



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

REFERENCE:	V01 – 09/2025
OWNERSHIP:	AP Lead
AUTHORISED BY:	Emma Draper (Director)
REVIEW:	Annually – September 2026

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline how Churchwood Forest School AP will handle situations of bullying (with regard to DfE Guidance: Preventing and tackling bullying). We also align with KCSIE 2025 on child-on-child abuse and safeguarding reporting, used here as good-practice benchmarks for a non-school AP.

SCOPE

This policy applies to Churchwood Forest School AP, this includes all employees who work within Churchwood Forest School AP as well as contractors, volunteers and visitors. Significant bullying incidents are shared the same day with parents/carers and the commissioning school/LA.

SAFEGUARDING COMMITMENT

As an organisation that prioritises the safeguarding of children and all vulnerable people, Churchwood Forest School AP is committed to providing a safe environment across all we do by actively adopting strategies that embed a culture of zero tolerance for abuse of any kind.

RESPONSIBILITIES

This section outlines the specific responsibilities of all members of the school community in preventing, identifying, and responding to bullying.

1. The Education Leadership Team/Directors

- **Policy Approval and Oversight:** To approve, regularly review, and monitor the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy, ensuring it complies with all relevant legal requirements and guidance.
- **Resource Allocation:** To ensure adequate resources are allocated for the effective implementation of the policy, including staff training and support programs.
- **Accountability:** To hold the Provision Lead accountable for the effective implementation of the policy and the promotion of a positive school culture.

2. Provision Lead

- **Policy Implementation:** To ensure the Anti-Bullying Policy is consistently and effectively implemented across the entire setting.
- **Promoting a Positive Culture:** To actively promote a culture of respect, kindness, and inclusivity, where bullying is never tolerated.
- **Staff Training and Support:** To ensure all staff receive regular and appropriate training on anti-bullying strategies, identification of bullying behaviours, and reporting procedures.
- **Incident Management:** To oversee the investigation and resolution of all reported bullying incidents, ensuring appropriate actions are taken and records are maintained.
- **Communication:** To ensure clear communication with parents/carers and relevant external agencies regarding bullying incidents and support strategies.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** To regularly monitor the effectiveness of the policy and anti-bullying initiatives, using data to inform continuous improvement.

3. All Provision Staff (Teachers, Support Staff, Administrative Staff, Volunteers)

- **Vigilance and Awareness:** To be vigilant in observing student interactions and to be aware of the signs and indicators of bullying behaviour.
- **Immediate Intervention:** To intervene immediately and appropriately when witnessing or becoming aware of bullying, following the provision's established procedures.
- **Reporting Incidents:** To report all suspected or confirmed bullying incidents promptly and accurately to the designated staff member using the school's reporting system. Reports are made to the DSL the same day, recorded on the safeguarding system (victim) and behaviour record (perpetrator) as applicable, and cross-referenced.
- **Role Modelling:** To consistently model positive, respectful, and inclusive behaviour, and to challenge any form of bullying or disrespectful conduct.
- **Student Support:** To provide appropriate support and reassurance to students who have been bullied, and to help them understand the reporting process.
- **Curriculum Integration:** Where appropriate, to integrate anti-bullying messages and strategies into the curriculum to raise awareness and promote empathy.

4. Students

- **Reporting Bullying:** To report any bullying they experience or witness to a trusted adult.
- **Standing Up to Bullying:** To actively refuse to participate in bullying behaviour and to support peers who are being bullied.
- **Respectful Conduct:** To treat all members of the provision community with respect and



kindness.

- **Understanding the Policy:** To understand what bullying is and the consequences of bullying, as outlined in this policy.

5. Parents/Carers

- **Open Communication:** To communicate openly with the provision about any concerns regarding their child's well-being or any suspected bullying incidents.
- **Supporting the Provision's Policy:** To support the Anti-Bullying Policy and work collaboratively with staff to address any bullying issues.
- **Promoting Positive Behaviour:** To reinforce at home the importance of respectful behaviour, empathy, and the unacceptability of bullying.
- **Monitoring Online Activity:** To monitor their child's online activity and encourage responsible digital citizenship.

DEFINITIONS

1. Bullying

Bullying is defined as **repeated behaviour** by an individual or group, intentionally designed to **hurt, harm, or intimidate** another individual or group, physically or emotionally. It is often, but not exclusively, characterised by an **imbalance of power**, where the person doing the bullying has more power (e.g., physically stronger, socially more popular, older) than the person being bullied. Bullying is not a one-off conflict or disagreement, but a pattern of behaviour. Note: a single incident may be serious enough to constitute child-on-child abuse (e.g., sexual violence/harassment or serious assault) and must be treated as a safeguarding matter even if not repeated.

