Anti-bullying Policy

This policy is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) including the Designated Safeguarding Leads.

The Board of Governors considers this policy as part of its collective responsibility to carry out an annual review of safeguarding.

Last review: September 25

Next review: September 26

Scope

This Policy was written with regard to the following guidance:

Keeping children safe in education (September 2025) ('KCSIE').

Working together to safeguard children (updated June 2025) ('WT').

Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (July 2017) Department of Education (DfE)

Cyberbullying – Advice for Headteachers and School Staff' (2014) DfECyberbullying Guidance: Understand, Prevent and Respond – Childnet International

Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services (May 24).

Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools (July 2022).

Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (updated July 2025)

Teaching online safety in schools (January 2023)

Advice and guidance: Tips for tackling discriminatory bullying (EHRC)

Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people (March 24).

Preventing and Tackling Bullying, DfE, July 2017

ISI Inspection Framework, September 2025

Handbook for the inspection of association independent schools, including residential (boarding) schools and registered early years settings, July 2025

The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (September 2025)

Teaching Online Safety in School, DfE, January 2023

Behaviour in Schools: Advice for headteachers and school staff DfE February 2024

Additional advisory materials for parent/s, guardians and staff can be found at Appendix A.

It should be read in conjunction with St Mary's School Cambridge ('School') *Safeguarding and Child Protection policy, Behaviour Management Policy, Discipline, Exclusions and Required Removal Policy, the Online Safety Policy, the Pupil Internet and IT Acceptable Use Policy, PSHEE policy, SEND Policy, Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education Policy and the Arrangements for Risk Assessment*.

Aims and Objectives

At St Mary's School, Cambridge ("the School"), our community is based upon respect for all, good manners and the gospel values of love and justice. We are committed to providing a safe and caring environment that is free from disruption, violence, and any form of harassment so that every one of our pupils can develop to their full potential and learn in a secure environment. We expect our pupils to treat members of staff with courtesy and co-operation so that they can learn in a relaxed, but orderly, atmosphere. All pupils should care for and support each other, inside and outside of School.

The School prides itself on respect and mutual tolerance of others and the celebration of diversity. The School is committed to actively promoting and safeguarding the welfare of its pupils. This policy seeks to produce a consistent approach to bullying and to comply with the School's duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Parents/guardians have an important role in supporting the School in maintaining high standards of behaviour. It is essential that there are consistent expectations of behaviour both at school, online and at home, and that the School and parents co-operate closely together.

This policy is available to parents of pupils and prospective pupils on our website and on request It is also communicated to all staff and pupils.

Bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination of pupils or staff will not be tolerated by the School. We treat all our pupils and their parents fairly, and with consideration, and we expect them to respect the staff, the School and each other, in return. All forms of bullying are unacceptable at the School (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying) and any instances of bullying will be recorded and, where appropriate, will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the School's Behaviour Management Policy.

This policy applies to all day and boarding pupils in the School, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and applies to actions which take place both inside, and outside of the School.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, pregnancy and/or maternity, special educational needs and disability, or because a child is adopted or is a carer – it may occur directly, indirectly or through cyber-technology (social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email).

Put another way, bullying is the intentional hurting, harming, or humiliating of another person. It may take many forms, including but not limited to:

- physical (including any threat of or use of violence of any kind), hitting, kicking, pushing someone around, spitting, fighting, or taking, damaging or hiding someone else's belongings, books, clothes or sports kit or so-called initiation ceremonies or hazing;

- sexual (which may include harmful written comments or spoken words which draw attention to body shape, hair colour, manner of dress, alleged sexual attractiveness (or lack of it), close friendships (or the lack of intimate relationships in an individual's life or other unwanted conduct of a sexual nature such as telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, calling someone sexualised names, sexual jokes or taunting, physical

behaviour such as deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with clothes, displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature and online sexual harassment which may include non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos, sharing of nudes and semi-nudes; inappropriate sexual comments on social media, exploitation, coercion and threats and upskirting); ,

- <u>verbal</u> (including cyberbullying via text messages, email, social media, gaming, or other instant messages, and can include the use of images and video); and/or

- <u>emotional/psychological</u> (including by excluding the person, being sarcastic, name-calling, tormenting or spreading malicious rumours in person or by mobile phone texts, emails or social media).

