Mayfield House School

Anti-bullying Policy

Date policy last reviewed: 26 September 2026

Signed by:

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Statement of intent

Mayfield House School believes that all pupils are entitled to learn in a safe and supportive environment; this means being free from all forms of bullying behaviour. This policy outlines how instances of bullying are dealt with, including the procedures to prevent occurrences of bullying.

These strategies, such as learning about tolerance and difference as part of the school's curriculum, aim to promote an inclusive, tolerant and supportive ethos at the school.

The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 require the Proprietor to ensure that bullying at the school is prevented, so far as reasonably practicable, through the drawing up and effective implementation of an anti-bullying strategy. This policy forms part of that strategy and operates alongside the school's Behaviour Policy, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and other relevant policies.

All staff, parents and pupils work together to prevent and reduce any instances of bullying at the school. There is a zero-tolerance policy for bullying at the school.

Mayfield House School is an independent special school. The Proprietor (Board of Directors) holds the legal duty under the Independent School Standards to safeguard and promote pupils' welfare. We have zero tolerance for bullying, including prejudice-based incidents linked to protected characteristics, and we log, analyse and act on patterns termly.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- Communications Act 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Education Act 2011
- DfE (2017) 'Preventing and tackling bullying'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'
- DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) – current statutory guidance
- DfE (2026) Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education statutory guidance
- DCMS, DSIT, and UK Council for Internet Safety (2020) 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people'
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, Part 3 — Welfare, health and safety of pupils
- DfE (2024) Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff
- DfE Filtering and Monitoring: core standard
- Online Safety Act 2023 (selected provisions commenced)
- DfE (2022) Searching, screening and confiscation

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy
- Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy
- Suspension and Exclusion Policy
- Child-on-child Abuse Policy
- Remote Education Policy

2. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, "bullying" is defined as persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another person or group. Bullying is generally characterised by:

- **Repetition:** Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over an extended period of time.
- **Intent:** The perpetrator means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.

- **Targeting:** Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.
- **Power imbalance:** Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.

Vulnerable pupils are more likely to be the targets of bullying due to the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves. Vulnerable pupils may include, but are not limited to:

- Pupils who are adopted.
- Pupils suffering from a health problem.
- Pupils with caring responsibilities.
- Pupils from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Pupils with certain characteristics are also more likely to be targets of bullying, including, but not limited to:

- Pupils who are LGBTQ+ or perceived to be LGBTQ+.
- Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) pupils.
- Pupils with SEND.

Bullying that is prejudice-based (e.g., related to protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010) is recorded distinctly so trends can be monitored and addressed.

3. Types of bullying

Many kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying, and bullying can be related to almost anything. Teasing another pupil because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, home life, culture, or SEND are some of the types of bullying that can occur.

Bullying is acted out through the following media:

- Verbal
- Physical
- Emotional
- Online (cyberbullying)

Racist bullying: Bullying another person based on their race, ethnicity, nationality or skin colour. Some racist bullying behaviour may constitute a criminal offence, including offences aggravated by racial hostility or offences under relevant public order legislation.

Homophobic and biphobic bullying: Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

Transphobic bullying: Bullying based on another person's gender identity or gender presentation, or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.

Sexist bullying: Bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.

Sexual bullying: Bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal or non-verbal sexual dimension or dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes.

Ableist bullying: Bullying behaviour that focuses on another person's disability or support needs; this can include mocking the individual's disability or their needs, using derogatory words or slurs in relation to an individual's disability, or deliberately excluding an individual because of their disability.

Prejudicial bullying: Bullying based on prejudices directed towards specific characteristics or experiences, e.g. religion or mental health issues.

Relational bullying: Bullying that primarily consists of excluding, isolating and ostracising someone – usually through verbal and emotional bullying.

Socioeconomic bullying: Bullying based on prejudices against the perceived social status of the victim, including, but not limited to, their economic status, their parents' occupations, their health or nutrition level, or the perceived "quality" of their clothing or belongings.

