



# ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

This policy applies to all School departments, including EYFS

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## Aims and Objectives

In line with the School's Mission Statement we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment in order that the whole person can be developed; intellectually, morally and emotionally.

All members of our community should be free from fear of bullying. Everyone should feel able to speak out and report any concerns about bullying in the knowledge that they will be listened to and that the matter will be investigated.

We aim to educate pupils about bullying, harassment and child-on child abuse through a variety of means including our tutor time and Personal Development programme, assemblies and in conversations with pupils about relationships.

## Definition of Bullying

Bullying is aggressive or insulting behaviour, that can be shown to be repeated and deliberate, that can hurt, harm, humiliate or cause distress.

Bullying can take many forms, but the main categories are:

- Physical** - hitting, kicking, taking or damaging belongings or school work, demanding money and/or favours through force.
- Verbal** - name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks.
- Indirect** - spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours, sending malicious text messages or images on mobile phones or via social media.

Alternatively, bullying can be categorised according to the nature of the hurtfulness or the medium being used:

- Racial/religious/cultural** - behaviour or language that makes a pupil feel unwelcome or marginalised because of their colour, ethnicity, culture, religion or national origin.
- Sexual/sexist** – behaviour or language that is derogatory towards a person's gender or sexual orientation.

- Disability** – behaviour or language that is disrespectful towards a person’s physical, mental or learning disability.
- Cyber** – language or images that are sent or delivered using social media websites or mobile phones or other devices
- Vulnerability** – appearance or health circumstances
- Related to home circumstances** – marriage, civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, young carers and looked after children
- Transphobic** – including gender reassignment

Occasionally an incident may be deemed to be bullying even if the behaviour has not been repeated or persistent but it fulfils all other descriptions of bullying. This possibility should be considered, particularly in cases of sexual, sexist or racist bullying and when pupils with disabilities are involved. If the victim might be in danger, then intervention is urgently required.

The school will recorded and categorise bullying in accordance with Leicestershire Safeguarding Audit Return. Principles of best fit will apply where two categories are applicable.

A bullying incident should be treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

#### Differences between Bullying and Friend Fallout

- There is a deliberate intention to hurt or humiliate
- There is a power imbalance that makes it hard for the victim to defend themselves
- It causes feelings of distress, fear, loneliness or lack of confidence
- It is usually persistent.

Friends may fall out, say something that hurt’s another’s feelings and may even be physically aggressive. However, bullying occurs when someone deliberately targets someone weaker or different from them and repeatedly picks on them.

#### Possible Signs of Bullying

- suffer damage or loss to possessions
- struggling with school work
- unwilling to attend school
- reluctant to travel to and from school on the bus
- appear generally unhappy, moody and/or irritable
- visiting reception to report feeling ill, with symptoms such as stomach pains, headaches more frequently than normal
- become withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- become excessively disruptive, aggressive or unreasonable

- shows a change in eating pattern
- difficulty in sleeping

The above signs do not necessarily mean that a pupil is being bullied but if repeated or occurring in combination, these signs do warrant investigation in order to establish what is affecting the pupil.

How Bullying will be addressed and tackled at LAS

Pupil/friend of pupil speaks to a member of staff they feel comfortable with.  
Member of staff makes dated notes.

Pupils can use the 'report a concern' button that can be found on the student dashboard.

With pupil's consent and if appropriate, the tutor is informed:

Tutor meets privately with pupil to give support and assess the seriousness of the situation. Pupil is asked to put in writing everything that has occurred with dates and preferably with names.

If appropriate:

Heads of Year will become involved. Interviewing victims and perpetrators, deciding on action to be taken dependant on the severity of the case, involving parents where appropriate. Recording the incident in the school bullying log.

If appropriate;

Refer up to the Deputy Head Pastoral and parental involvement, if not already done so previously.

Support and Reporting Extensive support networks have been established to allow targets of bullying to raise their concerns with a trusted adult in the school, including the Form Tutor, Head of Year, School Nurse, Designated Safeguard Lead, Counsellor, Deputy Head (Pastoral), Teacher or any member of the School Leadership Team (including DSL). A mechanism for pupil reporting concerns online exists from the Pupil Dashboard on the VLE and via QR codes displayed in the toilets.

