Anti-Bullying Policy

Heath Mount School, Hertfordshire

Independent Day and Boarding School for Boys and Girls

December 2021

1   **Policy statement**

1.1   This policy applies to all pupils at Heath Mount School ('the School') irrespective of their age and whether or not a pupil is in the care of the School when / if the bullying behaviour occurs.

1.2   This policy has been authorised by the Governors and is addressed to all members of staff and volunteers. It is a whole school policy, including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision. It is available to staff via the policy file on the staff server and in hard copy in the staff rooms. It is also available on the School's website and on request from the School Office. This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.

2   **Scope**

2.1   This policy applies to all pupils at the School and at all times when a pupil is:

2.1.1   In or at School;

2.1.2   Wearing School uniform or representing the School;

2.1.3   Travelling to or from the School;

2.1.4   On School associated trips; or

2.1.5   Associated with the School at any time.

2.1.6   In the care of the School or not and the School becomes aware of an incident of bullying.

2.2   This policy shall also apply in circumstances where failing to apply the policy may:

2.2.1   Impact the health, safety or wellbeing of a member of the School community or a member of the public;

2.2.2   Impact the orderly running of the School;

2.2.3   Bring the School into disrepute.

3   **Regulatory Framework:**

3.1   This policy has been drawn up with assistance from guidance issued by the Department for Education (DfE), *Preventing and tackling bullying* (July 2017) and will be reviewed against any new government advice issued from time to time. Further, this Policy also has regard to the following:

3.1.1   Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2021);

3.1.2   Working together to safeguard children 2018 (DfE, updated December 2020);

3.1.3   Information Sharing Advice for Safeguarding practitioners (DfE, July 2018);

3.1.4   Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance (DfE, June 2019);

3.1.5   Advice and Guidance: how Can we Stop Prejudice based Bullying in Schools (Equality and Human Rights Commission);

3.1.6   Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools and Colleges (September 2021);

3.1.7   Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people (DCMS and UKIS, December 2020).

3.2   **Additional advisory materials for parents and staff:** The DfE also from time to time publishes additional advisory material. These can be found at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying and currently include:

3.2.1   *Cyber Bullying: Advice for Head teachers and School Staff;*

3.2.2   *Advice for Parents and Carers on Cyber Bullying.*

3.3   There are also a wealth of websites and social media feeds which are a rich and regularly updated source of advice which we pass on to pupils and parents. The following websites provide a useful and regularly updated source of information and advice:

3.3.1   Changing Faces;

3.3.2   Stonewall / Acceptance without exception;

3.3.3   Show Racism the Red Card;

3.3.4   Anne Frank Trust;

3.3.5   Thinkuknow;

3.3.6   Childnet International;

3.3.7   Digizen;

3.3.8   Equality and Human Rights commission: Advice and Guidance: how can we stop prejudice-based bullying in Schools.

4   **Aims**

4.1   The expectation at the School is that people will at all times behave in an appropriate, fair and friendly manner towards each other, in accordance with the School's central principles. Through the operation of this policy we aim:

4.1.1   To actively promote and safeguard the welfare of pupils at the School, creating a safe and secure environment whereby all pupils can learn and thrive free from fear and anxiety;

4.1.2   To maintain and drive a positive and supportive culture among all pupils and staff throughout the School, developing an ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable;

4.1.3   To deter bullying behaviour, detect it when it occurs, and deal with it promptly and on a case-by-case basis using disciplinary sanctions. Where possible, those demonstrating bullying behaviour of any sort will be supported in learning different ways of behaving;

4.1.4   To promote a consistent response to any bullying incident that may occur and;

4.1.5   To help to promote a whole-school culture of openness, safety , equality and protection from all forms of harm and abuse to comply with the School's duties under the Equality Act 2010.

4.2   This policy forms part of the School's whole-school approach to promoting child safeguarding and wellbeing, which seeks to ensure that the best interests of pupils underpins and is at the heart of all decisions, systems, processes and policies.

5   **Bullying**

5.1   Bullying is not confined to any particular sex, age, ethnicity or occupation. In UK schools, bullying is thought to affect many thousands of pupils. Bullying can cause severe unhappiness, psychological damage and even suicide.