2. Types of Bullying

Bullying can take many forms, including but not limited to:

- **Verbal Bullying:** Spreading rumours, name-calling, teasing, making offensive remarks, insults, or threats.
- **Physical Bullying:** Hitting, kicking, pushing, tripping, spitting, or any other form of unwanted physical contact. This also includes damage to property.
- **Social/Relational Bullying:** Excluding someone from groups, spreading gossip, manipulating friendships, or damaging a person's social reputation.
- **Cyberbullying:** Bullying that takes place using electronic technology. This can include



sending mean texts, emails, or instant messages; posting embarrassing photos or videos; or creating fake profiles to spread rumours or mock someone. Response: preserve evidence (screenshots/URLs/timestamps); do not search a device without consent; escalate to DSL. Where there is suspected illegal content (e.g., indecent images of children), inform police immediately and do not delete material. See Online/E-Safety Policy for operational steps.

- **Prejudicial Bullying:** Bullying based on characteristics such as race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or any other protected characteristic. This can be particularly damaging due to its discriminatory nature.

POLICY

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Churchwood Forest School AP is committed to offering a safe and healthy environment for the young people who attend activities in our provision and as a consequence of wider engagement with the organisation. Challenging bullying and early signs of bullying behaviour effectively will improve the safety and happiness of pupils, show that the organisation cares and make clear to bullies that the behaviour is unacceptable. The Behaviour Policy sets consequences available within Churchwood Forest School AP sessions; where legal processes (e.g., suspension/exclusion) are required, these are led by the commissioning school/LA. Staff follow KCSIE reporting routes for all safeguarding elements.

Safeguarding young people

Safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child on child abuse. This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), gender based violence/sexual assaults and sexting and prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying. Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, provision staff should report their concerns to the local authority children's social care. In any case where staff are concerned that a pupil is being bullied, a safeguarding form should be completed.

We may need to draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a young person engaging in



bullying.

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the , there are certain instances of harassment or threatening behaviour that could be deemed as such. If staff feel that an offence may have been committed they should seek assistance from the police.

Bullying may occur in relation to individual characteristics or situations, such as appearance, a health condition, or home circumstances. Bullying can be in relation to the 'protected characteristics' as set out in the Equality Act 2010. These are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation.

There is no 'hierarchy' of bullying – all forms of bullying should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately.

Early signs of bullying

Although the definition of bullying refers to the repetition of bullying behaviour over time, it is crucial to recognise, challenge and record all single incidents of bullying behaviour, including where a pupil makes malicious, derogatory, prejudice-based or discriminatory remarks about another person. This allows bullying behaviour to be nipped in the bud. Where pupils do not respond to early sanctions or interventions and bullying behaviour is repeated, staff can quickly recognise and respond to emerging patterns of behaviour.

All such incidents should be recorded and reported as a safeguarding concern (for both the perpetrator and the victim) along with the sanctions imposed and interventions put in place. Logs must indicate that the behaviour being recorded is 'bullying' and specify its 'type'. This allows for effective monitoring and analysis of bullying or potential early signs of bullying.

Identifying where bullying can occur

Although in-person bullying can occur during the journey to or from the provision, e.g. extortion or theft of possessions such as mobile phones, most typically it takes place on the premises. At Churchwood Forest School AP, there is constant supervision of pupils, and staff must be vigilant in identifying and dealing with any incidents of bullying as they occur. Churchwood Forest School AP will address off-site and online bullying by recording, supporting those affected and applying in-provision consequences under the Behaviour Policy. Churchwood Forest School AP will notify the commissioning school/LA so that any statutory actions can be considered.



Both boys and girls bully others. Young people who bully others can come from any kind of family, regardless of social class or cultural background. Any young person can be bullied and certain factors can make bullying more likely:

- Lacking close friends at school
- Being shy
- An over-protective family environment
- Being from a different racial or ethnic group to the majority
- Being different in some obvious respect (e.g. stammering)
- Having Special Educational Needs or a disability.
- Behaving inappropriately, intruding or being an 'nuisance'
- Possessing expensive accessories such as mobile phones or computer games

As well as maintaining a high level of vigilance during the supervision of pupils, staff who suspect that bullying is taking place outside of these times or online, should bring any concerns to the weekly staff meeting.

Although the primary purpose of this policy is to protect and defend the young people who come to Churchwood Forest School AP School, it is important to note that bullying can take place not only between pupils, but also between pupils and staff, parents and staff, or between staff.

Effects of bullying

Victims may be reluctant to attend a place of education and are often absent. They may be more anxious and insecure than others, having fewer friends and often feeling unhappy and lonely.

Victims can suffer from low self-esteem, low self-confidence and negative self-image, looking upon themselves as failures – feeling stupid, ashamed and unattractive.