It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone, or actions that fall short of direct participation, where someone encourages others to bully, or joins in with laughing at a victim. Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and intimidating, and often involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator(s) and the victim(s) whether that be a physical, psychological, or intellectual imbalance, or by the perpetrator(s) having the capacity to socially isolate the victim(s).

Bullying can sometimes amount to child on child abuse, which is defined as abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil. It can be standalone or as part of wider abuse and can happen both inside and outside of school, and online. Further information about child on child abuse, including the procedures to follow when an incident of child on child abuse is reported can be found in the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.

Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups and may involve actions or comments regarding a person's race, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, special education needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions, or because of a child's familial circumstances, such as they are adopted, in care or that they have caring responsibilities. Bullying may be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. For example, bullying can still be homophobic if directed towards a child that is perceived to be gay, whether or not this is the case. A person may be vulnerable to bullying simply because they are new to School and appear to be uncertain or has no friends. They may also become a target because of an irrational decision of a bully.

Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time and can involve anyone- pupils, other young people, staff, and parents.

Where an incident of bullying causes or is likely to cause significant harm to a pupil, the School will follow the procedures set out in the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

The School's Response to Bullying

At the School, we always treat bullying very seriously. It conflicts sharply with the School's social and moral principles, and potentially with its Equality Policy, and will not be tolerated. When incidents of bullying do occur, they are dealt with quickly and taken seriously. The School will never dismiss or downplay bullying as 'banter' or 'horse play', 'just having a laugh' or 'part of growing up'. All reports of bullying will be dealt with by staff in accordance with this policy. Staff will reassure any victim(s) that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.

The School understands that bullying can be so serious that it may cause physical, emotional, and psychological damage, such as eating disorders, self-harm and even suicide. Stopping violence and ensuring the immediate physical safety of pupils is the School's first priority; however, the School acknowledges that emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical bullying, and therefore staff will use their discretion when dealing with an incident of bullying within the parameters of this policy and the Behaviour Management Policy. Whilst bullying itself is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment, sexual violence and assault, the sharing of nudes / semi nudes (in certain circumstances), upskirting and to violent and threatening behaviour. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying: everyone has the right to be treated with respect.

The school recognises that children with SEND or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges and may be more prone to child on child abuse and peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice based bullying) than other children. The School also recognises that certain children may face additional barriers to reporting an incident because of their vulnerability, disability, sex, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation.

Pupils who are victims of bullying will always be supported and will be reassured that they will be kept safe. Pupils who have engaged in bullying behaviour will be subject to appropriate disciplinary sanction and will also, where possible, be supported in learning different ways of behaving and offered support for their own circumstances, where appropriate.

Bullying which occurs on school trips, online, or outside of the School's premises will not be tolerated any more than bullying on School premises. Teachers will, where appropriate, discipline pupils for mis behaviour online, outside School premises and outside School hours.

Signs of Bullying

Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is being bullied include:

- Unwillingness to return to school.
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet.
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually poor work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others.
- Books, bags, money, and other belongings suddenly go "missing", or are damaged.
- Change to established habits (e.g., giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary).
- Diminished levels of self-confidence.
- Frequent visits to the Medical Centre with symptoms which may relate to stress or anxiety, such as stomach pains or headaches.
- Unexplained cuts and bruises.
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, or late arrival to class.
- Choosing the company of adults rather than peers.
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact.
- Difficulty in sleeping or experiencing nightmares; or
- Talking of suicide or running away from home or school.

Although there may be other causes of some of the above symptoms, a repetition or combination of these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents and teachers and reported/ recorded, as appropriate, in accordance with this policy.

Bullying – Preventative Measures

The School's response to bullying does not start at the point in which a pupil has been bullied. We take the following preventative measures in order to create an environment that prevents bullying from becoming a problem at the School in the first place:

Pupils

The School promotes an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat each other with respect at all times, inside and outside of School.

- Class teachers or form tutors remind pupils at the start of the academic year of their responsibility to ensure that bullying does not occur and to talk to a member of staff if they witness, suspect or experience bullying.

- All new pupils (including boarders and EYFS pupils) are briefed thoroughly on the School's expected standards of behaviour. They are told what to do if they encounter bullying. We guarantee that those who report bullying in good faith will not be punished, will be taken seriously and will be supported and kept safe.