5.2   Bullying behaviour is always unacceptable and will not be dismissed as being normal between young people, as "banter", 'boys will be boys' or simply "part of growing up". No-one deserves to be the victim of bullying and everyone deserves to be treated with respect. Pupils who are the victims of bullying will be supported. Bullying will not be tolerated at the School because:

        5.2.1   it is harmful to the person who is bullied, to those who engage in bullying behaviour, and those who support them. It can be a barrier to learning and, in some cases, can lead to lasting psychological damage, depression and even suicide;

        5.2.2   it interferes with a pupil's right to enjoy his / her learning and leisure time free from intimidation;

        5.2.3   it is contrary to all the School's aims and values, our internal culture and the reputation of the School.

5.3   The School aims to make all those connected with the School aware of its policy on and opposition towards bullying, making clear each person's responsibilities regarding the prevention of bulling in School.

5.4   This policy will apply to bullying behaviour outside of the School of which the School becomes aware.

6   **Bullying behaviour**

6.1   Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group that:

        6.1.1   intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally;

        6.1.2   Is repeated over time; and

        6.1.3   There is an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim, whether that be a physical, psychological or intellectual imbalance, or by the perpetrator having the capacity to socially isolate the victim. This means it is hard for those being bullied to defend themselves.

6.2   Bullying is behaviour which harasses, humiliates, intimidates or oppresses other people. It can take the form of abuse towards a person or property, verbal criticism, teasing, taunting, psychological pressure or sexual harassment. Although sometimes occurring between two individuals in isolation, it quite often takes place in the presence of others. Bullying can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone, or actions that fall short of direct participation, for example, where someone encourages others to bully, or joins in with laughing at a victim. It is often hidden or subtle but can also be overt and intimidating. Bullying can be motivated by actual differences between children or perceived differences.

6.3 Bullying may be:

6.3.1 **Physical**: hitting, kicking, pushing people around, spitting; taking, damaging or hiding possessions; setting someone else up so that they get the blame for a breach of School rules.

6.3.2 **Verbal**: name-calling, taunting, teasing, insulting, harassment or demanding money;

6.3.3 **Non**-**verbal abuse**: hand signs or text messages (see also cyberbullying below);

6.3.4 **Emotional Abuse**: manipulating or controlling someone, making silent, hoax or abusive calls;

6.3.5 **Exclusionary Behaviour**: intimidating, isolating or excluding a person from a group, activity or place;

6.3.6 **General Unkindness**: spreading rumours or writing unkind notes, offensive graffiti, gossiping, mobile phone texts, calls or emails;

6.3.7 **Initiation / hazing type behaviour**: rituals which may include but is not limited to activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating someone into a group;

6.3.8 **Low level disruptive behaviour**: 'banter' or 'horseplay' over a prolonged period of time;

6.3.9 **Cyberbullying:** bullying that takes place using technology (see paragraph 6.5 below);

6.3.10 **Prejudice-based bullying**: bullying that is motivated by actual or perceived differences between children, e.g.: where a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities;

6.3.11 **Harmful Sexual Behaviours**: includes sexual harassment and sexual violence:

(a) sexual comments, such as telling sexual stories. Making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;

(b) Sexual jokes or taunting;

(c) Physical behaviour, e.g.: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with their clothes, displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature;

(d) Online sexual harassment which may include: non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos (sharing nudes or semi-nudes images and videos; otherwise known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery); inappropriate sexual comments on social media; exploitation; coercion and threats and upskirting. Incidents of sexual harassment will be investigated to ensure they are not part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and / or sexual violence;

(e) Sexual violence: sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. Specifically, rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault and causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent.

6.3.12 Discrimination-based bullying may also be:

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(a)   sexist: related to a person's gender or gender reassignment;

(b)   racist, or regarding someone's religion, belief or culture;

(c)   related to a person's sexual orientation (homophobic bullying);

(d)   related to a person's age;

(e)   related to pregnancy and maternity;

(f)   related to a person's home circumstances;

(g)   related to a person's disability, special educational needs, learning difficulty, health or appearance;

(h)   related to a person's intellectual or other abilities.

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6.4   Racial, sexual, transphobic or homophobic bullying and bullying someone because they have a disability are also hate crimes.

6.5   **Cyberbullying**: Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using technology. This may include bullying through the use of mobile electronic devices, social media or gaming sites. An incident of cyberbullying will be dealt with in accordance with the procedures in this policy. See the Appendix 1 to this policy for guidance for pupils about cyberbullying. The School's separate Acceptable Use Policy for pupils sets out the School rules about the use of technology including mobile electronic devices. The School limits both the provision and availability of IT hardware and the use of electronic devices by pupils in order to safeguard the School community. Staff are vigilant around the School.

