everyone has a responsibility to prevent bullying.

What is Bullying?

We define bullying as the use of **deliberate** hurtful behaviour over a period of time with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress and the victim usually can't defend themselves. We recognise that bullying can be defined as child-on-child abuse (see our Behaviour Policy for detail).

We believe that:

- children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind
- we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and operate in a way that protects them.

Bullying can be:

- **Emotional**- being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures).
- **Physical**- pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
- **Racist**- racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- **Sexual**- unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
- **Homophobic**- because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality.
- **Verbal**- name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, excluding from social groups.
- **Cyber** - All areas of internet, such as email & social media misuse, mobile threats by text messaging & calls, misuse of associated technology, e.g. camera & video facilities.

However, it is not bullying if two pupils of equal power and strength have an occasional fight or quarrel.

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

We recognise that:

- bullying causes real distress and affects a person's health and development.
- the effects of bullying can last a long time.
- in some instances, bullying can cause significant harm.
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- everyone has a role to play in preventing all forms of bullying (including online) and putting a stop to bullying.

Objectives of this Policy

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should understand what bullying is.
- All governors and teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the Federation policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents should know what the Federation policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- The whole Federation takes bullying seriously. Pupils and parents are confident that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of possible signs, such as a child who:

- is worried about going to and from Federation, changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to Federation
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- learning and work begins to deteriorate,
- has possessions which are damaged or " go missing", asks for money or starts stealing money
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what is wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone and is nervous & jumpy when a text/email/chat room message is received.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Prevention

Through a caring ethos established in our assemblies, through class discussions, relationships education, e-safety education, individual sessions with the pastoral team and the School Council we encourage children, who are bullied physically or verbally, to ask for help from staff and other children. Our behaviour curriculum explicitly teaches key routines so children know how to behave well in school. We teach children about our values of respect, responsibility and readiness. If parents or carers discover that a child is being bullied they must share their worries with the class teacher, Deputy or Headteacher. In this way the child will be supported and the bully dealt with effectively. Staff will remind children firmly that if they feel they are being bullied, they must tell their parents and teachers.

We prevent bullying in the following ways:

- Staff praise children's positive social behaviour.
- Respect, responsibility and readiness are key Federation values and highlighted in assemblies, PSHE lessons, class discussions and modelled at all times by Federation staff.
- Discuss issues about bullying in class during circle time and PSHE lessons.
- We participate in special events, such as Anti-Bullying Week, to raise awareness about bullying and how to combat it.
- We work with individuals to develop the self-regulation and emotional communication skills through social stories, colour monsters, Yoga Bears and zones of regulation teaching to help young people learn express their feelings and recognise emotions in others.
- We use displays to raise awareness of bullying and how children can prevent it and what to do if they are affected by it or witness it.
- Encourage assertiveness in children who might find it difficult to stand up for themselves.
- We challenge any bullying behaviour in the early years to prevent it developing in later years. We understand that bullying behaviour may be exhibited in children as young as 3 years old.
- We help children to develop strategies, with help from the pastoral team, to solve conflicts constructively.
- We help young children make sense of differences: present positive attitudes and messages about differences amongst us all and the benefits such attitudes bring to all people.
- Staff are vigilant and recognise bullying can happen in any setting.

- Staff closely monitor any possible problems and raise any concerns early with SLT.
- Through shared staff meetings dedicated to pastoral issues and concerns.
- Through the teaching of our PSHE and e-safety curriculums.
- Teaching all children how to act if they witness or are affected by bullying in any form by seeking help from a trusted adult.
- Be concerned about bullying on the way to and from Federation settings and online.
- Provide additional support for vulnerable children.

We recognise that bullying is closely related to how we respect and recognise the value of diversity. We will be proactive about:

- seeking opportunities to learn about and celebrate difference.
- increasing diversity within our staff, volunteers, children and young people.
- welcoming new members to our organisation.

What the Federation does in the event of bullying

STEP 1: Ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child:

- Take bullying seriously. It is not a child's fault if they are bullied. Children should never be told to just ignore it, or to change who they are. It is the children doing the bullying that need to change their behaviour and their attitude.
- Support the child being bullied. We reassure children when they speak to someone about another person being unkind to them.

STEP 2: Prevent bullying from reoccurring:

- We will react firmly and promptly when bullying is identified.
- Investigate the facts of any incident and meet those concerned individually.
- Involve mums, dads and carers of all children involved at an early stage.
- Record names of those involved and how they were involved.
- Develop a strategy to protect the children involved and to help those involved in bullying to change their behaviour.
- Help children (including witnesses and bystanders) to develop positive strategies and appropriately assertive skills.
- Children who display bullying behaviours will have their needs taken into account and will be given the chance to discuss their behaviour and wider issues with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher and may work with the pastoral team. The child will be supported to change their behaviour. We do not label a child a bully. Instead we talk about bullying behaviour, which can be changed.
- Logical consequences will be determined according to the individual case, the age and stage of development of the children involved and in line with our behaviour policy.
- Encourage parents/carers to supervise children's online activity closely (for all children involved in the bullying).