- We use appropriate assemblies,Relationships Education and PSHE lessons in the Junior School to explain the School's policy on bullying (including cyberbullying and prejudice -based and discriminatory bullying). Our pastoral programme is structured to give pupils an awareness of their social and moral responsibilities as they progress through the School. The programme is structured to enforce messages about community involvement and taking care of each other. It focuses on the importance of equality and diversity and pupils are encouraged to avoid prejudicial and exclusionary language.

- Other lessons highlight the issue of bullying and reinforce this message by developing social skills and by teaching moral and spiritual values that show bullying to be unacceptable. Staff are aware of learning opportunities in class (drama, stories or interactive activities).

- All of our pupils are encouraged to tell any member of staff at once if they are being bullied, or if they know or suspect that bullying is taking place. They are reassured that they will be taken seriously and will be supported and kept safe.

- All boarders know how to report anxieties to a member of the Boarding staff or to another member of the pastoral team.

- All Senior School pupils have access to the School counsellor and details of how to contact the counsellor are given to all pupils.

- All Boarding pupils have access to the Independent Person and details of how to contact her are on notice boards in Mary Ward House and in the pupil welcome booklet.

- In the Senior School we operate a peer mentoring scheme, whereby trained older pupils are encouraged to offer advice and support to younger pupils.

- The School buildings (including Mary Ward House) display advice on where pupils can seek help, including details of confidential help lines and websites where they can connect with external specialists, such as ChildLine, NSPCC, Kidscape, Bullying UK, Kooth, Papyrus and the Samaritans.

- In the senior school we provide opportunities for students to be leaders in a variety of ways such as the Sixth Form Leadership Team and mentors. We support students in such positions with advice and guidance about how to support younger and potentially more vulnerable students at the start of the school year and at other points in the year where it is appropriate.

- The School does not tolerate peer-group "initiation ceremonies" or hazing rituals designed to cause pain, anxiety or humiliation to pupils, and all staff remain alert to such actions.

Staff

- Upon induction, all new members of staff are given training and guidance on the School's anti-bullying policy and on how to react to, and record allegations of bullying at the School. The School will ensure that all School staff understand the principles of the School's policy, the School's legal responsibilities, actions to be taken to resolve and prevent incidents of bullying from arising or escalating and also details of sources of further support.

- The School recognises that certain children may be more at risk of bullying than others and may require additional support when dealing with an incident of bullying, for example children with SEND and LGBTQ+ pupils. The School will ensure that staff receive appropriate training to be able to understand the specific needs of our pupils, and to enable all staff to provide an inclusive environment for all pupils.

- There is a fixed agenda item on the weekly staff briefing at the Junior School. General pastoral information is shared with colleagues and more specific / personal information is shared with colleagues on a 'need to know' basis.

- All reported incidents are recorded and investigated at once. We always monitor reported incidents. Records of any bullying incidents are kept securely on MyConcern in order that patterns of behaviour can be identified and monitored; incidents of friendship fall-out are logged via an on-going log updated by the Heads of each year to ensure we consider where friendship fall-out may cross into bullying behaviours.

- We have a strong and experienced pastoral team of Tutors, Heads of Year, and Head of Boarding and Matrons who support the Deputy Head Pastoral and Boarding and the Head of Juniors and are trained in handling any incidents as an immediate priority, and who are alert to possible signs of bullying, and will know when to apply our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy to bullying incidents.

- Our pastoral team gives support and guidance to other staff on handling and reporting incidents, and on the follow-up work with both victims and bullies. INSET and Twilight sessions are held regularly using outside experts (where relevant).

- Our trained School Counsellors are an important part of our pastoral support service, providing specialist skills of assessment and counselling. They are available to give confidential advice and counselling support to pupils who can refer themselves to them when they have social, emotional, or behavioural concerns. Any member of teaching staff in the senior school or any member of the senior leadership team or nursing staff may refer a pupil to them as appropriate.

- In the Senior School, the School Chaplain will give support and guidance to pupils of all faiths who are able to refer themselves to him whenever they wish (for example at a time of family break-up, sickness or bereavement). The Chaplain will provide confidential advice and seek to encourage the development of tolerance, understanding and respect for others in a multi-faith community.

- Staff are always on duty at times when pupils are not in class and patrol the School site, particularly at times and in areas where bullying behaviour might occur. They are trained to be alert to inappropriate language or behaviour at all times.