Disciplinary Steps Sanctions

We seek to discipline, but also support students with bullying behaviour, by helping them to appreciate the effects of their actions and in doing so subsequently change their behaviour.

When managing concerns about bullying the Anti-Bullying Policy should be read alongside the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Behaviour Rewards and Sanctions Policy, Student Serious Disciplinary Policy and other complementary policies.

The disciplinary sanctions have four main purposes, namely to:

- nurture an environment for all which is free of fear;
- impress on the perpetrator that what they have done is unacceptable;
- deter them from repeating that behaviour;
- signal to other pupils that the behaviour is unacceptable and deter them from doing it.

### Actions for Preventing and Tackling Bullying

As members of staff we aim to behave sympathetically by:

- never ignoring suspected bullying but knowing the difference between bullying and friend "fallout".
- not making premature assumptions.
- listening carefully to all accounts – several pupils with the same story does not necessarily mean they are telling the truth.
- adopting a problem-solving approach which, by liaising with line managers, parents and pupils' peer groups, resolves issues.
- following up by checking bullying has not resumed.
- reinforcing the anti-bullying message wherever possible.

As a school we seek to:

- provide positive role models in terms of mutual respect.
- organise the school in a way which minimises opportunities for bullying within the school curriculum, e.g. ensuring that all accessible areas of the school are patrolled/supervised effectively, separating known protagonists where possible.
- inform relevant members of staff when incidents have arisen so that situations before, during and after classes can be monitored.
- use any opportunity to discuss aspects of friendship, accommodation, tolerance etc. especially within the PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT programme, or during tutor time and assemblies.
- encourage pupils to treat others with respect, to develop positive views of other people, and to appreciate and embrace differences as well as similarities.
- to build resilience in pupils to protect themselves and their peers.
- deal with any concerns regarding bullying quickly, firmly and fairly, communicating with parents/guardians/carers, if appropriate.
- continue to have a firm but fair discipline structure, where the rules are clearly stated, easy to understand, and have the support of the community.

The school promotes the annual Anti Bullying Alliance 'Anti-Bullying Week' and facilitates associated activities for pupils to engage with and other initiatives to promote wellbeing and awareness of differences.

- avoid using teaching materials and methods which give a negative view of any particular group.
- discuss topics such as racism, sexism, disability, etc. openly and sensitively as they appear across the whole of the school curriculum.
- make all staff, including new staff and support staff, aware of the School's anti-bullying policy through appropriate continuing professional development training and induction.
- treat bullying as a serious matter, and explore every possible action in order to eradicate it from our school community.

We seek to discipline, but also support bullies, by helping them to understand the effects of their actions and in doing so subsequently change their behaviour.

### Guidelines for Pupils

If you are being bullied:

- Do not suffer in silence! It is not okay that you are being bullied and the school will not tolerate it - report it to someone you know and trust.
- If you have been bullied, keep any evidence if relevant (texts, screen grabs, etc). If there are witnesses, pass on their names to the member of staff to whom you report the bullying.
- Do not worry – once you have reported the incident the school will take appropriate action.
- If bullying continues after the school has acted tell staff straight away.
- Visit the school counsellor if you think that would help.

If you know of someone who is being bullied;

- Take action! Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully, and makes the victim feel more isolated and alone.
- If you feel that you cannot get involved at that time, tell an adult or older pupil immediately. Teachers will know how to deal with it without getting you into trouble.
- Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully. Encourage them to change their anti-social behaviour by making them aware of the impact their actions are having on others.

The school has a reporting system on the pupil dashboard.

You may want to contact the school counsellor via the counsellor hub on the student dashboard

- We recommend these three websites: Anti Bullying Alliance - What is bullying? ([anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk))
- NSPCC – one of the best resources for young people <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/>
- Online safety <https://www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre/How-can-CEOP-help-me-YP/>

### Advice for Parents/Carers

- Watch for signs of distress in your child, eg they suddenly may not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly or not complete work to a normal standard.

- Discourage your child from retaliating as this will only exacerbate the issue.
- Encourage your child to talk to their tutor about any worries.
- Be clear of the difference between a friend fallout and bullying.

If your daughter/son discloses to you that they have been a victim of bullying, please inform the school immediately. Your first point of contact will be the form tutor. Be patient while investigations take place. Successful outcomes occur more quickly when we are in full possession of the facts. The school will keep you regularly updated and let you know the sanctions applied.

