



## Anti-bullying and Cyber Safety Policy

<b>Policy date</b>	August 2025
<b>Revision date</b>	July 2026
<b>Circulation</b>	Internal, External and Website
<b>Approval Signature</b>	

*This policy will be reviewed annually unless an incident; new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an interim review*



## **Rationale**

We believe that in a caring school, respect for individuals and good relationships between all members is central to its wellbeing and we always ensure that our students learn in a mutually supportive, caring, and safe environment without fear. Bullying will not be tolerated as it can cause serious long term damage to the student's mental and physical health, educational attainment, and outlook on life. We have zero tolerance to Bullying and any reports of bullying will be taken seriously.

## **Aim**

- To practice within the school community that no form of bullying is acceptable
- To ensure that every member of our school community is alerted to signs and evidence of bullying as well as reinforce that everyone has a responsibility to report it to the Safeguarding Officer whether as an observer or a victim
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying and harassment are followed up appropriately and that support is given to all affected ones.
- To pursue parental and peer-group support and co-operation at all times
- To provide students with a safe and secure learning environment free from bullying and harassment.

We recognise that real change happens when students, staff, parents, and other members of the community share responsibility for making our school a respectful and inclusive environment.

- We have clear explicit procedures for dealing with all forms of bullying and the policy is widely promoted to students, staff and parents
- All members of the school community share the responsibility for addressing and reporting bullying, cyber-bullying and we promote self-reporting for the students through regular reminders by classroom teachers, the leadership team and by the Safeguarding Officer.
- Staff training/induction programmes will occur periodically to keep staff informed of current issues/strategies/policy updating for dealing with these matters
- Provide access to a range of programmes that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem-solving
- Explicit teaching of interpersonal/safety skills will be undertaken by enriching the curriculum and teachers to be models of caring and tolerant behaviour
- All students are made aware of bullying, its impacts and guidelines to prevent and manage it. Students are also made aware of 'what bullying is not'



- Parents will be made aware of students' responsibilities in their use of ICT/online learning and provided help and support with regard to internet safety 'netiquette', e-safety and digital literacy.
- Vigorous entry and exit monitoring duties to ensure prompt responses to incidences of unsafe or disrespectful behaviour which includes blocking the access to unsuitable internet sites.
- Matters related to bullying and cyber-bullying will be treated and recorded with confidentiality and sensitivity
- Planning strategically and pro-actively for those students identified through the Early Intervention strategies, and ensuring preventive measures are in place so as not to repeat the same
- Providing recognition for positive and appropriate behaviour by credits/awards/positions

We consider the following 10 key principles to prevent and respond to bullying.

1. Listen
2. Celebrate difference
3. Include all
4. Report bullying
5. Believe
6. Take action
7. Understand
8. Challenge
9. Respect
10. An anti-bullying policy that supports and underpins the principles

### **Bullying**

Bullying is repetitive, intentionally hurting of one person or a group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online

Bullying behaviour is not an individual action. Our school community agrees that

- Bullying is deliberate
- Bullying involves a power imbalance
- Bullying has an element of repetition
- Bullying is harmful.



Bullying is not an individual action. It involves up to three parties; initiators (those doing the bullying), targets (those being bullied) and often bystanders (those who witness the bullying).

**Initiators:** Students who bully others often do so to gain status and recognition from their peers. Their bullying behaviour is reinforced when they intimidate their targets and when the peer group colludes by not challenging the initiator or reporting the bullying to staff.

**Targets:** Students of all ages can be at relatively greater risk of being bullied (ie, being targets) for a whole host of reasons, including:

- being unassertive or withdrawn (eg, isolated students with low self-esteem)
- differing from the majority culture of a school in terms of ethnicity, cultural or religious background, sexual orientation, gender identity, or socio-economic status
- having a disability, special education needs or mental health issues
- academic achievement (perceived as high or low achiever)
- having recently transitioned into a school (through natural progression through schools, changing to a new school because of behavioural issues at a previous school or moving to the area from another city or country).

**Bystanders** (ie, witnesses to bullying behaviour) can have a powerful effect on either encouraging or inhibiting bullying behaviour. There are three main types of bystander:

- followers (assistants) – do not initiate, but take an active role in the bullying behaviour
- supporters (reinforcer) – support the bullying behaviour (overtly or covertly, eg, by turning a blind eye) but do not take an active role in the bullying behaviour
- defenders – dislike the bullying and try to help the target by intervening, getting teacher support (using safe telling) or providing direct support to the target.

