



King's College

TAUNTON

Anti-Bullying Policy

(This policy is applicable to all pupils including those in EYFS)

*This policy applies to
King's College Prep School and King's College Taunton*

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Responsibility

Individual: Deputy Head, Pastoral

Council Committee: Council

Review Cycle: (Annual)

Next scheduled review: September 2025

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This policy has due regard to the following documents and school policies:

- DfE Advice 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for School Leaders and Governors' (July 2017)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2024)
- National Minimum Standards for Boarding (September 2022)
- Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership Advice
- DfE The Equality Act 2010: Advice for Schools (May 2014)
- DfE Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff (2014)
- KST Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy, KCT/KCP Behaviour Policies, KST Online Safety Policy

Contents

1.	INTRODUCTION.....	3
2.	THE PROBLEM	4
3.	RESPONSIBILITIES	4
4.	THE NATURE OF BULLYING.....	4
5.	AIM.....	5
6.	OBJECTIVES.....	5
7.	PREVENTION	5
8.	IDENTIFYING BULLYING.....	6
9.	BULLIES AND TARGETS	11
10.	SIGNS OF BULLYING	11
11.	COMBATING BULLYING – SUPPORT STRUCTURES	12
12.	COMBATING BULLYING – THE CURRICULUM.....	12
13.	PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH BULLYING	13
14.	TRAINING	13
15.	SANCTIONS	14
16.	CYBERBULLYING	14
16.1.	Introduction	14
16.2.	Legal implications.....	15
16.3.	Prevention	16
16.4.	Process	16
16.5.	Sanctions for cyberbullying behaviour.....	17
	APPENDIX 1 - ANTI-CYBERBULLYING CODE: ADVICE TO PUPILS	19
	APPENDIX 2 - SUICIDAL BEHAVIOUR IN CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE.....	21
	APPENDIX 3 - HELP ORGANISATIONS AND LINKS TO ANTI-BULLYING DOCUMENTS.....	22

1. INTRODUCTION

We aim to provide a safe, welcoming, supportive and tolerant environment at King's Schools in which each pupil feels valued as an individual, and in turn, learns the importance of tolerance and consideration towards others.

We believe that our schools should be happy and positive communities. We expect our pupils to be honest and considerate in their relationships with others. We believe that pupils are entitled to a safe and orderly learning environment to assist them in achieving their full potential.

The example set by our staff should help to create a climate in which all pupils feel valued, secure and happy. The mutual respect with which staff treat one another and the public demonstration of this are both important. The same applies to the relationships between teachers and pupils: pupils should always be treated with honesty, kindness and fairness.

Bullying is an insidious form of behaviour that has no place at King's Schools. We are committed to combating bullying and this policy recognises the need to respect and support each individual in this area. To this end it believes that:

- Physical, verbal or emotional abuse of any member of the community is not acceptable at King's Schools
- All instances of bullying behaviour should be reported. All reported instances of bullying will be recorded and appropriate action will be taken.
- All instances of child-on-child discrimination on the basis of protected characteristics will be reported to the County Council using the online form <https://services.somerset.gov.uk/reportpeeronpeerdiscrimination>

Bullying that is so extreme that a pupil suffers or is likely to suffer significant harm will be treated as a Child Protection concern and dealt with in accordance with the King's Schools Safeguarding policy. In extreme cases this will necessitate the involvement of Children's Services and the police.

The Heads, staff and pupils of King's Schools agree that we will not tolerate any form of bullying. Everyone who is part of the King's Schools community has a responsibility for one another.

The schools will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the schools.

2. THE PROBLEM

All schools in the world - and many adult communities - suffer from the problem of bullying. We believe that King's Schools are pleasant and well-disciplined schools but, although bullying is rare, cases do arise from time to time. We also believe that teachers have a very good rapport with our pupils and their parents so that we usually hear very quickly about any problems that do occur.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

All members of the school community have a responsibility to recognise bullying when it occurs and take appropriate action in line with the schools' policy, with the information on bullying and child-on-child abuse in Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2024) and the current guidelines from the Department for Education in 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (July 2017). This will happen in the following ways:

- The schools will meet the legal requirement to have an anti-bullying policy in place.
- Records are kept of bullying incidents, and are reviewed and monitored to provide an overview of incidents and to inform staff training as appropriate
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, children and parents/guardians will have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff will know what the school policy is on bullying and will consistently and swiftly follow it when something is reported.
- All children and parents/guardians will know what the school policy is on bullying and what they can do if bullying occurs.
- Children and parents/guardians will be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Whole school initiatives (staff training, assemblies, anti-bullying week) and proactive teaching strategies (PSHE lessons, circle time, tutor time) will be used throughout the schools to reduce the frequency of bullying and deal with specific problems.
- A positive, caring ethos will be created within the school environment where all can work, play and express themselves without fear of being bullied.

4. THE NATURE OF BULLYING

There are many definitions of bullying, but most consider it to be:

- Deliberately hurtful and threatening
- Repeated over a period of time
- Difficult for victims to defend themselves against
- A wilful and conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone

Bullying is a very serious issue that can affect individuals or groups both physically and emotionally and which may cause psychological damage. Bullying is often hidden. It may involve actions or comments that are racist, sexist, homophobic or which focus on disabilities. It can focus on someone's gender, religion or culture, make fun of someone because they have special educational needs, or because someone's family circumstances are different. It can happen anywhere and at any time.

5. AIM

King's Schools aim to promote a culture in which pupils and staff live and work in a safe, supportive and tolerant environment. Children should feel confident that they can approach adults about any matters of concern to them.

All members of staff should be acquainted with the school anti-bullying policy and procedures. All staff should be sensitive to the needs of pupils who are the victims of bullying

It is crucial to the schools' success in dealing with bullying that all members of our community are made aware that such behaviour is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. It is the responsibility of all members of the community to take action if they see it happening. To remain silent is to condone bullying. Bullying is never to be left unchallenged or to be dismissed as 'horseplay' or 'banter'.

6. OBJECTIVES

- To define clearly those actions which the schools understand as bullying and to ensure that this is communicated to all members of the King's Schools community
- To ensure the protection of pupils from bullying
- To promote communication and good listening, and specifically, to encourage pupils to tell someone that they, or someone they know, is being bullied
- To ensure that correct procedures are followed
- To make sure that pupils know that involvement in bullying is a serious offence and will be treated as such by King's Schools

7. PREVENTION

We seek to instil values in all members of the schools via the Golden Rules, The Code of Conduct or School Rules which should, ideally, preclude all bullying. These are reinforced by:

- Staff training (including Girls on Board training and the use of Educare online training modules)
- Bullying Themed Assemblies

- Initiatives such as anti-bullying week and Safer Internet Day
- A PSHE programme (including circle time) which requires tutors at all levels of the schools to spend time talking to their tutor groups about bullying (including cyber-bullying) and child on child abuse and its effects and consequences
- Curricular activities which highlight bullying issues such as drama role plays and the study of literature

In essence these strategies seek to inculcate respect for others, their property and their individuality. We hope these values underpin ordinary curricular lessons too.

8. IDENTIFYING BULLYING

Bullying...

- is sometimes a group activity
- may be one-off or systematic
- may be done in person or indirectly or manipulatively
- is deliberately hostile
- leads to personal distress
- has serious consequences that can be physical (e.g. bruises, scratches), emotional (e.g. misery, despair) or psychological (e.g. depression or mental breakdown)
- can be carried out in person, or by using technology via text messaging, mobile phone calls, offensive emails, use of digital images, messages on social networking sites etc (cyberbullying).

It can include...

- threats of violence, including sexual violence
- actual violence, including sexual violence
- ignoring/shunning
- teasing
- name-calling
- interfering with/ hiding property
- racially offensive remarks and behaviour
- sexually offensive remarks and behaviour, including comments about sexual orientation
- offensive remarks about disability or special educational needs
- incitement or manipulation of others to commit an act of bullying
- intimidating or embarrassing graffiti
- ridiculing/mimicking/sarcasm

- demanding money, property or favours through intimidation
- deliberate damage of property or work
- vandalism
- intimidation
- spreading false rumours
- being complicit in someone else's action (e.g. as a bystander who looks the other way).