Prejudice-based bullying related to protected characteristics (e.g., disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment) is specifically tracked and analysed.

4. Roles and responsibilities

The Proprietors (Directors**)** are responsible for:

- Evaluating and reviewing this policy to ensure that it does not discriminate against any pupils on the basis of their protected characteristics or backgrounds.
- The overall implementation and monitoring of this policy.
- Ensuring that all Directors are appropriately trained regarding safeguarding and child protection at induction.
- Ensuring that the school adopts a tolerant and open-minded policy towards difference.
- Ensuring the school is inclusive.
- Analysing any bullying data to establish patterns and reviewing this policy in light of these.
- Ensuring the DSL has the appropriate status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the role.
- Appointing a safeguarding link Director who will work with the DSL to ensure the policies and practices relating to safeguarding, including the prevention of cyberbullying, are being implemented effectively.
- Ensuring that pupils are taught how to keep themselves and others safe, including online.
- Ensuring compliance with the Independent School Standards, including the requirements relating to behaviour, bullying, safeguarding and pupil welfare, and having regard to the current version of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) and current DfE behaviour and online-safety guidance.
- Receiving termly bullying data (including prejudice-based incidents) from the DSL and approving any action plan.
- Overseeing annual review of filtering and monitoring effectiveness.

The **headteacher** is responsible for:

- Reviewing and amending this policy, accounting for new legislation and government guidance, and using staff experience of dealing with bullying incidents in previous years to improve procedures.
- Keeping a Bullying Report Form of all reported incidents, including which type of bullying has occurred, to allow for proper analysis of the data collected.
- Analysing the data in the bullying record at termly intervals to identify trends, so that appropriate measures to tackle them can be implemented.
- Arranging appropriate training for staff members.
- Completing, or overseeing, risk assessments and safety plans for victims/perpetrators where indicated (including for sexual harassment/violence).

The **DSL** is responsible for:

- Leading on recording, analysis and escalation of bullying concerns.
- Reporting termly data (including prejudice-based incidents) to the Directors.
- Coordinating risk assessments/safety plans and reviewing their effectiveness.

Key-Stage Leads are responsible for:

- Corresponding and meeting with parents where necessary.
- Providing a point of contact for pupils and parents when more serious bullying incidents occur.

Teachers are responsible for:

- Being alert to social dynamics in their class.
- Being available for pupils who wish to report bullying.
- Providing follow-up support after bullying incidents.
- Being alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups, and informing the pupil's Key-Stage Lead of such observations.
- Refraining from stereotyping when dealing with bullying.
- Understanding the composition of pupil groups, showing sensitivity to those who have been the victims of bullying.
- Reporting any instances of bullying once they have been approached by a pupil for support.

Parents are responsible for:

- Informing their child's Key-Stage Lead or form tutor if they have any concerns that their child is the victim of bullying or involved in bullying in any way.
- Being watchful of their child's behaviour, attitude and characteristics and informing the relevant staff members of any changes.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Informing a member of staff if they witness bullying or are a victim of bullying.
- Not making counter-threats if they are victims of bullying.
- Walking away from dangerous situations and avoiding involving other pupils in incidents.

- Keeping evidence of cyberbullying and informing a member of staff should they fall victim to cyberbullying

5. Statutory requirements

The school understands its duties under the Equality Act 2010. The Proprietor will ensure that pupils and prospective pupils are not unlawfully discriminated against, harassed or victimised because of a protected characteristic. The school will make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils where required and will take appropriate action to prevent and address discriminatory and prejudice-based bullying.

The school understands that, under the Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998, it could have charges brought against it if it allows the rights of pupils to be breached by failing to take bullying seriously. The headteacher will ensure that this policy complies with the HRA; the headteacher understands that they cannot do this without fully involving their teaching staff.