6.6   **Intention**: Not all bullying is deliberate or intended to hurt. Some individuals may see their hurtful conduct as "teasing" or "a game" or "for the good of" the other person. These forms of bullying are equally unacceptable but may not be malicious and can often be corrected quickly with advice and without disciplinary sanctions. However, if left unchallenged or dismissed, they can have a wearing and significant impact on the individuals exposed to such behaviour and may lead to a culture of failing to report. This is not a culture the School adopts.

6.7   **Responsibility**: It is everyone's responsibility to ensure, whatever the circumstances, that no-one becomes a victim of bullying. A person may be vulnerable to bullying because of his / her age, physical appearance, nationality, colour, gender, sexual orientation, religion, culture or disability, or because he / she is new in the School, appears to be uncertain or has no friends. He / she may also become a target because of an irrational decision by a bully.

6.8   Bullying causes fear and distress for the victim and may also distract from their schoolwork. It often affects other children who witness the bullying. It may damage the atmosphere of a class or even of the school.

6.9   **Legal aspects**: A person who makes a physical or sexual assault on another, or who steals or causes damage to the property of another, commits a criminal offence. Bullying behaviour may also be regarded as threatening behaviour or harassment which can be either a criminal offence or a civil wrong, for both of which there can be leal consequences outside of the school. Certain acts of voyeurism e.g.: upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing parts of their body or clothing not otherwise visible to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm, are criminal offences Misuse of electronic communications could also be a criminal offence, for example it is an offence to send an electronic communication (such as a text message or email) to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety.

7   **Safeguarding and peer on peer abuse**

7.1   Bullying behaviour is closely connected with pupil wellbeing and therefore may be of such a nature that a safeguarding response is required. Bullying demonstrates a lack of respect for others which can overlap with abusive and harassing behaviour. This in turn can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children. All of this informs the school's zero-tolerance approach, and it is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers that are actually abusive in nature.

7.2   Peer on peer abuse can occur both inside and outside of the School and may not be reported. A one size fits all approach is not appropriate for all pupils. Instead, a contextualised approach is needed for more vulnerable pupils, victims of abuse and pupils with special educational needs and disabilities. Certain behaviours, for example, dismissing sexual harassment as 'just banter', or 'just having a laugh', 'part of growing up' or 'boys will be boys' can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and create an unsafe environment for pupils. In worst case scenarios, dismissing sexual harassment can lead to a culture that normalises abuse and pupils accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

7.3   Technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Pupils are at risk of abuse online as well as face-to-face. This can take the form of abusive, harassing and misogynistic messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, particularly around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography.

7.4   In line with the School's aims and culture of openness and encouragement to report, the School policy and procedures with regard to peer-on-peer abuse are set out in the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.   Concerns about a pupil's welfare because they are the perpetrator or victim of bullying behaviour must be reported in accordance with the Child protection and Safeguarding Policy and procedures and appropriate action taken, taking into account Hertfordshire's Safeguarding Children Board's threshold document. The School will always treat a bullying incident as giving rise to a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

8   **Signs of Bullying:** this is not an exhaustive list. Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is being bullied include:

8.1   An unwillingness to attend school;

8.2   Excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet;

8.3   Failure to produce work, producing unusually poor work or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others;

8.4   Books, bags, money and other belongings suddenly going 'missing' or are damaged;

8.5   Changes to usual routines, for example, wishing to give up certain activities;

8.6   Diminished levels of self-confidence;

8.7   Frequent visits to the Medical Centre with symptoms which may relate to stress or anxiety, for example, stomach pains or headaches;

8.8   Unexplained cuts and bruises;

8.9   Frequent absence, erratic attendance or late arrival to class;

8.10   Choosing the company of adults rather than peers;

8.11   Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact;

8.12   Reported difficulty sleeping and indications of low-mood.

9   **Anti-bullying culture and systems**

9.1   The School's response to bullying does not start at the point at which a pupil has been bullied. Our expectation of all members of the School community is that they will create an environment that prevents bullying from becoming a problem in the first place. This is achieved by:

   9.1.1   everyone upholding the School rules;

   9.1.2   Pupils, members of staff or volunteer who witness or hear of an incident of bullying, reporting it;

   9.1.3   Complaints of bullying always being taken seriously;

   9.1.4   Not tolerating unkind actions or remarks or standing by when someone else is being bullied.

9.2   In School and in every year group:

   9.2.1   discriminatory words and behaviour are treated as unacceptable;

   9.2.2   positive attitudes are fostered towards people who are disabled and towards ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic groups within and outside the School; and

   9.2.3   positive attitudes are fostered towards gender and sexuality differences through the curriculum and tutorials.