- In the Junior School, 'worried' posters are on display in the classrooms and around school and give advice on who the pupils should speak to if they are worried about something. The House system at the Junior School ensures there is a group whereby the older pupils are encouraged to support younger pupils.

- In both the Junior School and Senior School, anti-bullying posters are on display and anti-bullying week in November provides a further opportunity for discussion in assemblies and form time.

- In Mary Ward House, the Boarding staff act *in loco parentis.* Staff are aware that boarding houses provide more opportunities for bullying and are therefore always vigilant and alert to signs of issues with or between boarders. The informal house environment is important in reinforcing a pupil's standards and values, providing the opportunity for friendly, informal discussion of matters of concern to the individual pupil outside the formal classroom. Boarding house staff are always on duty to supervise the pupils. The school will comply with its obligations as set out in the National Minimum Standards at all times.

- The School has the right, and duty, to investigate incidents of bullying involving our pupils which take place outside school hours, on School visits and trips, or that otherwise occur outside of school. The School has the right to take disciplinary measures in respect of such incidents. Disciplinary measures will be taken in accordance with the School's Behaviour Management Policy and will be applied in a fair, consistent and reasonable manner, taking into account the needs of SEND and certain health conditions and vulnerable pupils.

- Staff will always consider the motive behind bullying behaviour and whether it raises any concerns for the welfare of the perpetrator. If staff reasonably suspect that a pupil may be suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, they should follow the procedures set out in the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and discuss their concerns with the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) without delay.

- This policy is readily available on the School's website and on request which parents are made aware of so that they are clear on the School's approach to bullying and what to do if their child experiences bullying.

- We encourage close contact between the teaching members of staff and parents/guardians and between the Head of Boarding and parents/guardians and will always make contact if we are worried about a pupil's well-being.

- If parents know or suspect that their child, or another pupil, is being bullied, they should contact the School without delay. All concerns will be taken seriously.

- We welcome feedback from parents and guardians on the effectiveness of our preventative measures and all other aspects and implementation of this anti-bullying policy.

Procedures for Dealing with Reported Bullying

The School ensures that all instances of, or concerns about, bullying and cyber-bullying, both on and away from School premises are easy to report and that they are recorded properly. Records of instances of bullying and allegations of bullying will be kept on *MyConcern* and monitored by the Deputy Head - Pastoral and Boarding (Senior School) the Head of Juniors (Junior School). Records will also be kept on files relating to safeguarding where appropriate, in order to enable the School to identify patterns of behaviour and to evaluate the effectiveness of this anti-bullying policy.

The School recognises that pupils are likely to report bullying to someone they trust: this could be any member of staff. The School also recognises that children may not find it easy to tell staff about bullying verbally and that instead they may show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to. It is also recognised that an incident may come to a member of staff's attention through a report of a friend, or by overhearing conversations. All staff will be trained in handling an allegation and will be aware that they must listen to the pupil, not ask leading questions and make a written record of the allegation to the best of their ability.

The School also recognises that a first disclosure to a trusted adult may only be the first incident reported. It is not necessarily representative of a singular incident. Staff will take all reports seriously regardless of how long it has taken for the child to come forward. Staff will act immediately and will support the victim(s) when they raise a concern.

If an incident of bullying is reported, the following procedure will be adopted:

1. The member of staff to whom the incident was reported, or who first discovers the situation, will reassure, and support the pupil/s involved. The member of staff should listen carefully, not ask leading questions, keep an open mind but must not promise absolute confidentiality.

2. The member of staff will record the information regarding the incident/s and inform the Head of Year/Senior Tutor toral and Boarding at the Senior School or at the Junior School, a member of the Junior School SLTabout the bullying allegation as soon as possible. The Deputy Head, Pastoral, Head of Juniors and Boarding/Senior Tutor/Head of Boarding or member of the pastoral team (as relevant) will appoint a designated person ("Case Handler") who will deal with the matter going forward.

3. Where an issue of pupil behaviour or bullying gives 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer, significant harm', staff should follow the procedures set out in the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy rather than the procedure set out below.

4. The victim(s) and the alleged perpetrator(s) will each be interviewed individually by the Case Handler on their own (or, if appropriate, with a suitable person present for support) and asked to write their accounts of events.