Although bullying itself is not a specific criminal offence, some bullying behaviour may constitute a criminal offence depending on the circumstances. This may include conduct involving threats, harassment, violence, hate crime, sexual offences, the sharing of intimate images, or harmful electronic communications. Relevant legislation may include the Online Safety Act 2023, Protection from Harassment Act 1997, Communications Act 2003 and other applicable criminal legislation. Where behaviour may constitute a criminal offence or presents a serious risk of harm, the DSL and Headteacher will consider whether referral to the police and/or children's social care is required.

The school recognises duties under the Online Safety Act 2023 and aligns education, reporting routes and technical controls with the current version of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), including its online-safety expectations.

6. Prevention

The school will clearly communicate a whole-school commitment to addressing bullying and have a clear set of values and standards which will be regularly promoted across the whole school.

All members of the school will be made aware of this policy and their responsibilities in relation to it. All staff members will receive training on identifying and dealing with the different types of bullying.

All types of bullying will be discussed as part of the relationships and health education curriculum, in line with the Primary Relationships and Health Education Policy.

All types of bullying will be discussed as part of the RSE and health education curriculum, in line with the Secondary Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy.

RSHE/PSHE content is kept current with DfE updates (e.g., online harms, misogyny/influence, consent, coercive control).

This curriculum will explore and discuss issues at age-appropriate stages such as:

- Health and respectful relationships.

- Boundaries and consent.
- Stereotyping, prejudice and equality.
- Body confidence and self-esteem.
- How to recognise abusive relationships and coercive control.
- Harmful sexual behaviour, the concepts involved and why they are always unacceptable, and the laws relating to it.

Staff will encourage pupil cooperation and the development of interpersonal skills using group and pair work. Diversity, difference and respect for others will be promoted and celebrated through various lessons. Opportunities to extend friendship groups and interactive skills will be provided through participation in special events, e.g. drama productions, sporting activities and cultural groups.

Seating plans will be organised and altered in a way that prevents instances of bullying. Potential victims of bullying will be placed in working groups with other pupils who do not abuse or take advantage of others.

A safe place, supervised by a teacher, will be available for pupils to go to during free time if they feel threatened or wish to be alone. The teacher supervising the area will speak to pupils to find out the cause of any problems and, ultimately, stop any form of bullying taking place.

Pupils deemed vulnerable will meet with their form tutor on a **monthly** basis, where appropriate, to ensure any problems can be actioned quickly. Form tutors will also offer an 'open door' policy allowing pupils to discuss any bullying, whether they are victims or have witnessed an incident.

Before a new pupil joins the school, particularly when this happens in-year, the pupil's form tutor and the DSL will implement a strategy to prevent bullying from happening – this will include a buddy scheme. Where a new pupil is deemed vulnerable, this strategy may involve further observation or intervention on the part of the DSL.

The school will be alert to, and address, any mental health and wellbeing issues amongst pupils, as these can be a cause, or a result, of bullying behaviour.

The school will ensure potential perpetrators are given support as required, so their educational, emotional and social development is not negatively influenced by outside factors, e.g. mental health issues.

Technical controls: We meet the DfE Filtering and monitoring: core standard and complete an annual review each September, with termly checks jointly by the DSL and IT lead/provider. Actions are recorded.

7. Signs of bullying

Staff will be alert to the following signs that may indicate a pupil is a victim of bullying:

- Being frightened to travel to or from school.
- Unwillingness to attend school.
- Repeated or persistent absence from school.
- Becoming anxious or lacking confidence.
- Saying that they feel ill repeatedly.

- Decreased involvement in schoolwork.
- Leaving school with torn clothes or damaged possessions.
- Missing possessions.
- Missing dinner money.
- Asking for extra money or stealing.
- Cuts or bruises.
- Lack of appetite.
- Unwillingness to use the internet or mobile devices.
- Lack of eye contact.
- Becoming short-tempered.
- Change in behaviour and attitude at home.

Although the signs outlined above may not be due to bullying, they may be due to deeper social, emotional or mental health issues, so are still worth investigating. Pupils who display a significant number of these signs will be approached by a member of staff to determine the underlying issues causing this behaviour.