   9.2.4   Happiness surveys are completed every term, the results of which can highlight pupils who may be experiencing difficulties, including bullying.

9.3   The School recognises that children with Special Educational Needs and / or disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. This can include the possibility of suffering a disproportionate impact from behaviours such as bullying, without necessarily showing any signs of this impact. The School will provide extra pastoral support for such pupils as required.

9.4   **Governing Body:** The Governing Body, as proprietor, has overall responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of pupils at the School, ensuring that those in leadership and management positions actively promote pupil well-being. This includes ensuring that policies and procedures are in place that reflect the values of the School and that these are implemented effectively to:

   9.4.1   minimise the risk of bullying at the School so that pupils feel safe and secure;

   9.4.2   intervene early in instances of low-level disruption to prevent negative behaviours from escalating;

   9.4.3   deal swiftly with allegations of bullying at the School so that pupils feel confident that all incidents will be dealt with appropriately;

   9.4.4   Although less likely given the age of the School's pupils, nevertheless; consider any incident of sexual harassment in broad terms so that it can be challenged to prevent the normalisation of behaviours which can provide an environment that may lead to sexual violence.

9.5   **Staff and volunteers**: Through their training and experience, members of staff and volunteers are expected to promote an anti-bullying culture by:

9.5.1 Upholding the School rules and values;

9.5.2 Reporting any incidence of bullying in accordance with the terms of this and related policies;

9.5.3 Ensuring that complaints of bullying are always taken seriously;

9.5.4 Ensuring that no-one will tolerate unkind actions or remarks or stand by when someone is being bullied;

9.5.5 Valuing one another and treating each other with respect and sensitivity;

9.5.6 Celebrating achievement;

9.5.7 Anticipating problems and providing support;

9.5.8 Thinking carefully before speaking / acting in a certain way which may cause argument, distress or embarrassment;

9.5.9 Appreciating what may seem fun to some, particularly a group, may be much more threatening to others, particularly an individual.

9.5.10 Respecting differences (of origin, appearance, personality), protecting and supporting those who are unhappy or vulnerable and keeping in mind that everyone has rights and duties;

9.5.11 disciplining fairly, consistently and reasonably, taking into account any special educational needs or disabilities of the pupil and the needs of vulnerable pupils;

9.5.12 making opportunities to listen to pupils;

9.5.13 acting as advocates of pupils;

9.5.14 Working together to create a school in which people live harmoniously.

9.6 All of the above apply to interaction in person or in cyberspace, via the use of any form of technology.

9.7 It is everyone's responsibility to ensure, whatever the circumstances, that no-one becomes a victim of bullying. A person may be vulnerable to bullying because of their age, physical appearance, nationality, colour, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief, culture or learning difficulty, disability, home circumstances or because they are new in the School, appears to be uncertain or has no friends.

9.8 **Pupils**

9.8.1 In every year group:

(a) Discriminatory and offensive words and behaviour are treated as unacceptable;

(b) Positive attitudes are fostered towards people with any protected characteristics, including those who are disabled and towards ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic groups both within and outside of school; and

(c) Positive attitudes are fostered towards gender and sexuality differences towards gender and sexuality differences through the curriculum and tutorials.

