

Parent & Carer Guide: Cyberbullying & Online Safety Approach

Ready. Respectful. Safe. — Online and Offline

Woodlands Primary School | Greenshaw Learning Trust

This guide explains how Woodlands Primary School works in partnership with parents and carers to keep children safe, happy, and respected in the digital world.

1. Welcome & Our Commitment to Families

At Woodlands Primary School, we know that technology, games, and messaging apps play a big part in children's lives today. While the online world offers fantastic opportunities to play, learn, and create, we also know it can sometimes bring challenges like digital exclusion, unkind comments, or cyberbullying.

Even though digital interactions often happen at home or outside school hours, their impact directly affects how safe, confident, and ready to learn your child feels at school. We are fully committed to working hand-in-hand with parents and carers to ensure every child feels heard, protected, and supported.

Our approach is built around our shared school values: **Ready, Respectful, Safe**, and reflects our commitment to the Anti-Bullying Alliance and UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools (Articles 12, 19, 28 & 29).

2. Understanding Cyberbullying vs. Online Unkindness

To help us work together effectively, it is helpful to understand how we define digital behaviour at school:

Unkind / Negative Digital Behaviour	Cyberbullying
• A one-off or thoughtless comment in a chat or game. • Accidental exclusion from a game lobby or group chat. • An impulsive disagreement while playing games online. • <i>While unacceptable and addressed with coaching, these are often thoughtless rather than deliberately targeted over time.</i>	• Intentional, repeated, and targeted online behavior designed to distress, isolate, or hurt a child over time. • Involves a power imbalance (e.g. group targeting an individual). • Can happen 24/7 through messaging, gaming, or fake accounts.

3. Common Digital Challenges in Primary School

Children in primary school encounter online spaces mainly through online games and family devices. Some of the common issues we help address include:

- **Group Chat Exclusion:** Intentionally leaving a child out of class WhatsApp or messaging groups to make them feel isolated.
- **Gaming Toxicity ("Griefing"):** Targeted unkindness, mean voice notes, or team sabotage during multiplayer games (e.g., Roblox, Minecraft, or FIFA).
- **Mean Comments or Flaming:** Sending repeated unkind text or voice messages in group chats.
- **Impersonation:** Setting up fake profiles or using someone else's account to cause trouble.
- **Sharing Without Permission:** Sharing private chats, photos, or embarrassing memes in group chats.

4. How Woodlands Primary Responds to Concerns

When an online incident affecting a pupil is reported, our team acts quickly and consistently:

1. **We Listen & Reassure:** We make sure your child feels safe, believed, and praised for speaking up.
2. **We Log Concerns Centrally (CPOMS):** All digital incidents are recorded on our central system so we can track patterns and ensure early support.
3. **We Investigate Out-of-School Incidents:** School leaders have the authority to investigate and address out-of-school digital conduct whenever it impacts a child's well-being or friendships **at school**.
4. **We Take a Restorative Approach:** We help the children involved understand the emotional impact of digital words and support them to repair relationships.
5. **We Partner with Parents:** Where concerns are repeated or confirmed cyberbullying, we contact parents immediately to agree on home-school action plans.

5. Top Tips for Parents & Carers at Home

Parents play the most important role in keeping children safe online. Here are practical ways you can support your child:

Action	How It Helps Your Child
Keep Conversations Open	Talk regularly about what games they are playing or who they are chatting with. Reassure them that they won't get into trouble or have their device banned if they report something that upset them.

Action	How It Helps Your Child
Save the Evidence (Screenshots)	If your child receives unkind messages or sees upsetting content, take a screenshot or photo of the screen showing the message, sender username, and date. Do not delete it right away.
Use App Controls & Age Limits	Check PEGI ratings for games and age recommendations for apps (for example, WhatsApp is recommended for ages 13+). Set up privacy settings and content filters on devices.
Teach "Block & Report"	Show your child how to block players or report unkind messages directly inside games like Roblox or messaging apps.

6. What to Do If You are Worried About Cyberbullying

If you suspect your child is experiencing cyberbullying, or if you are concerned about online behaviour involving pupils from our school, please follow these 4 steps:

1. **Stay Calm & Reassure Your Child:** Let them know it is not their fault and that you will help sort it out together.
2. **Keep Evidence:** Take clear screenshots or photos of any messages, posts, or player tags.
3. **Use Technical Safeguards:** Block the user on the device, app, or game to stop immediate contact.
4. **Contact the School:** Speak to your child's class teacher or contact the school office. You can email or call to arrange a time to speak to the Class Teacher, Phase Leader, or Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

7. Working Together & Listening to You

We value parent feedback and hold regular parent voice opportunities to hear your views on online safety, communication, and behaviour at school. Together, we can make sure our children stay safe, happy, and confident both online and offline!