Staff will be aware of the potential factors that may indicate a pupil is likely to exhibit bullying behaviours, including, but not limited to, the following:

- They have experienced mental health problems, which have led to them becoming more easily aggravated.
- They have been the victim of abuse.
- Their academic performance has started to fall and they are showing signs of stress.

If staff become aware of any factors that could lead to bullying behaviours, they will notify the pupil's form tutor, who will investigate the matter and monitor the situation.

8. Staff principles

The school will ensure that prevention is a prominent aspect of its anti-bullying vision.

Staff will treat reports of bullying seriously and will not ignore signs of suspected bullying. Staff will act immediately when they become aware of a bullying incident. Unpleasantness from one pupil towards another will always be challenged and will never be ignored.

Staff will always respect pupils' privacy, and information about specific instances of bullying is not discussed with others, unless the pupil has given consent, or there is a safeguarding concern. If a member of staff believes a pupil is in danger, e.g. of being hurt, they will inform the DSL immediately.

Follow-up support will be given to both the victim and perpetrator in the months following an incident to ensure all bullying has stopped.

Staff complete 'cause for concern' records on BehaviourWatch the same day.

9. Child-on-child abuse

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of child-on-child abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence.

To prevent child-on-child abuse and address the wider societal factors that can influence behaviour, the school will educate pupils about abuse, its forms, and the importance of discussing any concerns and respecting others through the curriculum, assemblies and PSHE lessons, in line with the Prevention section of this policy.

All staff will:

- Be aware that pupils of any age and gender are capable of abusing their peers.
- Be aware that abuse can occur inside and outside of school settings.
- Be aware of the scale of harassment or abuse, and that just because it is not being reported does not mean it is not happening.
- Take all instances of child-on-child abuse equally seriously regardless of the characteristics of the perpetrators or victims.
- Never tolerate abuse as "banter" or "part of growing up", and will never justify sexual harassment, e.g. as "boys being boys", as this can foster a culture of unacceptable behaviours and one that risks normalising abuse.
- Be aware that child-on-child abuse can be manifested in many ways, including sexting, sexual harassment and assault, and hazing or initiation-type violence.
- Always challenge any harmful physical behaviour that is sexual in nature, such as inappropriate touching. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

Sexual harassment in particular can take many forms, including but not limited to:

- Telling sexual stories, making sexual remarks, or calling someone sexualised names.
- Sexual "jokes" or taunting.
- Deliberately brushing against someone.
- Displaying images or video of a sexual nature.
- Upskirting (this is a criminal offence).
- Online sexual harassment, e.g. creating or sharing sexual imagery, sexual comments on social media, or sexual coercion or threats.

Pupils will be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled – this includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers. If a pupil has been harmed, is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral may be made to children's social care services (CSC) and potentially the police, where the DSL deems this appropriate in the circumstances.

All staff will be aware and sensitive towards the fact that pupils may not be ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused. Pupils being abused may feel embarrassed, humiliated, scared, or threatened.

The school's **Child-on-child Abuse Policy** outlines the school's stance on addressing child-on-child abuse, including sexual abuse, and the procedures in place will be adhered to if any instances are uncovered or disclosed. More information on the school's approach to preventing and managing instances of child-on-child abuse can be found within this policy and the **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**.

Risk assessment & safety planning

Where a reported incident indicates a safeguarding or safety risk, the DSL will consider whether a written risk assessment and/or safety plan is required. This will not be delayed pending the conclusion of an investigation where interim measures are necessary to protect a pupil. Any plan will consider supervision, seating and timetables, contact arrangements, online controls and review dates, as appropriate.

10. Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying can take many forms and can go even further than face-to-face bullying by invading personal space and home life, and can target more than one person. It can also take place across age groups and target pupils, staff and others, and may take place inside school, within the wider community, at home or when travelling. It can sometimes draw bystanders into being accessories.

