



Woodland Pathways

Anti-bullying Policy

Date created or revised: 0925

Date of next review: 0926

1. Policy Statement

Woodland Pathways is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment where all children and young people feel valued and protected.

Bullying of any kind is not tolerated and will always be addressed promptly, proportionately, and in line with safeguarding procedures.

We recognise that:

- Many learners in alternative provision have experienced trauma
- Behaviour is often a form of communication
- Bullying must be addressed firmly but therapeutically

2. Definition of Bullying

Bullying is behaviour that is:

- **Deliberate** – intended to hurt, intimidate or harm
- **Repeated** – occurs over time
- **Power-based** – involves an imbalance of power

3. Characteristics of Bullying

- Ongoing or repeated behaviour
- Intent to harm
- Imbalance of power (physical, emotional, social or psychological)

4. Forms of Bullying

Bullying may include:

4.1 Physical

- Hitting, kicking, pushing
- Damage to belongings

4.2 Verbal

- Name-calling
- Threats
- Offensive comments

4.3 Social / Emotional

- Exclusion
- Spreading rumours
- Humiliation

4.4 Cyberbullying

- Social media abuse
- Messaging harassment
- Sharing images without consent

4.5 Prejudice-Based Bullying

- Related to:
 - Race
 - Religion
 - Disability
 - SEND
 - Gender identity
 - Sexual orientation

5. Aims of the Policy

Woodland Pathways aims to:

- Minimise bullying incidents
- Improve safety and wellbeing
- Empower learners to speak out
- Address and change harmful behaviour
- Support all individuals involved (including perpetrators)

6. Our Approach

We use a **trauma-informed, safeguarding-led approach**:

- Bullying is never dismissed as “banter”
- All concerns are taken seriously
- Response is:
 - Protective
 - Restorative
 - Proportionate

7. Prevention Strategies

7.1 Culture and Environment

- Strong adult role modelling
- Safe, structured environments
- High staff visibility and supervision

7.2 Relationship-Based Practice

- Positive staff–student relationships
- Daily check-ins and reflection time
- Nurture-based approaches

7.3 Education and Awareness

- Anti-bullying themes
- PSHE and social development work
- Online safety education

7.4 Staff Training

- Safeguarding and bullying awareness
- Trauma-informed practice
- Identifying hidden bullying

8. Responding to Bullying

8.1 Immediate Response

Staff will:

1. **Listen** – take the concern seriously
2. **Reassure** – ensure the child feels safe
3. **Record** – complete safeguarding/incident form
4. **Report** – inform DSL immediately
5. **Act** – implement support and intervention

8.2 Safeguarding Threshold

Where bullying:

- Causes harm
- Indicates abuse
- Involves exploitation or risk

It is treated as a **safeguarding concern** and escalated accordingly

8.3 Investigation Approach

- No-blame initial discussion (where appropriate)
- Exploration of:
 - What happened
 - Impact on individuals
- Focus on:
 - Understanding behaviour
 - Repairing harm

8.4 Outcomes and Actions

May include:

- Restorative conversations
- Behaviour support plans
- Increased supervision
- Separation strategies
- Safeguarding referrals (if required)

8.5 Persistent or Serious Bullying

If behaviour continues:

- Escalation to senior leadership
- Formal behaviour intervention
- Possible removal from provision

Safety of all learners is prioritised

9. Support for Those Involved

9.1 Victims

- Emotional support
- Safe spaces
- Regular check-ins
- External referrals if needed

9.2 Perpetrators

- Behaviour intervention
- Reflection work
- Safeguarding assessment

Recognising perpetrators may also be vulnerable

9.3 Bystanders

- Encouraged to report
- Supported to build confidence

10. Recording and Monitoring

All incidents are:

- Recorded formally
- Logged as safeguarding concerns where appropriate
- Monitored for patterns

The DSL will:

- Analyse trends
- Identify risks
- Review effectiveness of interventions

11. Communication with Parents & Commissioners

Woodland Pathways will:

- Inform parents/carers **without delay**
- Inform commissioning schools/Local Authority immediately
- Share:
 - Incident details
 - Actions taken
 - Ongoing updates

12. Roles and Responsibilities

All Staff

- Challenge bullying
- Record concerns
- Support learners

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- Oversee all incidents
- Ensure safeguarding thresholds applied
- Liaise with commissioners

Directors

- Ensure policy implementation
- Monitor effectiveness
- Promote safe culture

13. Links to Other Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Equality & Diversity Policy
- Complaints Policy

14. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be:

- Reviewed annually
- Updated following:
 - Incidents
 - Legislative changes
 - Feedback from commissioners