5. Where the Case Handler considers that the reported bullying behaviour may be criminal or considers that there may be a risk of harm to someone, the Case Handler will discuss this with the Deputy Head, Pastoral

and Boarding or the Head of Juniors (as relevant) and Head and will report the matter to the police without delay, if considered necessary. The School will then follow the procedures set out in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy as well as any guidance from the Police.

6. The Case Handler will record the incident/s and pass this to the relevant Head of Year (HOY)/member of the Junior School SLT who will log it on the bullying log if it is deemed to be one where a friendship fall-out is leading to unkindness. If bullying is thought to have taken place, a further MyConcern logging concern form is created and uploaded to the system which allows first and further accounts to be recorded as well as actions taken if necessary.

7. The Deputy Head, Junior School member of SLT, Pastoral and Boarding/Senior Tutor or Head of Boarding (as relevant) will inform the tutors or class teacher, Head of Year/s and Head of Boarding (as relevant) of both the alleged perpetrator(s) and the victim(s) as soon as possible. In very serious incidents, the Head should be informed.

8. The victim(s)s will be spoken to at a later stage by a member of the pastoral team, separately from the alleged perpetrator(s). They will be offered support to develop a strategy to help. It will be made clear to them why revenge or retaliation is inappropriate and how the staff can support them.

9. The perpetrator(s) will be spoken to at a later stage by member of the pastoral team, separately from the victim(s), and it will be made clear why their behaviour was inappropriate and caused distress. They will be offered guidance on modifying their behaviour. The School's Behaviour Management Policy may also be invoked. Sanctions under the Behaviour Management Policy and / or Discipline, Exclusions and Required Removal Policy might include, for example, detention and withdrawal of privileges. The School may exclude a pupil, either temporarily or permanently, in cases of serious or persistent bullying, or in the event that the support put in place for the perpetrator(s) does not result in the modification of behaviour to an acceptable level.

10. The parents/ guardians off all parties will be informed and may be invited into School to discuss the matter, and the appropriate sanctions under the Behaviour Management Policy and / or Discipline, Exclusions and Required Removal Policy. The parents support will be sought in respective preventative measures, and any concerns of either party will be addressed.

11. A way forward, including where appropriate disciplinary sanctions and support for the perpetrator(s), should be determined, and where possible agreed with all parties. They should recognise that suitable support may be needed by the pupils who are being bullied, and also by the pupils who bully others, as well as dealing with disciplinary measures in accordance with the School's Behaviour Management Policy and / or Discipline Exclusions and Required Removal Policy if appropriate.

12. As part of this process, a meeting involving all the parties, with close staff supervision, may be convened to help develop a strategy which enables all concerned to close the episode.

13. A monitoring and review strategy will be put in place and put on record.

14. In very serious cases, and only after the Head has been involved, it may be necessary to make a report to the police or Children's Social Care). However, in many cases it will be possible to resolve such issues internally under this policy and the School's Behaviour Management Policy.

Risk Assessment

Where a concern about a pupil's welfare is identified, the risks to that pupil's welfare will be identified, assessed and appropriate action will be taken to reduce the risks identified. The format may vary but the School's approach to promoting pupil welfare will be systematic and pupil focused. The Head and Head of Juniors, as appropriate, has overall responsibility for ensuring that matters which affect pupil welfare in each school are adequately risk assessed and for ensuring that relevant findings and/or necessary changes are implemented, monitored, and evaluated. Day to day responsibility for carrying out risk assessments under this policy will be delegated to the Deputy Head Pastoral

and Boarding in the Senior School or Designated Safeguarding Lead and to the Head of Juniors or Deputy Head in the Junior School, who have been trained in, and tasked with, carrying out the assessment.

Record Keeping

All records created in accordance with this policy are managed in accordance with the Staff Data Protection Policy, the retention guidelines and the information sharing advice all held in St Mary's Cloud all staff - data protection tile. Records created may contain personal data. The School has a number of privacy notices which are published on the School website, and which explain how the School will use the personal data of parents and pupils.

Cyber-Bullying

The way in which pupils relate to one another online can have a significant impact on the culture at school. Negative interactions online can damage the School's culture and can lead to school feeling like an unsafe place. The School makes it clear to pupils that the same standards of behaviour are expected online as apply offline, and that everyone should be treated with kindness, respect and dignity.

Cyber-bullying can be defined as "*the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others*" (Belsey, http://www.cyber-bullying.org/). It is an aggressive, intentional act and often against a victim who cannot easily defend themself. The School acknowledges that cyber-bullying may take place inside School, outside of School and at any time of the day.