The reported incidents are tracked on CPOMS. They form part of the termly report to the Board of Governors who check on the procedures the school has in place to tackle bullying behaviour. The incidents are also tracked to indicate how behaviour and staff training needs to be amended and delivered.

The pupils take part in Student Voice activities and have questions about bullying behaviour and a focus for discussions with Prefects. These activities will inform staff training and tutor time and or Personal Development activities (e.g. PSHE and assemblies). This informs pupil and teacher training.

### Preparatory School

It is recognised that younger children may require a different response as their understanding of personal relationships develops.

If there is evidence of a child bullying another child or children, then staff action is as follows;

- Intervene to stop the child harming the other child or children
- Explain to the child doing the bullying why his/her behaviour is inappropriate
- Give reassurance to the child or children who have been bullied
- Help the child who has been bullying to say sorry for his/her actions
- Ensure that the child who has been bullying receives praise when he/she displays acceptable behaviour
- Do not label children who bully
- When a child has been bullying, this is discussed with his/her parents and a plan is worked out for handling the child's behaviour
- When a child has been bullied, this is shared with his/her parents, explaining that the child who did the bullying is being helped to adopt more acceptable ways of behaving and that his/her parents have been informed.

### Prevention

- Having discussions about bullying
- Writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying
- Reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly
- Make up role plays

### Disciplinary Steps Sanctions

- A discussion with the child who has been bullying about why their behaviour is inappropriate. A written record will be recorded in the Bullying Log. They may be separated from their peers before school, during break and /or at lunchtimes.
- They will be required to produce an apology or a written explanation of their behaviour.
- Pupils' parents will be contacted by phone or called in to discuss the issue.
- The situation should be reviewed after an appropriate period of time. If there is no modification of behaviour, or incidents still persist, sterner measures will be taken in line with the code of conduct, which could ultimately include temporary or permanent exclusion.

## Appendix 1 Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying 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
- The profile of the person doing the bullying and their target

Cyberbullying is unique in its potential to involve staff, as well as pupils, in being bullied by individuals. Acts of cyberbullying, whilst not a specific criminal offence, may involve the breaking of UK laws regarding harassment and threatening communications. Dealing with acts of cyberbullying could therefore result in the involvement of the police.

### **Forms which cyberbullying may take:**

- Threats and intimidation
- Harassment or "cyber-stalking" (e.g. repeatedly sending unwanted texts or instant messages)
- Vilification / defamation ("trolling") Exclusion or peer rejection Impersonation
- Unauthorised publication of private information or images (such as in response to 'sexting' events) Manipulation or grooming

It is important to recognise that not all apparent cases of cyberbullying are deliberate or aggressive, but may be the result of unthinking acts in which images or comments are shared in the belief that they are amusing without any realisation of the distress caused.

These instances are to be treated seriously but not necessarily with the same severity as obviously intentional acts of cyberbullying.

### **Prevention of cyberbullying**

Education on cyberbullying and its effects will be delivered concurrent with education on other forms of bullying. Pupils also receive specific education on the safe use of technology, online grooming, and the implications of posting personal information online and at a level appropriate to their age. This education is delivered through a variety of routes, including PSHCE, ICT and other lessons, assemblies, and discussions with Tutors, Heads of Year and other staff.

iPad's, Mobile phones and other devices are only to be used in lessons with the permission of the member of staff in charge, and then in accordance with the school rules and the ICT responsible use policies (RUP). These policies are signed by all staff, pupils and their parents and form the basis for the guidelines on the use of mobile devices on campus (see ICT Responsible use policy for staff/ICT Responsible use policy for students).

The school reserves the right to confiscate an iPad or other mobile device if it is being used to disrupt the education of other pupils, including perpetration of bullying behaviour.

### **Reporting of cyberbullying**

Pupils will be encouraged to report instances of cyberbullying as for all instances of bullying. Staff will also be vigilant for behaviours which may signal that a pupil is being bullied in this specific manner, such as:

Being obviously upset whilst using a device. Being unwilling to discuss their device usage.



Suddenly changing patterns of use of specific technologies.