Cyberbullying can include the following:

- Threatening, intimidating or upsetting text messages.
- Threatening or embarrassing pictures and video clips.
- Disclosure of private sexual photographs or videos with the intent to cause distress.
- Silent or abusive phone calls.
- Using the victim's phone to harass others, to make them think the victim is responsible.
- Threatening or bullying emails, possibly sent using a pseudonym or someone else's name.
- Menacing or upsetting responses to someone in a chatroom.
- Unpleasant messages sent via instant messaging.
- Unpleasant or defamatory information posted to blogs, personal websites and social networking sites, e.g. Facebook.

NB. The above list is not exhaustive, and cyberbullying may take other forms.

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to cyberbullying. The school views cyberbullying with the same severity as any other form of bullying and will follow the sanctions set out in section 12 this policy if they become aware of any incidents.

All members of staff will receive training on an **annual** basis on the signs of cyberbullying, in order to identify pupils who may be experiencing issues and intervene effectively.

Annual training includes platform reporting mechanisms, evidence preservation (e.g., screenshots, URLs, timestamps), and when to involve police.

Many of the signs of cyberbullying will be similar to those found in the 'Signs of bullying' section of this policy; however, staff will be alert to the following signs that may indicate a pupil is being cyberbullied:

- Avoiding use of the computer.
- Being on their phone routinely.
- Becoming agitated when receiving calls or text messages.

Staff will also be alert to the following signs which may indicate that a pupil is cyberbullying others:

- Avoiding using the computer or turning off the screen when someone is near.
- Acting in a secretive manner when using the computer or mobile phone.
- Spending excessive amounts of time on the computer or mobile phone.
- Becoming upset or angry when the computer or mobile phone is taken away.

Parents will also be invited to attend **annual** training sessions in order to educate them on the signs and symptoms of cyberbullying and will be advised to report to the headteacher if their child displays any of the signs outlined in this section.

All learning at home will follow procedures outlined in the **Remote Education Policy**. During times when remote education is being utilised, the school will frequently be in contact with parents to make them aware of their activities online, but also to reinforce the importance of pupils staying safe online and explaining how filtering and monitoring procedures work.

Staff will be aware that a cyberbullying incident might include features different to other forms of bullying, prompting a particular response. Significant differences may include the following:

- **Possible extensive scale and scope** – pupils may be bullied on multiple platforms and using multiple different methods that are made possible by virtue of the bullying taking place online.
- **The anytime and anywhere nature of cyberbullying** – pupils may not have an escape from the torment when they are at home due to the bullying continuing through technology at all times.
- **The person being bullied might not know who the perpetrator is** – it is easy for individuals to remain anonymous online and on social media, and pupils may be bullied by someone who is concealing their own identity.
- **The perpetrator might not realise that their actions are bullying** – sometimes, the culture of social media, and the inability to see the impact that words are having on someone, may lead to pupils crossing boundaries without realising.
- **The victim of the bullying may have evidence of what has happened** – pupils may have taken screenshots of bullying, or there may be a digital footprint that can identify the perpetrator.

Staff and pupils will be instructed not to respond or retaliate to cyberbullying incidents. Evidence of the incident should be recorded, e.g. taking screenshots. Staff will report incidents to their line manager or the headteacher for the incident to be investigated and support to be provided. Pupils will report incidents to a trusted member of staff.

Where offensive content is posted online targeting a staff member or pupil, the person targeted will be encouraged to use the reporting mechanism on the website or social media platform to request its removal. Where the person who has posted it is known to the school, the headteacher will request they remove it directly.

The school will support pupils who have been victims of cyberbullying by holding formal and informal discussions with the pupil about their feelings and whether the bullying has stopped, in accordance with section 13 and section 14 of this policy.

Any search/examination/deletion of content on a device will follow DfE ‘Searching, screening and confiscation’ (July 2022); parents and police are involved in line with that guidance.

11. Procedures

Minor incidents will be reported to the victim's form tutor, who will investigate the incident, set appropriate sanctions for the perpetrator, and inform the Key-Stage Lead in writing of the incident and outcome.