9.8.2 Through the School's pastoral care systems, all pupils from nursery upwards are informed and taught that bullying will not be tolerated in the School. The message is reinforced via form-time, PSHEE and assemblies. Our PSHEE programme is structured to give pupils an awareness of their social and moral responsibilities as they progress through the School. The programme is structured in such a way as to reinforce messages about community involvement and taking care of each other. It includes a focus on equality and diversity and the importance of avoiding prejudicial language. Other lessons highlight the issue of bullying and reinforce this message by developing social skills and teaching moral and spiritual values that show that bullying is unacceptable. All pupils, including boarders, know how to report anxieties to a member of staff, their House Parents or the School's Independent Listener. They are encouraged:

9.8.3 To treat each other with respect at all times, inside and outside of school;

9.8.4 to celebrate the effort and achievements of others;

9.8.5 to hold and promote positive attitudes;

9.8.6 to feel able to share problems with staff and know that those who report bullying in good faith will not be punished and will be supported;

9.8.7 to turn to someone they trust, if they have a problem;

9.8.8 to be kind, considerate and tolerant towards others;

9.8.9 to be aware of the impact their behaviour can have on others;

9.8.10 to challenge their peers if they are unkind to others;

9.8.11 to use technology safely and securely and to be aware of the risks and impact of the use of technology on themselves and others.

9.9 **Parents:** The School will take active measures to promote an anti-bullying culture and reinforce the message that bullying will not be tolerated in the School. This is achieved through:

9.9.1 Making parents aware of the School's policy so that they are clear on what to do if their child experiences bullying and the part they can play to prevent bullying;

9.9.2 school communications and talks.

9.10 **Why incidents might not be reported**

9.10.1 **Victim**: There are many reasons why a pupil who has suffered bullying may be reluctant to report it. He / she may become demoralised and may think, for example:

(a) it is telling tales;

(b) they won't believe me because the person I am complaining about is popular and I am not, and I will become even more unpopular;

(c) the things they are saying and doing are too embarrassing to discuss with an adult;

(d) it is all my fault anyway for being overweight / too studious etc;

(e) there are too many of them; there is nothing the staff can do;

(f) it will get back to my parents and they will think less of me;

(g)   I will just try and toughen up and grow a thicker skin;

(h)   I will lie low and not draw attention to myself;

(i)   this is a normal part of growing up and going to school.

9.10.2 **Witnesses**: There are also reasons why a pupil who has witnessed or learned of bullying behaviour may not want to make a report. He / she may think:

(a)   it is "grassing" and I will become unpopular;

(b)   it is not my concern anyway;

(c)   I don't like the victim and I would find it embarrassing to be associated with him / her.

9.11   Any of these responses would be contrary to the culture at and values of the School. When the School implements this policy it encourages every pupil (and their parents) to understand that:

9.11.1 every complaint of bullying will be taken seriously;

9.11.2 members of staff and volunteers will deal with a complaint correctly and effectively in accordance with their experience and the training they have received;

9.11.3 there is a solution to nearly every problem of bullying;

9.11.4 a pupil who complains will receive support and advice and in many cases the problem can be dealt with on a no-names basis;

9.11.5 the primary aim will be for the bullying to cease, not the punishment of the bully unless this is necessary;

9.11.6 the School may need to support the bully as well so we can address the causes of bullying behaviour.

10   **Anti-bullying systems**

10.1   The School's systems for detecting and dealing with bullying are designed to operate vertically (through all year groups) and horizontally (within year groups and in the classroom and other activities).

10.2   Members of staff and volunteers are vigilant at all times but particularly:

10.2.1 On arrival and departure from School;

10.2.2 before and after lessons;

10.2.3 in the queue for the dining hall and in the dining hall itself;

10.2.4 in School corridors and communal spaces;

10.2.5 on School transport / School trips;

10.2.6 in boarding houses.

10.3   **Education:** Measures are taken throughout each year to educate pupils about bullying and this policy. These measures include:

10.3.1 the PSHEE curriculum includes lessons on bullying;

10.3.2 anti-bullying posters placed around the School;

10.3.3 anti-bullying messages are given in assemblies;

10.3.4 once a year we participate in anti-bullying week;

10.3.5 Form Time discussions;

10.3.6 online safety is a key aspect of all areas of the curriculum. Parents are informed about online safety issues and the School's strategies to safeguard pupils through correspondence and annual events held by the School to raise awareness. See the School's Online Safety Policy for further information about the School's online safety strategy;

10.3.7 Adopting the 'Learning Powers Approach' throughout the School, particularly the emphasis on developing resilience and collaboration.

10.4 **Staff training:** Staff awareness is raised in whole staff and departmental meetings and strategies are put in place for action to be taken to reduce the risk of bullying at times and in places where it is most likely to occur. These meetings serve to feedback information from staff and parents, about friendship patterns, particular incidents, any pupil who appears to be isolated, any growing 'power base' and any known conflict between pupils, thereby allowing strategies to be developed and shared.

