



# Anti-Bullying Policy

**Review cycle:** Annually

**Last Review Date:** September 2025

**Next Review Date:** September 2026

**Staff responsible:** Headmaster, DSL

**Committee responsible:** Pastoral Committee

(This policy applies to the whole School including EYFS)

(Willington School reserves the right to update all policies on a regular basis)



## 1. Aims and Objectives

The Anti-Bullying Policy has been drawn up having due regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State, specifically the *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025* (KCSIE 2025) and *Preventing and Tackling Bullying* (DfE) advice, ensuring compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSR).

### Objectives of this Policy

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, children, and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All staff and governors must know and follow the school's policy when bullying is reported.
- All children and parents should know the school's policy and what they should do if bullying arises.
- Children and parents should be assured that bullying is taken seriously and that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

## 2. Statutory Compliance and School Commitment

**Statutory Duty:** The Governing Board must ensure that bullying at the school is prevented, in so far as reasonably practicable, by the drawing up and implementation of an effective anti-bullying strategy. This strategy forms part of the written behaviour policy, which must be effectively implemented.

**School Ethos:** At Willington, community relations are based upon the values of kindness, respect, honesty and humility. We are committed to providing a safe and caring environment that is free from disruption, violence, and any form of harassment, enabling every pupil to develop their full potential. Bullying, harassment, victimisation, and discrimination will not be tolerated.

**Zero Tolerance:** The school adopts a zero-tolerance approach to abuse; it must never be passed off as "banter," "just having a laugh," "part of growing up," or "boys being boys".

## 3. Definition and Scope of Bullying

### Definition of Bullying,

Bullying is defined as "behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally".

Staff will, however, rigorously respond to isolated incidents of 'bullying' behaviour to avoid a recurrent pattern of such behaviour becoming entrenched.

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## Forms of Bullying and Child-on-Child Abuse

Bullying is recognized as a form of child-on-child abuse. It includes, but is not limited to:

- Emotional: Derogatory name calling, manipulation of a third party to tease, torment, or isolate someone, or demanding money/favours by threat.
- Physical: Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, or any use of violence.
- Verbal: Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, abuse, and threats.
- Prejudice-Based: Bullying motivated by prejudice against protected characteristics, including:
  - Racist (racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, or focus on religion, cultural, or family background).
  - Sexual (unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments).
  - Homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic (HBT) (because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality/gender identity).
  - Bullying related to Special Educational Needs (SEND), disabilities, or physical attributes.

## Definition of Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using technology. It is defined as "the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others".

Cyber-bullying includes communications via various electronic media:

- Texts, instant messages, or calls on mobile phones.
- Use of mobile phone camera images to cause distress, fear, or humiliation.
- Posting threatening, abusive, offensive, or humiliating material or comments on websites (including blogs, personal websites, and social networking sites).
- Using e-mail to message others in a threatening or abusive manner or hijacking/cloning e-mail accounts.

## Scope of Application

The policy applies to all pupils and incidents involving pupils, other young people, staff, and parents.

School staff members have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises, including incidents occurring on school or public transport, outside local shops, or online, where it is reasonable for the school to regulate the behaviour in those circumstances.

## 4. Cyberbullying: Prevention and Incident Management



## **Preventative Measures (Technology)**

In addition to general measures, the school will:

- Ensure pupils adhere to the Online Safety Policy, including guidance on the safe use of social networking sites.
- Offer guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, phone numbers, and other personal details safe.
- Offer guidance on blocking, removing contacts from "friend" lists, and sharing personal data.
- A complete ban on mobile phones in school. Only those pupils walking to school may bring a 'brick' style phone to school, which is handed in at the office on arrival.

## **Staff Powers regarding Devices**

Staff members authorized by the headteacher can examine data or files and delete these from electronic devices (such as mobile phones) seized from pupils, where there is good reason to do so.

- If material is suspected to be evidence in relation to an offence (e.g. a pornographic image of a child or an extreme pornographic image), it must not be deleted and should be given to the police by the DSL and/or the Online Safety Officer as soon as is reasonably practicable.

## **Advice for Managing a Cyberbullying Incident**

If a child is being cyberbullied, they should be advised:

- To block the bully or report someone behaving badly.
- To not retaliate or reply to offending emails, text messages, or online conversations.
- To save the evidence, keep a copy of offending materials (such as screen grabs, including the web address) and pass it to an adult (parent, carer, or teacher).

If online content is upsetting or inappropriate:

- If the person responsible is known, request they remove the material.
- If the person refuses or is unknown, contact the social networking site directly to make a report and request content removal, noting how it breaches the site's terms and conditions.
- Where the material is suspected of being illegal, contact the police directly.



