



# WOODSTOCK SCHOOL POLICY MANUAL

## ANTI BULLYING POLICY

### OBJECTIVES

Everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. All individuals regardless of their age, culture, challenges, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse. No one should be subject to abuse or bullying from adults employed by the school or from students. The School views the welfare of each individual as paramount. Woodstock School is committed to providing a safe, nurturing community, within which everyone can live, study, learn, work and mature. Therefore, bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school.

Mandatory anti-bullying training which addresses identification and prevention of bullying as well as the steps that should be taken to report and follow up on bullying incidents at Woodstock School is required for all administrators, residential, teaching and support staff. The counseling team will be responsible for ensuring the training is evidence-based. Such trainings will occur at the beginning of each school year. A follow up session will occur at the beginning of second semester. In addition, all new staff that joins after the beginning of the school year will be required to attend the initial training session when they arrive.

### PROCEDURES

#### DEFINITION

Bullying is (1) a pattern of behaviour that is (2) aggressive, harmful, hurtful, unwanted, distressing or demeaning (3) in a relationship where there is an imbalance of power or strength. All 3 criteria must be present for the behaviour to be defined as bullying.

1. A "pattern of behaviour" can be defined in one of three ways:
  - 1) a pattern of behaviour by a single bully towards a single target;
  - 2) a pattern of behaviour by a single bully towards different targets, or
  - 3) a pattern of behaviour towards a targeted individual appropriated by anyone towards that individual. In this case, the pattern has already been established against this target by other offenders, even if appropriated for the first time by this particular offender.
2. "Aggressive, harmful, hurtful, unwanted, distressing or demeaning" behaviour can be direct or indirect.

#### Examples of Direct Bullying:

- Hitting, kicking, shoving, spitting, pushing, grabbing, or pinching
- Taunting, teasing, racial/cultural slurs or jokes, verbal harassment
- Comments about body and looks
- Threatening, obscene gestures
- Rough behaviour

#### Examples of Indirect Bullying:

- Getting another person to bully someone for you
- Negative body language
- Spreading rumours
- Deliberately excluding someone from a group or activity; silent treatment
- Cyber-bullying (e-mail, instant messaging, texting, prank or offensive phone calls, etc.)



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3. "Imbalance of power or strength:" Bullying involves the underlying belief that the bully has the right to exert power and control over a targeted individual or group. Bullying limits or denies a targeted person's ability to participate in or to receive benefits, services or opportunities in the school's program. Students and staff should be able to say or indicate "No" or "Stop" when they are recipients of any behaviour which makes them uncomfortable or puts them at risk. Behaviour that continues or is repeated after "No" or "Stop" has been communicated, is unacceptable behaviour.

## **PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING INCIDENTS AND INVESTIGATING REPORTS**

All reports of suspected or actual bullying will be taken seriously. All witnesses to suspected bullying must report the incident.

Students may report confidentially to any staff member. Alternatively, reports may be submitted to [ReportIt@woodstock.ac.in](mailto:ReportIt@woodstock.ac.in).

All staff members are required to forward all reports of suspected or actual bullying by students or staff as defined by the policy to a member of the Counselling Team. Apart from this, staff must maintain confidentiality to protect the targeted and reporting individuals. Reporting incidences and protecting confidentiality are expected professional responsibilities of all staff.

The Counselling Team will follow up initial reports. If the Counselling Team believes that bullying has taken place, they inform the Dean of Student Life. The Dean of Student Life must investigate the incident and apply appropriate discipline.

As soon as possible, the Dean of Student Life will notify the parents of students targeted by bullying and the parents of the aggressors.

## **PROTECTION OF WITNESSES AND OF PEOPLE TARGETED BY BULLYING**

Immediate measures will be taken to protect students from retaliation. Retaliation by the accused or anyone else will be viewed as an additional act of severe bullying.

Targets of bullying will provide input when decisions are made regarding their safety. If necessary, suspected bullies and their targets will be removed from boarding to separate staff residences until safety can be secured. The school will ensure that witnesses and targets are not alone in places where they do not feel safe.

## **DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

All disciplinary actions taken for bullying incidents will be in accordance to the Levels of Offense and Consequences as previously stated. Depending on the severity, immediate action may be taken by the Dean of Student Life as per our disciplinary guidelines.

Counselling support will be recommended for all individuals involved.

## *APPENDICES & REFERENCES*

Read with the Student Protection Policy



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## *REVIEW & REVISION*

Policy owner: Dean of Student Life

Written by:

Review by: Education Team

Approval required: Education Team

## *POLICY UPDATES HISTORY:*

Date	Reviewed by & Date of review	Approved by & Date of approval	Next review
29 Oct. 2007	Anti-Bullying Task Force Policy created due to concern over bullying incidents at Woodstock School in Spring 2007.	Principal	
31 March 2010	Counselling Team and Heads of Schools	Principal	
July 2015	Dean of Student Life	Principal	