### **Investigation of cyberbullying**

If a pupil reports instances of cyberbullying, they will be encouraged to keep any evidence and provide it to staff. Evidence may take the following forms:

- Messages or images saved on the recipient's device. Posts on social networking sites.
- Websites or accounts created about an individual or in an individual's name.

Staff investigating instances of cyberbullying should proceed in line with the LHS Antibullying policy but should aim to gather evidence in the form of screenshots from websites, printouts of emails and transcripts of messages. Images sent by social media will be recovered where possible and hard copies made if appropriate and if not in contravention of Safeguarding policy.

If pupils are accused of sending upsetting messages, which the recipient has deleted, staff may ask to be shown the perpetrator's phone for evidence if there is a reasonable suspicion that such messages have been sent. Staff may not, however, search a device for information without the specific permission of its owner, and are advised that any such search should be limited to pupils showing the investigating member of staff their device themselves. In line with the government advice on the confiscation of items, devices may be confiscated from pupils if they are causing a disturbance or if there is reasonable suspicion of use for the purposes of cyberbullying within school.

Staff should at all times be sensitive to the feelings of the bullied individual, who may find the evidence retrieved to be upsetting or very embarrassing. Pupils should be assured of discretion in dealing with such material as part of the upsetting nature of cyberbullying is the perception that 'everyone' is aware of such upsetting messages or images.

Any evidence generated in this manner will, upon resolution of the incident, be placed on the file(s) of the relevant pupil(s) and recorded on CPOMS.

### **Action to be taken**

If it is clear that acts of cyberbullying have taken place, the steps taken will be in line with the LHS Antibullying policy but may also include:

- Asking the perpetrator to remove upsetting posts or images.
- Supporting students in contacting the service provider or host to request that material is removed.
- Supporting students in contacting the nuisance call department of the victim's mobile phone provider to ask for certain numbers to be blocked.
- Supporting students in blocking certain email addresses from reaching the victim and educating the victim on how to block individuals from accessing their pages on social networking sites.
- In line with the LSF Responsible Use Policy, suspending internet access for the perpetrator for a period of time.
- Contacting the parents of the perpetrator to inform them of the nature of acts carried out.
- Confiscation of a School owned device for a period of time. Restricting specific use of apps and sites on School owned devices.

Aspects of this series of actions may also be taken against individuals who are not pupils of LHS as appropriate.

The *Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006)* outlines some legal powers which relate to cyberbullying. Headteachers have the power "to such extent as is reasonable" to regulate the conduct of pupils when they are off-site or not under the control or charge of a member of staff. This is of particular significance to cyberbullying, which is often likely to

take place out of school but which can impact significantly on the school life of those pupils involved.

In serious cases of cyberbullying, as with bullying of all forms, the school reserves the right to apply more severe punishments (*see LHS Discipline policy*).

If evidence appears to show that a pupil or another child is at significant risk of harm, the Deputy Head (Pastoral and Wellbeing) will be notified and safeguarding procedures will be followed (*see LSF Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and LEA guidelines*).

Further advice for parents and carers is available at: [Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/324222/Advice_for_parents_and_carers_on_cyberbullying.pdf)

## **Legal implications**

As discussed at the start of the policy, there are legal implications to acts of cyberbullying since the creation of images and text about individuals may cross into laws relating to harassment and the creation of indecent images. In the event of this being the case, the school reserves the right to seek legal advice and contact the police as necessary.

Cyberbullying may result in breaches of the law under the following acts:

- Computer Misuse Act 1990 Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015 Defamation Acts of 1952 and 2013
- Equality Act 2010
- Malicious Communications Act 1988 Obscene Publications Act 1959 Protection from Harassment Act 1997 Protection of Children Act 1978 Public Order Act 1986
- Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003

## **Cyberbullying and Staff**

One of the characteristics of cyberbullying is that it has the potential, by its anonymity, to affect staff. The perpetrator may not be older or in a position of authority in order to bully an individual. Staff therefore have a responsibility to protect themselves from cyberbullying as far as possible and have a right to support from SLT should an instance of bullying become apparent.

Staff should adhere to the guidelines contained in LHS policies referring to staff-pupil relationships and specifically the Staff Code of Conduct. The following guidance is also provided by the DfE.

### **General**

Staff should lock screens on a computer or other device logged on when not under their direct supervision, for example when they leave their desk.