## 5. Prevention: Whole School Approach

### Pupils

- All new pupils are briefed on expected standards of behaviour and what to do if they encounter bullying, with a guarantee of support for those who report in good faith.
- Pupils can report incidents by informing any teacher, the Matron, their parents, putting a note in the School worry post box, or speaking to any of the safeguarding team.
- Curriculum programs (e.g., PSHEE, RSE) are structured to emphasize social and moral responsibilities, community involvement, and mutual care, reinforcing that bullying is unacceptable.
- Notice board displays advise pupils where they can seek help, including details of confidential helplines and websites connecting to external specialists, such as Childline and the NSPCC.

### Staff

- All staff must understand the policy's principles, their legal responsibilities, actions to be taken, and sources of support.
- Staff receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety) at induction, with updates at least annually, to maintain relevant skills and knowledge.
- Staff are alerted to possible signs of bullying and handle incidents as an immediate priority.
- All staff should maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' regarding safeguarding.
- The Senior Leadership Team provides support and guidance on handling, reporting, and follow-up work.
- Staff must recognize the importance of professional boundaries and should not accept friend requests from pupils past or present.

### Parents

- Close contact between the School and parents/guardians is encouraged, and the school will initiate contact if worried about a pupil's well-being.
- Parents have an important role in supporting the school in maintaining high standards of behaviour, necessitating consistent expectations between school and home.
- Parents are advised that they have the right to be critical of decisions but should raise concerns in an appropriate way and not become abusive or libellous online as outlined in the Parent Contract. The Parent Complaint Policy is available on the school's website.



## 6. Procedures for Dealing with Reported Bullying

The school ensures all instances or concerns about bullying are easy to report and are recorded properly to identify patterns and evaluate the policy's effectiveness.

### Immediate Steps

1. **Reassurance:** The staff member receiving the report should control the situation, reassure the pupil(s) involved, and ensure the victim is taken seriously and supported.
2. **Notification:** Inform the DSL or a deputy immediately, who should inform an appropriate member of the leadership team and the relevant Form Teacher(s). The Headmaster will also be informed.
3. **Interview and Account:** The victim should be interviewed separately and asked to give an account. The alleged bully/bullies and all involved should be interviewed individually and asked to give accounts.
4. **Record:** The incident must be recorded by the staff member on the 'All Notes' form on the Staff Hub. The Headmaster then coordinates detailed recording on the School's Information System (iSams). Recording the incident should not delay the process of containing the situation or alerting the leadership team.

### Further Action and Decision Making

- **Statutory Referral:** If there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, the concern must be addressed as a child protection matter, requiring a referral to local authority children's social care. Where a crime may have been committed, staff should seek assistance from the police.
- **Support for Victims:** The victim should be interviewed again by a member of the leadership team, offered support, and provided with a strategy to help; it should be made clear that revenge or retaliation is inappropriate. Victims of serious bullying (e.g. involving sexual images or videos) will be particularly vulnerable and require specific support to return to school.
- **Discipline and Support for Perpetrators:** The alleged bully/bullies will be interviewed, and it will be made clear why their behaviour was inappropriate; they should be offered guidance on modifying their behaviour.
- **Sanctions:** Sanctions under the Behaviour Policy must be fair, consistent, and proportionate and may include detention, withdrawal of privileges, suspension, or temporary/permanent exclusion for severe or persistent bullying. Pupils who have engaged in bullying behaviour will also be supported in learning different ways of behaving.
- **Parental Involvement:** Parents/guardians of all parties will be informed and may be invited into School to discuss the matter, and their support will be sought.
- **Resolution:** A monitoring and review strategy will be put in place and recorded. In some cases, restorative processes, such as the Support Group Method, may be initiated.

(Willington School reserves the right to update all policies on a regular basis)



## 7. Special Considerations

### Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

- All staff recognize that children with SEND are generally more vulnerable to bullying and child-on-child abuse.
- The policy acknowledges that these children can be marginalized, subjected to hurtful comments, and physically hurt.
- The school promotes inclusion and neurodiversity. When planning support and discipline, staff recognise additional barriers that exist for this group in reporting abuse, and ensure support mechanisms are in place.

### Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

The policy applies to children in the EYFS.

- The youngest children are encouraged to behave with kindness and consideration, respect possessions, and learn to value differences and diversity.
- The school explains why some behaviours are unacceptable and hurtful.
- Sanctions are rarely imposed but may involve removing a treat or meeting with a senior member of staff. Parents are always informed of sanctions or reproofs and asked to reinforce the message given to the pupil.

### Pupil Voice (Feb 2026)

As part of pupil voice consultation, a group of pupils met in February to represent the wider school community and share their views on the pupil-friendly version of the Willington Prep Anti-Bullying Policy (see Annex B). Pupils agreed with the principles and procedures outlined in the policy and reported that they feel comfortable using the agreed processes should bullying occur.