### **Types of Bullying**

- Verbal (sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, name-calling, calling people unkind names, verbal threats of violence)
- Physical (hitting, kicking, biting, punching, pushing, tripping- anything that hurts by touching)
- Emotional (isolating someone, disturbing, hiding someone's property, humiliation, mockery, manipulation and causing stress, leaving them out, threatening looks)
- Sexual (unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comment, homophobic abuse, exposure to inappropriate media)



- Cyber/online (social networking pictures, WhatsApp groups to encourage bullying, abusive text messages, filming people without permission, prank calls)
- Discrimination: Prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, especially on the ground of race, age, gender, or disability.

### **Bullying Response - when bullying occurs**

We recognise the importance of consistently responding to all incidents of bullying that have been reported in our school and ensuring that planned interventions are used to respond to these incidents and support all involved. We will support anyone who has been affected by, engaged in or witnessed bullying behaviour.

- All reported incidents of bullying will be taken seriously and followed up as appropriate
- An appropriate adult (DSL/School Counsellor) will support the affected students by:
  - reassuring that they have done the right thing in reporting the incident
  - record a description of what happened and assess the level of severity
  - responding to bullying incidents to activate the response and action needed
  - will involve parents as early as possible and as appropriate
  - more serious incidents will be reported to the local authorities.

We will provide appropriate support for targets, bystanders and initiators of bullying behaviour and will regularly monitor all incidents of bullying and identify patterns of behaviour.

### **Positive steps to our students in response to cyber bullying**

- Tell an adult immediately
- Keep a record - include time, date and any screenshots if available
- Ask parents to contact their phone or internet provider and report what is happening
- If messages are threatening get in touch with the police -
- Do not reply to bullying messages - it will only get worse if we do. Often if we don't reply the bully will leave us alone.
- Change the contact details - get a new user name for the internet, a new email account, new mobile phone number and only give them to people you trust (e.g. family and close friends).
- Keep your username and password secret - keep all personal information private
- Respect other people online and offline.



- Don't spread rumours about people or share their secrets, including their phone numbers and passwords.
- If someone insults you online or by phone, stay calm and ignore them. "Do as you would be done by"- think how you would feel if you were bullied. You're responsible for your own behaviour - make sure you don't distress other people or cause them to be bullied by someone else.

### **Cyberbullying**

To define bullying the most acceptable definition of cyberbullying which has been used is "an aggressive, intentional act or behaviour that is carried out by a group or an individual, using electronic forms of contact, repeatedly and over-time against a victim who cannot easily defend him or herself."

When the bullying happens online with the help of technology it is cyberbullying. Cyberbullying includes sharing private or personal information about someone which can cause embarrassment to the person.

Place of occurrence of cyberbullying may includes

- Social Media (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, etc.)
- SMS (text messages from the cellular network)
- Instant Message Services (WhatsApp, Facebook messenger, I message, etc.)
- Email
- Cyberbullying Forms and examples:
- Humiliating/embarrassing content posted online about the victim of online bullying,
- Hacking of account
- Posting vulgar messages
- Threatening the victim to commit an act of violence
- Stalking
- Child pornography or threats of child pornography

The misuse of digital technologies or communication to bully a person or a group, typically through messages or actions that are threatening and/or intended to cause offence, anxiety or humiliation.



### Cyber-bullying can involve:

- Flaming: online fights using electronic messages with angry or vulgar tones
- Harassment: repeatedly sending nasty, mean/threatening and insulting messages this includes trolling
- Outing: sharing someone's secrets or embarrassing information or images online
- Exclusion: intentionally and cruelly excluding someone from an online group
- Cyber-stalking: repeated, intense harassment and denigration that includes threats or creates significant fear denigration: posting or sending rumours/pictures/videos about a person to damage his/her reputation or friendships without consent
- Hacking into someone's email, phone or online profiles to extract and share personal information, or to send hurtful content while posing as that person
- Creating dedicated websites that intend to harm, make fun of someone or spread malicious rumours
- The use of mobile phone cameras to cause distress, fear or humiliation

Bullying behaviour can also be targeted at 'looks', weight and height, colour of hair, wearing glasses or braces, acne, psoriasis and eczema, scars, marks or conditions of the face or body, body odour, poverty, gifts and talents or family situation (e.g. divorce, bereavement, homelessness). People who bully others often target 'difference' and bullying can be a form of wider discrimination.

### Impact of bullying

#### Children who are bullied are more likely to:

- Have low self-esteem
- Develop depression or anxiety
- Become socially withdrawn, isolated and lonely
- Have lower academic achievements due to avoiding or becoming disengaged with school
- Be unable to form trusting, healthy relationships with friends or partners in the future

#### Children who frequently bully others are more likely to:

- Drop out of, or be expelled from school
- Might engage in criminal behaviour later
- Develop depression or anxiety
- Might be abusive towards others



### Children who witness bullying are more likely to:

- Feel powerless
- Live in fear and guilt

### What bullying is not:

Many distressing behaviours are not bullying even though they are unpleasant and often require teacher intervention and management.