When investigating a bullying incident, the following procedures will be adopted:

- The victim, alleged perpetrator and witnesses are all interviewed separately.
- Members of staff ensure that there is no possibility of contact between the pupils being interviewed, including electronic communication.
- If a pupil is injured, members of staff take the pupil immediately to the first-aid room for a medical opinion on the extent of their injuries, from a first-aider.
- A room is used that allows for privacy during interviews.
- A witness is used for serious incidents.
- If appropriate, the alleged perpetrator, the victim and witnesses are asked to write down details of the incident; this may need prompting with questions from the member of staff to obtain the full picture.
- The headteacher will gather evidence of a cyberbullying incident; this may involve text messages, emails, photos, etc. provided by the victim.
- Premature assumptions are not made, as it is important not to be judgemental at this stage.
- Members of staff listen carefully to all accounts, being non-confrontational and not assigning blame until the investigation is complete.
- All pupils involved are informed that they must not discuss the interview with other pupils.

Where digital evidence is relevant, staff: (i) secure evidence (e.g., screenshots, export chat logs/URLs), (ii) avoid unnecessary copying, (iii) follow the Searching, screening and confiscation guidance, and (iv) consult the DSL regarding police referral criteria.

Due to the potential for some specific forms of bullying to be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviour, staff members involved in dealing with the incident are required to consider whether there is a need for safeguarding processes to be implemented.

The DSL completes risk assessments/safety plans where indicated and schedules review dates.

12. Sanctions

If the headteacher is satisfied that bullying did take place, the perpetrator will be helped to understand the consequences of their actions and warned that there must be no further incidents. The headteacher will inform the perpetrator of the type of sanction to be used in this instance, e.g. detentions or service-based activities, and future sanctions if the bullying continues.

If possible, the headteacher will attempt reconciliation and will obtain an apology from the perpetrator. This will either be in writing to the victim, and/or witnesses if appropriate, or face-to-face, but only with the victim's full consent. Discretion will be used here; victims will never feel pressured into a face-to-face meeting with the perpetrator.

Parents are informed of bullying incidents and what action is being taken.

All staff involved in managing instances of bullying will be aware that taking disciplinary action and providing support are not mutually exclusive actions, and should be conducted simultaneously to encourage more positive behaviour in future.

The school where appropriate will avoid unnecessarily criminalising pupils for bullying or abusive behaviour where possible, as young people with criminal records face stigma and discrimination in future aspects of their lives. The school's focus when handling perpetrators will be supporting them to develop more positive behaviours and to refrain from abusive and bullying behaviours in the future.

The headteacher will informally monitor the pupils involved over the next half-term.

The school will remain cognisant of the fact that continued access to school can be important for rehabilitation of harmful behaviour, and will not exclude pupils unless as a last resort – where there have been serious or consistent incidents of bullying, the school will act in line with the **Suspension and Exclusion Policy.**

Sanctions are proportionate, recorded, and communicated to parents/carers.

13. Support

In the event of bullying, victims will be offered the following support:

- Emotional support and reassurance from pastoral support or external therapeutic support.
- Reassurance that it was right to report the incident and that appropriate action will be taken.
- Liaison with their parents to ensure a continuous dialogue of support.
- Advice not to retaliate or reply, but to keep the evidence and show or give it to their parent or a member of staff.
- Advice on aspects of online safety, in the event of cyberbullying, to prevent recurrence, including, where appropriate, discussion with their parents to evaluate their online habits and age-appropriate advice on how the perpetrator might be blocked online.
- Discussion with their parent on whether police action is required (except in serious cases of child exploitation or abuse where the police may be contacted without discussion with parents).

The headteacher will carefully consider in each instance of bullying that is handled whether it is appropriate to split up the victim(s) and perpetrator(s), e.g. preventing them sharing classes or spaces where possible, and will split up other harmful group dynamics to prevent further occurrences where necessary. Victims will be encouraged to broaden their friendship groups by joining lunchtime or after-school clubs or activities.