School email addresses should be used for school business, in accordance with the staff RUP, and personal email addresses for everything involving private lives. This includes file sharing sites like Dropbox and YouTube.

### **Images and video**

- The school seeks permission from parents before sharing images of pupils online for publicity purposes (this is done at registration).
- Staff should not use their own mobile devices to take photographs of pupils.
- Staff should be aware that parents are asked not to take photographs at school events but to make use of the school's own photo service.
- Significant information should not be attached to any images posted, such as full names, unless informed or parental consent has been obtained in advance.

- Any picture which causes distress to an individual, for any reason, should be removed straight away.

### **Mobile Phones and other mobile devices**

Staff should be aware at all times of the increasing sophistication of mobile devices and their use in capturing information and uploading content to the internet.

Staff should take good care of their own devices at all times due to the amount of sensitive information they now contain. Enabling a PIN, passcode or fingerprint/face recognition is an important step to protect you from losing personal data and images (or having them copied and shared) from your mobile phone or device if it is lost, stolen, or accessed by pupils.

Staff should report, and have blocked, a missing device straight away. To this end all staff should be aware of their phone IMEI number (printed on the phone underneath the battery or found by typing \*#06# into the handset). Apple devices should have 'Find my iPad/iPhone installed' in accordance with guidelines to staff.

Staff should avoid lending mobile devices to pupils if at all possible. If a personal mobile has to be lent to a pupil, the call should be supervised at all times and any numbers used deleted from the phone straight away.

Staff should not give pupils or parents their personal mobile phone number.

Staff should follow advice given by the Deputy Head (Pastoral and Wellbeing) on the possession of pupil mobile phone numbers for trips, visits etc.

### **Social Networking Sites**

Staff should be mindful of how they present information about themselves on the internet, particularly in relation to images and personal information.

Staff using such sites should ensure that they are aware of how to restrict access to their information online on the sites they use. In cases of uncertainty, staff are advised to treat all information as accessible to the public.

Staff should be aware that their reputations could be harmed by what others share about them online, such as friends tagging them in inappropriate posts, photos or videos. Staff should discuss these issues with close family, friends and colleagues, as they could be affected by their inadequate security and privacy settings.

Staff should not befriend current pupils or recent pupils on social networking sites and should be aware, if befriending ex-pupils, of the relationships which may exist between current and ex-pupils and how this may potentially allow current pupils to access personal information. For the same reasons, staff are advised not to befriend parents of pupils.

Staff should occasionally use search engines to check what information is available about them in the public domain.

### **Action in the case of cyberbullying**

If a member of staff believes they are being cyberbullied, they should take the following steps:

Staff should never retaliate to, i.e. personally engage with, cyberbullying incidents. They should report incidents appropriately and seek support from a senior member of staff (e.g. Head of Department, Head of Year). They may refer the incident to the Head/ Deputy Head

□(Pastoral), if not already involved, who will discuss action with the member of staff and the Network Manager.

Staff should keep any records of the abuse – text, emails, voice mail, web site or instant message. They should not delete texts or emails. They should take screen prints of messages or web pages, and be careful to record the time, date and address of the site.

Staff are advised that if they receive a message with any attachment which they believe to contain offensive or obscene content, they should not open the attachment but alert a senior member of staff as soon as is practicable. It should not be forwarded to anyone.

Where the perpetrator is known to be a current pupil or colleague, the majority of cases will be dealt with by the school's own disciplinary procedures, with the involvement of other agencies in severe cases.

There have been cyberbullying incidents where pupils have made unfounded, malicious claims against staff members. It is critical to take every claim seriously and investigate it thoroughly. In cases where an allegation is made that an employee or volunteer has behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child, possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, or behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children then that allegation should be reported to the Head immediately. This will then be investigated as outlined in the Allegations policy and in accordance with LA guidelines.

Further advice for staff is available at: [Cyber bullying: advice for headteachers and school staff \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

#### **Further resources:**

Department for Education (2022) Keeping children safe in education 2022 [Keeping children safe in education 2022 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

www.gov.uk Bullying at school: the law  
<https://www.gov.uk/bullying-at-school>

Department for Education (2014) Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying [Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

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This policy was approved by SLT

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Point of contact (Reviewer): Thea Demitriou and Tom Rees (Designated Safeguarding Lead)

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