10.5 Appropriate training is provided for all staff, and particularly those in relevant roles, so that they have the necessary professional skills to identify the risk and indications of child abuse and bullying and to deal with cases or potential cases which are detected. In particular, the School aims to ensure that staff and volunteers are:

10.5.1 Aware of groups who may be more vulnerable to bullying and the School's responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010;

10.5.2 Aware of the risk and indications of bullying, and how to deal with cases or potential cases which are detected;

10.5.3 Counselling skills (including bereavement);

10.5.4 Aware of the risks of peer-on-peer abuse and how bullying behaviour may give rise to safeguarding concerns.

10.6 The level and frequency of staff training depends on the role of the individual member of staff. The School maintains records of all staff training.

10.7 **Pupils' responsibilities:** We emphasise with older pupils the role which is expected of them in setting a good example and being helpful to younger pupils and each other. The House 'Squadrons' enable the older pupils to have responsibility for supporting younger pupils in their squadron. All pupils know they can approach any older pupil in Year 7 and Year 8 (the 'blue jumpers'). Prefects are visible on various duties and pupils know they can approach them.

11 **Record keeping and monitoring**

11.1 School staff maintain records of the welfare and development of individual pupils. All records created in accordance with this policy are managed in accordance with the School's Records Management Policy and Procedures.

11.2 Records created in relation to this policy are managed in accordance with the School's Records Management Policy.

11.3 Records created in accordance with this policy may contain personal data. Please see the School website for the School's Parent Privacy notice which explains how the School will use the personal data of parents and pupils. In addition, staff must

ensure that they follow the School's data protection policies and procedures when handing personal data created in connection with this policy. This includes the data protection policy for staff and the guidance contained in the Staff Handbook.

11.4 Every complaint or report of bullying is recorded centrally and monitored to enable patterns to be identified, both in relation to individual pupils and across the school as a whole and to evaluate the effectiveness of the School's approach.

11.5 Unless a serious criminal offence is suspected, in the event of either a witnessed of reported instance of apparent bullying, the facts must be ascertained from the victim(s), alleged perpetrator(s) and / or witness(es) without delay. A record will be made of who was involved, what happened, when and where. This is then passed to the pupil's Form Teacher who will liaise with

12 Procedures

12.1 **Guidelines**: The following procedures are a guideline except where expressed in the terms "should" or "must". The best guide is the experience and training of the staff.

12.2 **Reporting bullying complaints**

12.2.1 **Pupils**: Pupils are encouraged to be open about concerns that they may have in respect of others' happiness. Any pupil who is being bullied, or who is worried about another pupil being bullied, should tell someone without delay and can do so in several ways. He / she can:

(a) tell his / her parents, Form Tutor, Houseparents or any member of staff or volunteer at the School or responsible older pupil;

(b) contact the Head; either in person or via the confidential 'worry box' in the Pre-Prep, Lower School and Main School Receptions;

(c) contact the School Counsellor either in person or via the confidential 'worry box' in the Lower School and Main School Receptions. For the younger pupils within the Pre-prep, the School Counsellor is regularly in the building as part of the PSHEE team, working with small groups of children. Referrals will come via that regular presence or from staff and / or parents.

(d) the Independent Listeners, whose details are published on School Noticeboards and in the Pupils' Planner, for advice;

(e) in focused PHSEE lessons addressing bullying-related issues;

(f) contact Childline.

12.2.2 **Parents**: Parents who are concerned that their child is being bullied should inform their child's Form Tutor without delay.

12.2.3 **Staff**: This policy focuses mainly on the bullying of pupils by pupils although it is recognised that a staff member could be a victim and on occasion may be perceived to be guilty of bullying. Staff members who are concerned about being bullied or harassed should refer to the School's Staff Handbook. Pupils and parents who feel that a member of staff is bullying should report this in accordance with the procedures set out above.

12.3 **Initial complaint**

12.3.1 Any member of staff or volunteer who learns of alleged bullying behaviour should:

(a) respond quickly and sensitively by offering advice, support and reassurance to the alleged victim. The member of staff should:

   (i) listen carefully and keep an open mind;

   (ii) not ask leading questions; and

   (iii) reassure the child but not give a guarantee of confidentiality;

(b) report the allegation to the pupil's Form Tutor as soon as possible.

12.3.2 The pupil's Form Teacher and Head of Year agree on a strategy for dealing with the matter in conjunction with the Deputy Head (Pastoral).