Pupils demonstrated a clear understanding of what bullying is and expressed confidence in the steps the school takes to address concerns promptly and fairly. They were also able to clearly identify the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads and knew who they could speak to if they needed support.

This feedback highlights pupils' confidence in the school's anti-bullying procedures and reflects a culture where children feel listened to, supported and safe to speak out.



## Appendix A: Useful Resources (External)

Organization/Resource	Focus
Childline Call 0800 1111 <a href="https://www.childline.org.uk/">https://www.childline.org.uk/</a>	Free and confidential advice for children and young people.
NSPCC <a href="https://www.nspcc.org.uk/">https://www.nspcc.org.uk/</a>	Children's charity specializing in child protection and support for professionals.
Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) <a href="https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/">https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/</a>	Support, resources, and fact sheets for schools and young people on bullying.
UK Safer Internet Centre <a href="https://swgfl.org.uk/">https://swgfl.org.uk/</a>	Provides safety and reporting tools, advice, and resources for online safety.
Thinkuknow (CEOP) <a href="https://www.ceopeducation.co.uk/">https://www.ceopeducation.co.uk/</a>	Resources for young people, parents, carers, and teachers on online safety and child sexual abuse.
Internet Matters <a href="https://www.internetmatters.org/">https://www.internetmatters.org/</a>	Provides help to keep children safe in the digital world.
The Parent Zone <a href="https://parentzone.org.uk/">https://parentzone.org.uk/</a>	Provides a national helpline service and innovative resources for parents/carers, particularly around e-safety.
Childnet <a href="https://www.childnet.com/">https://www.childnet.com/</a>	Guidance on online safety and anti-bullying, including cyberbullying.



<p>Tooled Up Education <a href="https://www.tooledupeducation.com/">https://www.tooledupeducation.com/</a></p>	<p>Online portal available to all Willington parents which provides resources to parents on all aspects of child development.</p>
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This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and guidance:

[Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy](#)

[Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#)

[Preventing and tackling bullying Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies 2017](#)

## Annex B

# Willington Prep – Our Anti-Bullying Promise

Your voice matters at Willington

## What is bullying?

Bullying is when someone hurts another person on purpose, more than once, and it makes that person feel upset, scared or unsafe.

Bullying can happen:

- Face to face
- In groups
- Online or through games, messages or social media

Bullying is never acceptable, even if someone says it is a joke or banter.

## What does bullying look like?

Bullying can be:

### Verbal

- Name calling
- Teasing that hurts feelings



- Threats or nasty comments

### **Physical**

- Pushing, hitting or kicking
- Taking or damaging someone's belongings

### **Emotional**

- Leaving someone out on purpose
  - Spreading rumours
- Making someone feel embarrassed, frightened or unhappy

### **Prejudice or identity based**

- Bullying someone because of their race, religion, family background, disability, gender or differences
  - Making fun of how someone looks or learns

### **Online (Cyberbullying)**

- Mean or threatening messages
- Sharing photos or videos without permission
  - Being asked to keep secrets online
- Being treated badly in games or group chats

### **How we treat bullying at Willington**

At Willington:

- We have zero tolerance for bullying



- Bullying is taken seriously every time
  - Adults will listen, help and act
  - No one will be told to just ignore it

Bullying is not:

- Just joking
- Part of growing up
- Something you should deal with on your own

### **What should you do if you are being bullied?**

If bullying happens to you:

1. Tell an adult you trust
  - Your teacher
  - Any member of staff
  - The DSL or Deputy DSL
  - Your parents
2. Tell as soon as you can
  - You are not getting anyone into trouble
  - You are helping us keep everyone safe
3. If it is online
  - Do not reply
  - Save the evidence (screenshots)



- Block and report
- Show an adult straight away

### **What if you see bullying happening?**

If you see bullying:

- Do not join in
- Do not laugh or encourage it
- Support the person being bullied
  - Tell an adult

Speaking up helps keep others safe.

### **What will adults do to help?**

When bullying is reported:

- Adults will listen carefully
- Everyone involved will be spoken to separately
- The situation will be recorded so patterns can be spotted
  - The person being bullied will be supported
- The person who has bullied will be helped to change their behaviour

Sometimes restorative approaches are used. This means helping people understand the impact of their actions and how to put things right.

### **Will there be consequences?**



Yes.

If someone chooses to bully:

- There will be fair and appropriate consequences
  - Parents will be informed
- Support will be given to help better choices in future

The aim is always safety, fairness and learning.

### **Our Willington Promise**

At Willington, we promise:

- To be kind
- To respect differences
- To speak up when something feels wrong
  - To help everyone feel safe

You will always be listened to.