Victims may present a variety of symptoms to health professionals, including fits, faints, vomiting, limb pains, paralysis, hyperventilation, visual symptoms, headaches, stomach aches, bed wetting, sleeping difficulties and sadness. Being bullied may lead to depression or, in the most serious cases, attempted suicide. It may lead to anxiety, depression, loneliness and lack of trust in adult life.

Raising and reporting concerns

Pupils may raise and report concerns they have about bullying by speaking directly to any member



of staff at any point during the day. At Churchwood Forest School AP we aim to create a safe environment where young people can openly discuss the cause of their bullying, without fear of further bullying or discrimination. Staff must ensure that they do not offer to keep any concerns raised confidential but work with the pupil to address their concerns in an appropriate manner. Staff must not promise confidentiality; they will explain what will happen next and how the young person will be supported.

Parents/carers and members of staff may also raise concerns and where this occurs, a staff member should speak to their line manager in the first instance. For further support, they may wish to contact their trade union or professional association for support and advice. Any parent who feels that their concerns are not being sufficiently dealt with may follow the 'Complaints Procedure'. All bullying concerns are shared with the DSL the same day; significant incidents are also shared with parents/carers and the commissioner.

Dealing with bullying – prevention and intervention

Bullying will be discussed as part of the curriculum and will be directly challenged and discussed with young people by staff. The Anti-Bullying Charter will be discussed with all young people at the start of their time with us and revisited at the start of each term. Staff will actively encourage young people to talk about bullies and bullying and about any bullying issues affecting them. Bullying in any form will not be tolerated. All young people will be challenged on behaviour that is tantamount to bullying from the low level persistent put-downs to physical, mental and verbal attacks. The 'Behaviour Policy' outlines the specific strategies and sanctions that exist at Churchwood Forest School AP School for dealing with misbehaviour and bullying.

All incidents of bullying must be recorded as a safeguarding concern. For pupils that are being bullied, the safeguarding records should be used. For pupils that are bullying, behaviour records should be used. Prejudice-based incidents are tagged by type (e.g., racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, faith-based, disability-related). Plans must address triggers and support; punitive measures alone are insufficient. The entry should include the type of bullying, the sanctions and interventions put in place and the outcome. This information can then help us to monitor and review occurrences of bullying and the effectiveness of sanctions in place to address them.

Monitoring

By using information from safeguarding records we will be able to monitor the effectiveness of our bullying policy. Success will be measured by:



- The number of incidents of bullying being recorded declines as each term progresses
- The number of repeat-offences of bullying are significantly less than first-offences
- There are no unresolved cases of bullying

The Provision Lead should access and review occurrences of bullying recorded on a regular basis and act on any concerns. Discussion of this should be built into the staff team meetings. The Provision Lead will report key information and analysis of bullying incidents to the Education Leadership Team/Directors on a termly basis. A termly summary can be shared with the commissioning school/LA on request to support their statutory duties; data is anonymised where appropriate.

Maintaining a High Anti-Bullying profile

- All new staff read and understand the Anti-bullying policy
- The 'Churchwood Forest School AP Anti-Bullying Charter' is displayed in all rooms
- Display how to report (named DSL and deputies; email/number) and signpost to external help where appropriate.
- All staff are encouraged to maintain a high level of vigilance around the likelihood of bullying taking place and to challenge and report all incidents
- Staff training is undertaken on a regular basis
- Opportunities are given for staff to discuss concerns during regular staff meetings
- Opportunities to discuss possible issues of bullying with schools, pupils, parents/carers and referring agencies are encouraged at all times
- The Provision Lead analyses behaviour records relating to bullying, discuss with the staff team monthly and reports to the Education Leadership Team/Directors termly.



POLICY CONTEXT

AP context (non-school AP): Churchwood Forest School AP operates as a non-school Alternative Provision (AP). The commissioning school/LA (referrer) retains statutory responsibilities for attendance/CME and exclusions. Churchwood Forest School AP provides same-day safeguarding and attendance information to enable those duties and adopts DfE “Preventing and tackling bullying” and KCSIE 2025 as benchmark guidance for AP.

This policy relates to the following legislative requirements, standards and internal documents:

Legislation/Standards	● DfE Guidance: Preventing and tackling bullying ● Protection from Harassment Act 1997; ● The malicious Communications Act 1988; ● The Communications Act 2003; ● Public Order Act 1986
Related Forms & Documents	● Behaviour Policy ● E-Safety Policy ● Safeguarding – Child Protection Policy ● Safeguarding – Staff Code of Conduct ● Client Complaints Procedure ● Complaints Policy ● Managing Allegations Policy

VERSION CONTROL

We will review our documentation regularly and we reserve the right to amend our policies and procedures at any time.

Version	Date	Change Summary	Author/ Reviewer	Approved by:
1	Sept 2025	Initial	Mark Wrangles	
2				
3				