Physical bullying may involve:

- hitting or kicking someone
- jostling or pushing someone
- spitting at someone
- invading someone's personal space (body space)
- taking or damaging or hiding someone's property
- physically humiliating someone (e.g. by 'debagging' them)
- invading someone's living space or intruding on their bed-space (e.g. 'bed flipping').

Verbal bullying may involve:

- spoken comments
- written notes
- emails or text messages
- improper use of social media and social polling sites
- phone calls
- defacing notices
- name-calling, spreading rumours
- circulating unflattering drawings or photographic images of someone.

Emotional bullying may involve:

- excluding other people, particularly from groups
- tormenting
- ridicule
- humiliation
- taunting.

Indirect or manipulative bullying may involve:

- ostracising a fellow pupil by refusing to sit alongside him/her in class, in the Dining Hall etc (or by moving away when he/she comes and sits down)
- the use of social networks to ostracise, marginalize or intimidate individuals

- publishing photographs or images which are intended to cause mockery or gossip
- encouraging others to become agents of physical or verbal bullying against one's intended victim.

Bullying may also be:

- sexual: talking to or touching someone in a sexually inappropriate way
- sexist: related to a person's gender or gender reassignment
- racist, or regarding someone's religion, belief or culture
- ageist: related to one's age
- related to someone's sexual orientation (homophobic, biphobic, transphobic bullying)
- related to pregnancy and maternity
- related to a person's home or familial circumstances such as being a carer or being adopted
- related to a person's disability, special educational needs, learning difficulty, health or appearance
- motivated by prejudice because of a protected characteristic such as marriage and civil partnership.

Electronic or cyberbullying may involve:

- sending abusive, insulting or malicious emails or text messages
- posting abusive, insulting or malicious messages on websites, using blogs, personal websites, on-line polling sites etc
- using a social network site to post facts, comments or photographs of someone with the intention to embarrass or belittle them in the eyes of others
- indulging in malicious or spiteful conversations in chat-rooms or on social networking sites
- spreading abuse, malice or scurrilous gossip by other electronic means
- hacking into social networking sites and adding or removing personal material
- filming fights or assaults ('happy slapping' or 'patterning') using mobile phone cameras etc and circulating electronically
- making repeated silent calls to a mobile phone or leaving abusive messages on voice mail.

'Frapping', using someone else's mobile phone, email or social networking account (or using a pseudonym) for anonymity when indulging in such bullying compounds the abuse. Many children perceive this behaviour as a 'practical joke' rather than bullying. It is vitally important that this misconception/erroneous description of such activity never passes unchallenged when it is uncovered.

'Sexting', the term given to the practice of sharing sexually explicit images or text is unfortunately commonplace. It must be remembered that it can be a powerful form of bullying and that it is illegal to publish or download a sexual image of someone under 18 even when it is the child him/herself who created the image and posted the material online. Its illegal nature means that serious and proven cases will be referred to external authorities such as Children's Services and/or the police.

Staff Awareness

All staff must be *aware* of the problem.

Bullying can take place:

- In the playground/leisure areas: pushing, teasing, jostling, isolating.
- In the changing rooms: teasing, hiding clothes and possessions.
- Before or after class: stealing a pencil case, verbal abuse.
- During games: over aggressive tackling, excluding someone from the game.
- During meals: queue barging, isolation by excluding peers from table.
- In the boarding house (day or night): theft, practical jokes which go too far.

Beware of:

- the joke that is not funny
- the game that not everyone is playing.
- the "accident" that was not really an accident.
- the loan that is never returned.

Staff Action

In class:

- Teachers need to define a clear, fair set of rules that protect the interests of all class members.
- Teachers need to remember that they teach people, not just a subject. Almost as much thought needs to go into how to manage a class and how to deal with poor discipline (or bullying) as into the preparation of teaching material.
- Teachers should think carefully about the seating arrangements in the classroom. It is often better to produce a seating plan than to allow the children to choose for themselves where they sit.
- Care should be exercised when dealing with the parties involved. There may be more to an incident than meets the eye: for example, a victim's reaction could be mistaken for bullying.