12.3.3 If the alleged bullying behaviour raises a safeguarding concern, the matter should be reported in accordance with the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures before further investigation is carried out.

12.4 Assessment

12.4.1 The pupil's Head of Year will normally see the victim and (unless the case is very serious) any witnesses without delay and form an initial view of the allegation. The assessment will consider:

(a) the nature of the incident(s) - physical? verbal? exclusionary? Etc.;

(b) is it a "one-off" incident involving an individual or a group?

(c) is it part of a pattern of behaviour by an individual or a group?

(d) has physical injury been caused? Who should be informed? Head? Parents? The School's Designated Safeguarding Lead? Children's Social Care? The police?

(e) can the alleged bully be questioned without disclosing the victim's identity?

(f) what is the likely outcome if the allegation proves to be correct?

12.4.2 At this stage, the possible outcomes for an incident which is not too serious include:

(a) there has been a misunderstanding which can be explained sympathetically to the alleged victim with advice to the *alleged bully; or*

(b) the complaint is justified in whole or in part, and further action will be needed (see Range of Actions, below).

12.5 Serious incidents

12.5.1 If at any stage the alleged bullying behaviour raises a safeguarding concern, the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures should be followed before further investigation is carried out.

12.5.2 Otherwise, in cases where the pupil's Form Tutor and Head of Year believe that serious bullying behaviour has occurred involving a pupil or has recurred after warnings have been given to the "bully", he / she will refer the matter to the Deputy Head (Pastoral). The Deputy Head (Pastoral) will then:

<div style="margin-left: 2em;">

(a) interview the alleged victim, bully and any witnesses separately, in order to establish the facts of the case. He / she may decide to ask another senior member of staff to be present; and

(b) send a summary of his / her findings to the Head and other relevant staff.

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12.5.3 Together with the Head, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) will decide on the action to be taken in accordance with the Range of Actions set out below.

12.5.4 The Head or the Deputy Head (Pastoral) will notify the parents of the victim and bully, giving them details of the case and the action being taken. Such action may include further investigation in accordance with the School's Behaviour and Discipline Policy and the Expulsion, Removal and Review Policy.

12.6 **Range of Actions**: When a complaint of bullying behaviour is upheld, the range of responses will include one or more of the following:

12.6.1 consideration as to whether the bullying incident should be addressed as a safeguarding concern and if so, the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures will be followed;

12.6.2 advice and support for the victim and, where appropriate, establishing a course of action to help the victim, including support from external services where appropriate;

12.6.3 advice and support to the bully in trying to change his / her behaviour. This may include clear instructions and a warning or final warning;

12.6.4 consideration of the motivation behind the bullying behaviour and whether external services should be used to tackle any underlying issues of the bully which contributed to the bullying behaviour. If these considerations give rise to safeguarding concerns relating to the bullying, the School's child protection procedures will be followed;

12.6.5 a supervised meeting between the bully and the victim to discuss their differences and the ways in which they may be able to avoid future conflict (only with the victim's express agreement);

12.6.6 a disciplinary sanction against the bully, in accordance with the School's Behaviour and Discipline Policy. In a very serious case or a case of persistent bullying, a pupil may be required to leave the School permanently in accordance with the School's Expulsion, Removal and Review Policy. Any disciplinary action will be applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, taking into account any special educational needs or disabilities and the needs of vulnerable pupils;

12.6.7 action to break up a "power base";

12.6.8 confiscation of mobile electronic devices, increased monitoring procedures or limiting access to the School's internet and email facilities if cyberbullying is found to have taken place (see also the School's Acceptable Use Policy for Pupils);

12.6.9 moving either the bully or victim to another form group after consultation with the pupil, his / her parents and the relevant staff;

12.6.10 involving Children's Social Care or the police;

12.6.11 notifying the parents of one or both pupils about the case and the action which has been taken;

12.6.12   such other action as may appear to the Head to be appropriate.

12.7 **Supporting those severely impacted by bullying:**

12.7.1 The School acknowledges that removing bullied pupils from school can make it difficult to reintegrate. However, in some circumstances, the consequence of being bullied may have had a severe impact on a pupil's social, emotional or mental health and may have impacted on a pupil's ability to learn. The School will do all that is reasonably possible to ensure bullied pupils continue to learn and maintain their educational progression by putting in place proportionate short-term alternative on-site provision where necessary.