Staff, particularly the DSL, will work with the victim to build resilience, e.g. by offering therapeutic support.

The school will acknowledge that bullying may be an indication of underlying mental health issues. Perpetrators will be required to attend a mandatory counselling session to assist with

any underlying mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. The school will work with the perpetrator regarding any underlying mental health or emotional wellbeing problems.

Support plans note who the pupil can go to, preferred spaces, and check-in frequency.

14. Follow-up support

The DSL and form tutor monitor progress; one-to-one check-ins continue until the victim and DSL are confident the bullying has stopped.

Pupils who have been bullied will be offered continuous support. The DSL will hold a formal meeting on a monthly basis to check whether the bullying has stopped – these formal meetings will continue to take place **once a month** until the DSL and pupil are confident the bullying has stopped. The victim will be encouraged to tell a trusted adult in school if bullying is repeated.

Pupils who have bullied others will be supported in the following ways:

- Receiving a consequence for their actions.
- Being able to discuss what happened.
- Being helped to reflect on why they became involved.
- Being helped to understand what they did wrong and why they need to change their behaviour.
- Appropriate assistance from parents.

Pupils who have been bullied will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and the DSL will, if necessary, refer the victim of bullying to CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service).

In cases where the effects of bullying are so severe that the pupil cannot successfully reintegrate back into the school, the headteacher and DSL will look to transfer the pupil to another mainstream school with the consent and involvement of the pupil's parents.

Where a pupil who has been the victim of bullying has developed such complex needs that alternative provision is required, the pupil, their parents, the headteacher and DSL will meet to discuss the use of alternative provision.

Where patterns persist or re-emerge, the DSL escalates to the Directors with an action plan.

15. Bullying outside of school

Staff will remain aware that bullying can happen both in and outside of school, and will ensure that they understand how to respond to reports of bullying that occurred outside school in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the Child-on-child Abuse Policy.

The school may respond to bullying or other misconduct occurring outside the school premises where there is a clear connection to the school, its pupils or the welfare of members of the school community. This may include incidents occurring during journeys to or from school, online, in the local community, or where behaviour outside school affects the safety, wellbeing or education of pupils within school.

Any action taken will be reasonable, proportionate and consistent with the school's Behaviour Policy, safeguarding responsibilities and the Independent School Standards. Where the pupil is participating in a school-organised activity, educational visit or otherwise under the lawful supervision of school staff, the school's normal behaviour expectations continue to apply.

The headteacher is responsible for determining whether it is appropriate to notify the police of the action taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be of a criminal nature or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will be informed.

16. Record-keeping

The DSL ensures robust records of all incidents, decisions, sanctions, support and reviews; records are retained in line with our retention schedule.

The headteacher and DSL will ensure that all decisions and actions recorded are reviewed on a regular basis for the purposes of:

- Identifying patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour on the part of certain pupils that may need to be handled, e.g. with pastoral support.
- Reflecting on whether cases could have been handled better and using these reflections to inform future practice.
- Considering whether there are wider cultural issues at play within the school, e.g. whether school culture facilitates discriminatory bullying by not adequately addressing instances, and planning to mitigate this.
- Considering whether prevention strategies could be strengthened based on any patterns in the cases that arise.
- Responding to any complaints about how cases have been handled.

17. Monitoring and review

This policy is formally reviewed every two years by the headteacher and DSL, with an annual September check to update statutory references (e.g., KCSIE) and technical standards.

The scheduled review date for this policy is October 2028.

The policy will also be reviewed earlier where there is a significant change in legislation or statutory guidance, following a serious or recurring bullying incident, where monitoring identifies an emerging pattern, or where inspection or safeguarding learning indicates that amendment is required.

The implementation of this policy will be monitored with regard to the Independent School Standards and the current Ofsted Non-association Independent Schools Inspection Toolkit and operating guidance. The school will be able to demonstrate how bullying, harassment and discriminatory or prejudiced behaviour are identified, recorded, addressed and evaluated over time, including the experiences of pupils with SEND.