- Loud and assertive (or aggressive) pupils should not be allowed to dominate; everyone should be involved in class discussions and nobody “rubbished”. In a poorly disciplined school, bullying and anti-social behaviour will flourish.
- Punctuality is vital. A lot of bullying occurs before class starts or as pupils go from one lesson to the next.
- Preventative work can be done by the teacher commenting on the spot, e.g. “that was nasty”, “that was unkind”, “that was unnecessary”.
- Do not accept lies or false excuses: “I didn’t do it, she’s got the wrong end of the stick”, “it was a game”, “we were having a joke”, “it was just banter”, “it was an accident”, “he offered to lend it to me”. These matters, however, can be hard to prove when the victim has no witnesses to back him /her up.
- Our priority is to prevent bullying, rather than to merely react to the behaviour by issuing sanctions. It should be recognised, however, that bullying is a major offence and may in some circumstances be punished by suspension or, ultimately, expulsion.

In the boarding house:

Ideally an adult member of house staff should be within close proximity twenty-four hours a day. All house staff should be aware of the dangers of bullying. Any incidents should be reported to the Houseparents and, where appropriate, the Head of Boarding, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) or the Head.

Staff must remember that boarders who are being bullied (off line) cannot escape their bullies for long periods of time as they are not going home as often.

On the games field:

Staff must not lose sight of the fact that they are primarily teachers, as well as coaches and referees. They should not tolerate anti-social or rude behaviour, regardless of circumstances. We are all very proud of our excellent sporting record, but that must be secondary to good conduct. In terms of transport to fixtures, staff should sit students appropriately on buses so that the possibility of an incident is much reduced.

In the dining room:

Watch out for queue barging and the exclusion of individuals from a table, as well as bad manners. The member of staff on duty in the Dining Room should be vigilant in this regard and pass on any concerns to house staff and, where necessary, the Deputy Head (Pastoral).

9. BULLIES AND TARGETS

Young people who bully may...

- be excessively criticised at home
- feel undervalued
- live in families where aggressive behaviour is normal
- be struggling to cope academically or in other ways
- have been bullied themselves

Young people who are bullied...

- may be unable to manage social situations with ease
- may have a distinctive appearance or stand out in some other way (accent, behaviour, intellect, tastes, home background, racial background, known or assumed sexual orientation etc)
- may experience difficulties forming friendships
- may be late developers either physically or socially
- may be physically weaker than their peers

10. SIGNS OF BULLYING

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he/she is being bullied.

Be aware of...

- property and work damaged or lost more than is usual for the age group
- unexplained injuries
- a pupil becoming withdrawn or socially isolated and reluctant to say why
- a decline in academic attainment
- a reluctance to attend school or certain activities at school
- requests to be accompanied to and from school
- unusual patterns of behaviour regarding money and possessions
- depression in the pupil which may manifest itself through general unhappiness, moodiness, irritability, disruptive behaviour
- a reluctance to go to meals
- a pupil who visits the Health Centre frequently
- a child who bullies other children or their own siblings
- a child who overwhelmingly chooses the company of adults to that of their peers

Taken individually the above may not be due to bullying, but a combination of several of these signs could be a strong indication of bullying. In any case, if a pupil is experiencing any of these it could be an indication of unhappiness and should be investigated.

11. COMBATING BULLYING – SUPPORT STRUCTURES

- All staff, in particular Houseparents and House Tutors, have a responsibility for promoting an atmosphere of respect and tolerance.
- KLM/SW are the Designated Safeguarding Leads, responsible for all matters of child protection/safeguarding, which includes the anti-bullying policy.
- The Chaplain is always available to see pupils to discuss problems.
- The PSHE curriculum, which deals with the problem of bullying throughout all years at KCP and early in the third form, revisiting the topic in the fourth form at KCT or whenever deemed necessary.
- The pupil complaints policy provides reassurance that all complaints will be dealt with seriously.
- Details of outside agencies (e.g. ChildLine) are made available to pupils (for example through posters in houses and around the schools).
- House and school prefects, as well as Pelican helpers in the Pre-Prep, play a role in looking after younger pupils and provide reassurance and advice.
- All staff are made aware of the latest government guidance and documentation on bullying.