12.7.2 If the pupil is considered to have significantly greater difficulty learning than the majority of those of the same age, because of the impact of bullying, the School will consider whether the pupil will benefit from being assessed for special educational needs.

12.7.3 For all incidents of bullying, whether isolated or occurring over a period of time, disciplinary sanctions will be applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, taking into account any special educational needs or disabilities of the pupil and the needs of vulnerable pupils. Sanctions may extend to a fixed term exclusion, removal, or in the most serious of cases, permanent exclusion. In the Pre-Prep, this could include time-out and reporting to the head of Pre-prep at regular intervals. Counselling may be maintained for both parties even after any sanction has been applied.

12.8 **Monitoring**: The position should be monitored for as long as necessary thereafter. Action may include:

12.8.1 sharing information with some or all colleagues and with those pupils who have day-today contact with certain pupils so that they may be alert to the need to monitor certain pupils closely; ongoing counselling and support;

12.8.2 vigilance;

12.8.3 mentioning the incident at meetings of staff;

12.8.4 reviewing vulnerable individuals and areas of the School;

12.8.5 liaison between Heads of Year, the outcome being recorded in the Bulling Register, maintained by the Deputy Head (Pastoral).

12.9 **Risk Assessment**

12.9.1 Where a concern about a pupil's welfare is identified, the risks to that pupil's welfare will be assessed and appropriate action will be taken to reduce the risk identified (see the School's risk Assessment for pupil Welfare Policy).

12.9.2 The format of the risk assessment may vary and may be included as part of the School's overall response ot a welfare issue, including the use of individual pupil welfare plans (such as behaviour, healthcare and education plans, as appropriate). Regardless of the form used, the approach taken by the School to promoting pupil welfare will be systematic and pupil focused.

12.9.3 The Heads of the different sections of the School have overall responsibility for ensuring that matters which affect pupil welfare are adequately risk assessed and for ensuring that the relevant findings are implemented, monitored and evaluated.

12.9.4 Day to day responsibility to carry out risk assessments under this policy is delegated to the Deputy Head (Pastoral).

13   **Record keeping**

13.1   The Deputy Head (Pastoral) will maintain a centralised record of all allegations or reports of bullying, including details of those involved and the action taken.

14   **Monitoring and review**

14.1   The Deputy Head (Pastoral) will monitor the centralised record of bullying incidents on a regular basis to identify patterns in behaviour and the effectiveness of the School's anti-bullying procedures.

14.2   The Deputy Head (Pastoral) will review and make revisions to this policy on an annual basis, or more regularly as required taking into account any advice published by the DfE together with the record of any bullying incidents.

14.3   The Board of Governors will consider the revisions made as part of its collective responsibility to carry out an annual review of safeguarding.

Governors' Committee normally reviewing:	Governance Committee
Effective from:	December 2021
Date last formally approved:	-
Date of next review:	December 2022
Person responsible for implementation and monitoring	Deputy Head, (Pastoral)
Related policies and procedures:	Child Protection and Safeguarding policy Behaviour and Discipline policy Safe & Acceptable Use of ICT Equal Opportunities Policy

Appendix 1   Cyberbullying: guidance for pupils

1   Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using technology.

2   Pupils should remember the following:

     2.1   Always respect others - be careful what you say online and what images you send.

     2.2   Think before you send - whatever you send can be made public very quickly and could stay online forever.

     2.3   If you or someone you know are being cyberbullied, TELL SOMEONE. You have the right not to be harassed or bullied online. Tell an adult you trust - your parents, any member of staff or volunteer, the School's independent listener or a helpline such as ChildLine on 0800 1111.

     2.4   Don't retaliate or reply online.

     2.5   Save the evidence - learn how to keep records of offending messages, pictures or online conversations. Ask someone if you are unsure how to do this. This will help to show what is happening and can be used by the School to investigate the matter.

     2.6   Block the bully. Most social media websites and online or mobile services allow you block someone who is behaving badly.

     2.7   Don't do nothing - if you see cyberbullying going on, support the victim and report the bullying.

3   You may find the following websites helpful:

http://www.childnet.com/young-people

https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/

https://www.childline.org.uk/Explore/Bullying/Pages/online-bullying.aspx

4   Please see the School's Acceptable use policy for pupils which sets out the School rules about the use of technology including mobile electronic devices.