- Encourage restorative approaches including supporting children to express their feelings in a safe space and to apologise to each other in meaningful ways.
- Involve outside agencies as appropriate.
- Record incidents in a consistent way to facilitate monitoring.
- Monitor over time to ensure bullying does not continue.

STEP 3: School Learning and Reflection

- If instances of bullying occur, we aim to learn from them and consider how we may prevent this from happening again.
- Re-teach children about our school values and routines for excellent behaviour.

Monitoring and Reporting Bullying.

Monitoring of bullying is conducted by the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and Pastoral Manager. Weekly behaviour and safeguarding reviews are carried out by the senior leadership team. Whole-staff pastoral meetings are held weekly to share concerns. Records of incidents are captured on the Federation's CPOMS system. The headteacher will report all incidents of bullying to the governing body at termly meetings. These reports will be anonymised.

In our Federation pupils are encouraged to talk to staff when they are unhappy or have concerns. Pupils in our Federation understand that they have a right to feel and be safe and a responsibility to support others to feel and be safe. Pupils are encouraged to report bullying to:

- A trusted adult
- Their class teacher/TA
- Peer mentors or buddies

Each child in school has a 'communication book' in which children can report their concerns if they do not feel confident speaking to an adult. Children are taught that it is important to talk to a trusted adult if bullying is taking place outside of Federation.

Each class has a worries or questions box. Children can use this to leave notes for their class teacher or teaching assistant and report any bullying concerns if they feel uncomfortable talking to an adult directly.

GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

It is always a good idea to take an active part in your child's social life, know where they are and who they are with, and chat about friends and their activities in and out of Federation. An important part of this is children's online presence – bullying can and does happen via

computers, tablets and telephones too. As well as keeping up to date with your child's friendships, you may learn of disagreements or difficulties.

Children who have been bullied may:

- Be unwilling to attend Federation settings.
- Be frightened of walking to and from Federation settings.
- Be anxious or overly concerned about using online technology.
- Respond anxiously to received emails, texts, messages via social media etc.
- Change their route to school.
- Show a change in their classroom behaviour or their work.
- Come home with books or personal belongings damaged.
- Request money or begin to steal money.
- Have unexplained injuries.
- Suffer mysterious illness.
- Refuse to say what is wrong.
- Give improbable excuses to explain any of the above.

If parents discover that a child is being bullied they must share their worries with the class teacher, Deputy Head or Headteacher. This will both support the child and ensure that the bully is dealt with effectively. We will act firmly and promptly where bullying is identified. We will always work to stop bullying. There are a range of sanctions available to staff depending on the seriousness of the situation. We will continue to support and monitor as long as necessary to end bullying behaviour.

GUIDANCE FOR CHILDREN

Remember we will always listen to you. It doesn't matter what colour hair you have; how you speak; how you walk; how you talk – it is not your fault if you get bullied. We are all different in some way and that's what makes us amazing. If you are being bullied here are some things you might try:

- Whether you are a boy or a girl, old or young, big or small – bullying makes you feel rubbish and it's okay to be upset about it. The important thing is that you tell someone about it.
- If you feel you can, talk to a teacher or adult in school you trust or your parents, brother or sister. If you don't want to do that you can always call Childline 0800 11 11 or visit www.childline.org.uk.

- You can always leave a note for your teacher in your communication book or in the note box in class.
- Keep a record of what happened, when it happened, and who was involved. If the bullying is online, keep the evidence – save or copy any photos, videos, texts, emails or posts.
- It can be tempting if you are being bullied to retaliate – to send a horrible message back to someone, to try and embarrass and hurt the other person, or to fight back. This is not a good idea – you might end up getting into trouble or get yourself even more hurt.
- Think about other ways you can respond to bullying. For example, practice saying: “I don’t like it when you say that/do that – please stop.”
- Try and be assertive. This means being firm without being angry or losing control.
- Think about other people who can help you if you are being bullied – this could be other classmates, or a teacher.
- Only hang out with people who make you feel good about yourself. If someone constantly puts you down they are not a real friend and not worth your time.
- Be kind to yourself, and do things that make you feel good, relax and make new friends. You might play an instrument; write lyrics; draw cartoons; dance; act or join a sports club. This is your life so make sure it’s the best life possible – don’t let anyone bring you down.
- Remember to be kind to other people! Just because someone is different to you – that doesn’t mean you are better than them or have a right to make them feel bad. If you mess up, say sorry.
- You don’t have to be friends with everyone – but you should always show respect, make it clear that you don’t like it when people bully others, and stick up for people who are having a hard time.

We can all help to stop bullying.

- Don’t stand and watch... get help.
- Show that you and your friends disapprove.
- Give sympathy and support to children being bullied.
- Be careful not to tease or make personal remarks... imagine how you might feel.
- If you know bullying is happening over a phone or computer then tell an adult.
- If you know of bullying that is going on, tell a trusted adult. We will help.