12. COMBATING BULLYING – THE CURRICULUM

- Religious and Moral education: The aim of promoting a tolerant, supportive environment within the schools is reinforced in the continuing religious and moral education as delivered in weekly whole-school chapel services and Religious Education lessons.
- PSHE: The problem of bullying is discussed throughout all years at KCP and in the Third and Fourth Form PSHE programme at KCT. Outside speakers visit the schools to talk about bullying.
- The Wider Curriculum: All teachers have a responsibility to promote a safe and tolerant teaching environment where pupils feel they can contribute without fear of ridicule. It is essential that teachers remain sensitive to the atmosphere in a lesson and act firmly and immediately to stop any bullying, intimidation and ridiculing, and communicate concerns swiftly to the Houseparent of pupils concerned.

13. PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH BULLYING

If as a member of staff (and this includes *any* person employed by the schools: teachers, support staff, peripatetic teachers) you witness an act of bullying or are told of such an incident...

- stay calm and don't make snap judgements or assign blame instantly
- explain clearly why bullying behaviour is unacceptable
- separate the pupils involved as appropriate
- explain to all involved that the incident will be treated seriously and that further action will be taken
- listen carefully to what the pupil is saying, if possible making notes
- reassure the pupil that s/he has done the right thing in speaking up
- remember that you are not able to guarantee secrecy/confidentiality
- offer support to the pupil – assure them that the matter will be dealt with sensitively
- where necessary, assure the child's immediate comfort/safety/reassurance by enlisting the help of a friend or another member of staff to stay with the pupil while the incident is reported or investigated further

Then...

- refer the incident as soon as possible to the appropriate person (Houseparent, Deputy Head, Pastoral)
- keep a written record of the incident giving details of names of all involved, including witnesses, date and time and a clear account of what happened if possible

Advice, support and counselling will be offered to all parties involved, and, if necessary, their parents.

14. TRAINING

The schools raise awareness of the staff through training and take action to reduce the risk of bullying at the times and places where it is most likely to occur. School Marshals and Duty staff contribute to this aim by patrols of school grounds in free time. Prefects and house staff are also sensitive about break times and lunchtimes in houses. The key points from this policy are discussed with pupils during tutorial sessions.

Anti-bullying is a discussion point for house prefect teams and feedback will be taken to the Deputy Head (Pastoral). It is also revisited as necessary during PSHE sessions to all years and reinforced in other areas of the curriculum as the opportunities present themselves e.g. drama, physical education.

Pupil surveys are used to facilitate an understanding of the level and type of bullying that pupils might have experienced and to improve future policy and outcomes for children and young people.

15. SANCTIONS

For bullying these could range from a quiet but firm word with those involved to expulsion, depending on the nature of the incident and the previous record of those involved. Other responses might include a gating, the involvement of parents, suspension or a combination of these.

Whilst recognising that both victim and bully need help, we take a very serious view of bullying. We believe that a pupil who persistently makes life miserable for others, especially after warnings and sanctions, should not expect to remain at our schools.

16. CYBERBULLYING

16.1. Introduction

Cyberbullying can be defined as 'the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else'. It can be an extension of face-to-face bullying, with technology providing the bully with another route to harass their target.

However, it differs in several significant ways from other kinds of bullying: the invasion of home and personal space; the difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages; the size of the audience; perceived anonymity; and even the profile of the person doing the bullying and their target.

Cyberbullying takes different forms: threats and intimidation; harassment or 'cyber-stalking' (e.g. repeatedly sending unwanted texts or instant messages); vilification / defamation; exclusion or peer rejection; impersonation; sexting; 'fraping'; unauthorised publication of private information or images and manipulation.

Some cyberbullying is clearly deliberate and aggressive, but it is important to recognise that some incidents of cyberbullying are known to be unintentional and the result of simply not thinking about the consequences. What may be sent as a joke may not be received as one, and indeed the distance that technology allows in communication means the sender may not see the impact of the message on the receiver. There is also less opportunity for either party to resolve any misunderstanding or to feel empathy. It is important that pupils are made aware of the effects of their actions.

In cyberbullying, bystanders can easily become perpetrators, e.g. by passing on or showing to others images designed to humiliate, or by taking part in online polls or discussion groups. They may not recognise themselves as participating in bullying, but their involvement compounds the misery for the person targeted. It is recommended that anti-bullying policies refer to those 'bystanders' — better termed 'accessories' in this context — who actively support cyberbullying and set out sanctions for this behaviour. It is important that pupils are aware that their actions have severe and distressing consequences, and that participating in such activity will not be tolerated.