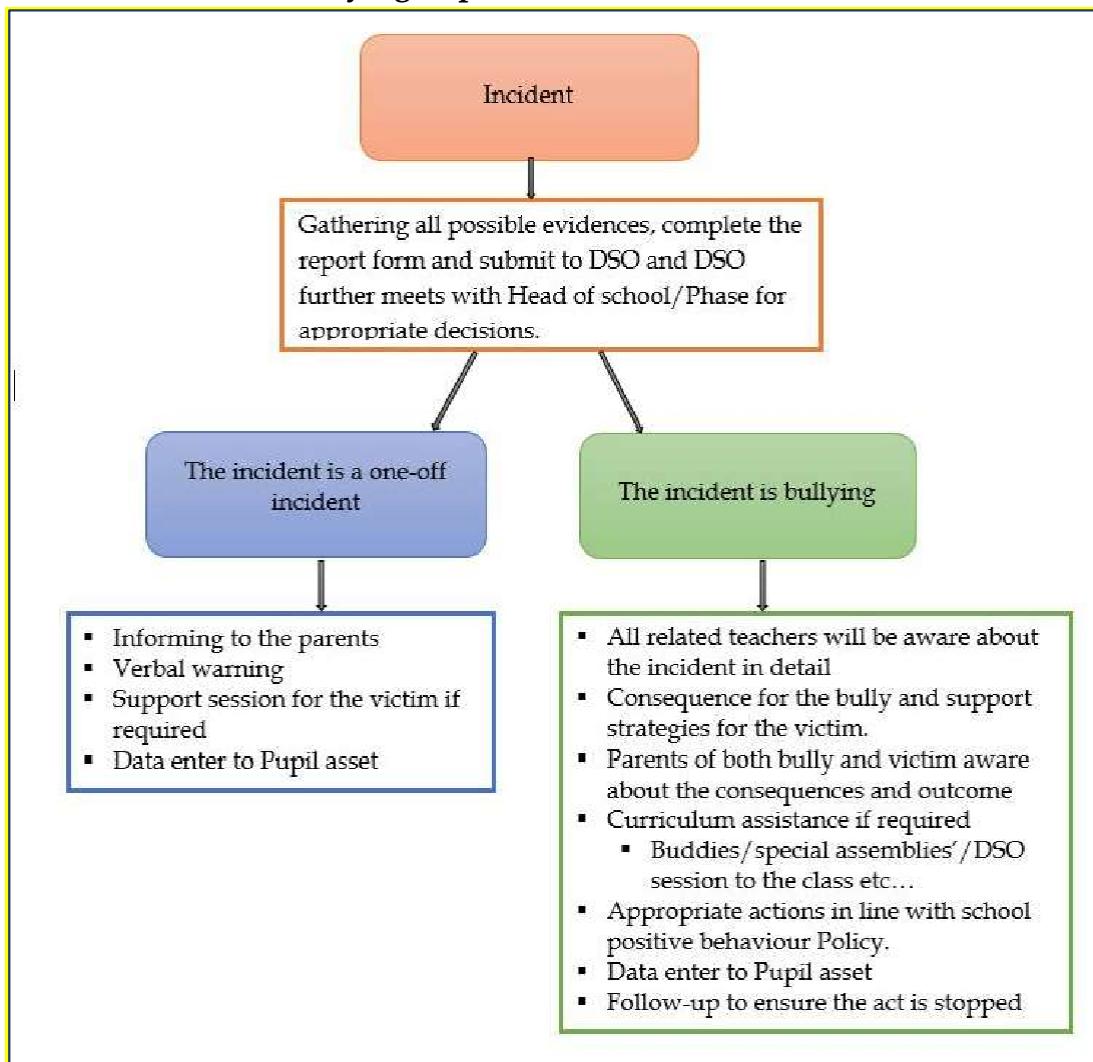
Mutual conflict: Such as an argument or the disagreement between students but not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the problem. However, unresolved mutual conflict sometimes develops into a bullying situation.

Social rejection or dislike: Unless the social rejection is directed towards someone specific and involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others it is not bullying.

Single episodes of unkindness or physical aggression: If a student is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion they are not being bullied. An unkind act or physical aggression that is directed towards many different students is not the same as bullying.



### Bullying Report Process in our school



**Evaluation and Review** We are regularly review and revise this policy to ensure that the school's bullying prevention practices are recognised and celebrated. DSL's and Head of School are having regular meetings to monitor and review the current incidents and changes with the school.