There are particular features of cyberbullying that differ from other forms of bullying which need to be recognised and taken into account when determining how to respond effectively. The key differences are:

- **Impact** - the scale and scope of cyberbullying can be greater than other forms of bullying.
- **Targets and perpetrators** - the people involved may have a different profile to traditional bullies and their targets.
- **Location** - the 24/7 and any-place nature of cyberbullying.
- **Anonymity** - the person being bullied will not always know who is attacking them.
- **Motivation** - some pupils may not be aware that what they are doing is bullying.
- **Evidence** - unlike other forms of bullying, the target of the bullying will have evidence of its occurrence.

16.2. Legal implications

Cyberbullies can easily break the law. There are a number of offences that may be committed in the course of cyberbullying. Some may be covered in more than one piece of legislation.

- **Obscene Publications Act 1959** makes it an offence to 'publish' an obscene article (which can include written material, photographs or films). Publishing includes circulation, showing or transmitting the article.
- **Protection of Children Act 1978** makes it an offence to take an indecent photograph (or film) of a child. It is also an offence for someone to distribute or show such images or to have them in their possession with the intention of viewing them or showing them to others.
- **Public Order Act 1986** makes it an offence to use threatening, abusive or insulting words, behaviour and images with the intention to cause harassment, alarm or distress. This can apply where a mobile phone is used as a camera or video.
- **Malicious Communications Act 1988** makes it an offence to send an indecent, grossly offensive or threatening letter, electronic communication or other article to another person with the intention to cause distress or anxiety.

- **Computer Misuse Act 1990** makes hacking an offence.
- **Protection from Harassment Act 1997** creates both civil and criminal offences of harassment. Harassment is defined as a course of conduct which causes alarm or distress. This means that there must be repeated incidents (more than twice). It is also an offence to cause another person to fear, on at least two occasions, that violence will be used against them.
- **Communications Act 2003** makes it an offence to send grossly offensive, obscene, indecent or menacing communications. There is also an offence of sending a message that is known to be false for the purposes of causing annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety.

16.3. Prevention

We seek to instil values in all members of the schools which should, ideally, preclude bullying. These are reinforced by a PSHE programme which will require tutors at all levels of the schools to spend time talking to their groups about cyberbullying and its effects and consequences. In essence, these seek to inculcate respect for others, their property and their individuality. These values underpin every aspect of the community.

It is crucial to our success in dealing with cyberbullying that all members of the community are made aware that it is unacceptable and should not be tolerated. It is the responsibility of all members of the community to take action if they are aware of it happening. To remain silent is to condone the action of the bully.

16.4. Process

Information is crucial to dealing with the problem. Those who feel that they are being bullied, or who are witnesses to what they believe is bullying/cyber-bullying, should always tell a member of staff.

Advice, support and counselling will be offered to all parties involved, and, if necessary, their parents. While recognising that both victim and bully need help, we do not adopt a 'no blame' position.

- If a pupil receives an abusive e-mail or text, they should report the matter to a member of staff as soon as possible. A copy of the e-mail with full headers, plus dates and times should be saved. Staff will investigate all complaints of abuse and take action accordingly.

- Depending on the nature of the allegation, the case will be taken up either by the tutor, house staff, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) or a combination of these people. As a rough guide, the more serious the allegation, the more likely it is to involve senior staff and/or the Police.
- Interviews will be conducted fairly, giving all sides the opportunity to state their case, so as to establish the truth in what seldom turn out to be straightforward issues. In all cases, pupils will be warned not to do or say anything that may prejudice their position vis-à-vis the pupil who has been bullied. (No revenge/stirring up support among friends, no taking the law into their own hands.)
- Except for the most straightforward cases, in which truth has been established and the matter has been resolved swiftly, an interview will be conducted; a pupil would be invited to bring a friend or member of staff to support them in any such interview. This will enable a record to be kept of the interview, and what is said, to be corroborated by the third person. Notes, both rough copies and, where necessary, a brief summary and copies of any letters sent to parents will be put on files with cross referencing where appropriate.
- Letters written to parents will detail the nature of the offence and any sanctions imposed and will set out what improvements the schools expect to be made in behaviour as well as the consequences of failure to improve. Recommendations may be made about visits to the Health Centre and counselling for everyone involved.
- At the conclusion of the investigation, if appropriate, one of the members of staff involved will contact parents of all pupils directly involved and inform them of action taken. Wherever possible, the identity of “informers” and pupils other than the son or daughter of the parent will not be disclosed. Parents should be aware that the School has a duty of care to pupils and staff, including specific safeguarding and data protection legal responsibilities. Complaints about other pupils or staff will be investigated and actioned where appropriate, but the School will never disclose details of those actions to third parties, including to parents who made the original complaint.
- In practice, the sanctions applied range from a verbal warning or a ban on use of the schools’ computer networks, to temporary or permanent exclusion, depending on the gravity of the offence and the pupil’s previous record with reference to bullying. (See the schools’ online safety policy for further amplification)

16.5. Sanctions for cyberbullying behaviour

The aim of sanctions is to:

- Help the person harmed to feel safe again and be assured that the bullying will stop.
- Hold the perpetrator to account getting them to recognise the harm caused and deter them from repeating the behaviour.

- Demonstrate to the school community that cyberbullying is unacceptable and that the schools have effective ways of dealing with it, so deterring others from behaving similarly.

When cyberbullying is investigated, reference will be made to the school anti-bullying policy.

Technology-specific sanctions for pupils engaged in cyberbullying behaviour could include limiting internet access for a period of time or removing the right to bring a mobile phone into school (although issues of child safety will be considered in relation to the latter).

Cyberbullying will have an impact on the education and wellbeing of the person being bullied, and the physical location of the bully at the time of their action is irrelevant in this. Schools now have broad new powers to discipline and regulate the behaviour of pupils, even when they are off the school sites.

These are set out in the Education and Inspections Act 2006. Misconduct of any kind outside of school will be amenable to the school disciplinary process if the welfare of another pupil or the culture or reputation of the schools are placed at risk.

APPENDIX 1

ANTI-CYBERBULLYING CODE: ADVICE TO PUPILS

Being sent an abusive or threatening text message, or email or seeing nasty comments about yourself on a website, can be really upsetting. This code gives you seven important tips to protect yourself and your friends from getting caught up in cyberbullying, and advice on how to report it when it does happen.

1. Always respect others

Remember that when you send a message to someone, you cannot see the impact that your words or images may have on the other person. That is why it is important to always show respect to people and be careful what you say online or what images you send. What you think is a joke may really hurt someone else. Always ask permission before you take a photo of someone. If you receive a rude or nasty message or picture about someone else, do not forward it. You could be assisting a bully and even be accused of cyberbullying yourself. You could also be breaking the law.

2. Think before you send

It is important to think before you send any images or text about yourself or someone else by email or mobile phone, or before you post information on a website. Remember that what you send can be made public very quickly and could stay online forever. Do you really want your teacher, parents or future employer to see that photo?

3. Treat your password like your toothbrush

Don't let anyone know your passwords. It is a good idea to change them on a regular basis. Choosing hard-to-guess passwords with symbols or numbers will help stop people hacking into your account and pretending to be you. Remember to only give your mobile number or personal website address to trusted friends.

4. Block the Bully

Most responsible websites and services allow you to block or report someone who is behaving badly. Make use of these features, they are there for a reason!

5. Don't retaliate or reply

Replying to bullying messages, particularly in anger, is just what the bully wants.

6. Save the evidence

Learn how to keep records of offending messages, pictures or online conversations. These will help you demonstrate to others what is happening and can be used by the schools, internet service provider, mobile phone company, or even the police to investigate the cyberbullying.

7. Make sure you tell

You have a right *not* to be harassed and bullied online.

There are people that can help:

- Tell an adult you trust who can help you to report it to the right place, or call a helpline like ChildLine on 0800 1111 in confidence.
- Tell the provider of the service you have been bullied on (e.g. your mobile-phone operator or social-network provider). Check their websites to see where to report.
- Tell your school. Your Houseparent, tutor or any member of staff will support you and will ensure the person bullying you is dealt with.

Finally, don't just stand there. If you see cyberbullying going on, support the victim and report the bullying. How would you feel if no one stood up for you?

APPENDIX 2

SUICIDAL BEHAVIOUR IN CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The following section is adapted from kidscape.org.uk

Suicide is the third leading cause of death in the young in the United Kingdom.

Why do they do it?

It may be that the child or young person is:

- depressed because of social problems with friends
- worried about school pressures and examinations
- concerned about family problems
- **being bullied**
- a victim of child abuse
- overwhelmed by the world situation
- experiencing a chemical imbalance
- having a drug or alcohol related problem
- influenced by another suicide story
- trying to make life easier for someone
- trying to escape from an impossible situation
- trying to get help for some problem
- trying to manipulate someone to gain love
- trying to punish someone for hurting them
- acting on sudden, inexplicable impulse
- putting pressure on themselves
- taking a prescribed drug that has given them a bad reaction
- using this as a misguided way to get recognition online
- influenced by an internet suicide chatroom or by 'friends' online
- influenced by the death of a friend or family

Possible indicators:

The following are common characteristics of many people who commit suicide:

- experienced the loss of a loved one through divorce or death
- overly sensitive to emotional pain or upheavals
- unable to find friendship or security
- unable to deal with problems and feel hopeless
- convinced that suicide is the only solution
- given indications or said that they wished to die

What to look for:

Although some children may not give any indication that they are considering suicide, staff should be aware of the following signs – usually in combination:

- change in eating or sleeping patterns

- loss of interest in activities usually enjoyed
- irritability, sadness, hopelessness
- loss of energy; feeling tired and listless
- unable to concentrate or sudden poor school performance
- restless, pacing type of behaviour
- excessive self-blame for everything
- expressions of self-hate
- continued thoughts of suicide or death
- giving away precious possessions
- spending hours online in depressing or suicide sites
- posting 'memorials' to young friends who have died, especially by suicide

Most of these signs could be due to other causes, but if a child or young person is exhibiting three or four of these consistently over a period of a week to ten days, there is cause for concern. Often young people who try to kill themselves don't really want to die and do not understand the finality of death.

Advice to staff:

If a child talks about suicide, TAKE IT VERY SERIOUSLY. There is a myth that 'talking about suicide means the person won't do it.' People who talk about suicide sometimes do kill themselves. Immediately seek help from the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and/or Head, who will contact the parents.

- encourage them to talk by saying: "I'd like to hear about it"
- give the child a chance to be alone with you, but don't "hover"
- be direct: "I'm worried about you"
- set limits – they help children feel secure
- help the child find solutions / offer alternatives
- don't force a child into an impossible situation - it may result in them feeling that suicide is the only escape, for example, severe bullying might make going to school a nightmare
- trust your own judgements
- remove means of suicide if possible
- tell others and seek professional help - don't try to cope alone
- encourage children to eat and sleep properly
- encourage physical or recreational activity to release tension
- role play with them to cope with situations
- encourage crying, deep breathing exercises, laughter, listening to music, drawing, relaxation techniques, teach positive assertion skills
- be especially diligent if a friend of the child commits suicide
- monitor the child's online activities and learn how to find out if they have accessed suicide websites
- teach problem solving skills, explaining how to find alternatives and to foresee consequences - explain that simply because you can't see a solution to a problem, it doesn't mean that there isn't one.
- build up a child's self-confidence - find something the child is good at and praise him/her

HELP ORGANISATIONS

Kidscape Parents Advice line and Kidscape WhatsApp	07496 682785
Family Lives	0808 800 2222
Youth Access	020 8772 9900
Bullying UK (part of Family Lives)	www.bullying.co.uk
Young Minds Parents Helpline	0808 8025544
ChildLine	0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk

HELP LINKS TO ANTI-BULLYING DOCUMENTS

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444865/Advice_for_parents_on_cyberbullying.pdf

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/374850/Cyberbullying_Advice_for_Headteachers_and_School_Staff_121114.pdf

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/623895/Preventing_and_tackling_bullying_advice.pdf

<https://youngminds.org.uk/media/1511/young-minds-bullying.pdf>