Cyber-bullying could involve communications by various electronic media, including for example:

- Texts, instant messages or calls on mobile phones.
- The use of mobile phone camera images to cause distress, fear, or humiliation.
- Posting threatening, abusive, sexual, discriminatory, offensive, or humiliating material or comments on websites (including blogs, personal websites, and social networking sites such as Snapchat, Tik-Tok, Facebook, Instagram, X, or YouTube).
- Using e-mail to message others in a threatening or abusive manner; or
- Hijacking/ cloning e-mail accounts.

The School acknowledges that cyber-bullying may take many different forms including cyber-stalking, exclusion or peer rejection, impersonation, unauthorised publication of private information or images, encouraging derogatory comments on online platforms, upskirting, sharing nudes/semi-nudes (sometimes known as sexting).

The School has a role to play in teaching pupils about the underpinning knowledge and behaviours that can help them to navigate the online world safely and confidently regardless of the device, platform, or app. In taking this forward, the School has regard to the DfE's non-statutory guidance on *Teaching online safety in school* (updated June 2019).

Additional advisory materials for parent/s, guardians and staff can be found at Appendix B.

Prevention of cyber-bullying

For the prevention of cyber-bullying, in addition to the measures described above the School:

- Expects all pupils to adhere to its *Pupil Internet and IT Acceptable Use Policy* and *Online Safety Policy*. Certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and our IT Department monitors pupils' use.
- May impose disciplinary sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse, of the internet in accordance with the *Behaviour Management Policy*.

- Issues all pupils with their own personal School email address. Access to all social media sites and personal email sites such as "Gmail" is not allowed from School computers/ tablets/devices inside the School.

- Offers guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and cyber-bullying in PSHEE lessons, which covers blocking, removing contacts from "friend" lists and sharing their personal data.

- Ensures its pupils are aware of the various forms in which cyber-bullying can take place, that it can have severe and distressing consequences, and that participation in cyber-bullying will not be tolerated.

- Offers guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details private and secure.

- Has a clear policy on mobile phone use by pupils. All students in Years 7-11 are required to hand in their phones into reception at the start of the day. Sixth Formers are reminded that phones should not be used in corridors or in the dining room from 12-2pm each day; and

- Does not allow the use of cameras/ mobile phone cameras in toilets, washing and changing areas, or in the EYFS areas.

Procedures for dealing with cyber-bullying

The School will follow the procedures set out in this policy and the *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy* where relevant for incidents of cyber-bullying, taking such disciplinary action that is considered reasonable in the circumstances, with a view to regulating pupil conduct and protecting the reputation of the School, and the welfare of its pupils.

Although cyber-bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws that may apply to communications of a harassing or threatening manner or the unauthorised publication of private images, upskirting, sharing nudes/semi-nudes and sexting. Where the School considers that a reported incident of cyber-bullying may amount to a criminal offence, it will inform the Police.

The School's procedure for dealing with incidents involving the sharing of nudes or semi-nudes is set out in the School's Safeguarding Child Protection and Policy.

If staff are notified or become aware of an incident of nudes or semi-nudes being shared by a pupil or of a pupil, they will refer the incident to the DSL as soon as possible. The DSL will follow the DDMSC / UKIS guidance "Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people" (March 2024) when responding to a report of sharing nudes and/or semi-nudes. In some circumstances the DSL may make an immediate referral to police and/or children's social care.

Electronic devices

In response to an allegation of cyber-bullying, the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead together with the IT Director (where necessary) are permitted to conduct a search for electronic devices, such as a pupil's mobile phone, with the authority of the Head or Head of Juniors as appropriate. Staff do not require the consent of the pupil, or their parents to undertake a search, provided they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that the pupil is in possession of a prohibited item, or an item that has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence, or to cause personal injury to any person (including the pupil being searched), or to cause damage to property, and provided they have the Head's prior consent to undertake a search.

The search will be conducted in accordance with the procedure set out in the *Search and Confiscation Policy*.

Where a search finds an electronic device that is prohibited by the School rules, or where the member of staff undertaking the search reasonably suspects that the electronic device has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence or cause personal injury or damage to property, the School may examine any data or files on the device, where there is good reason to do so; for example, where there has been an allegation of cyber-bullying. Parental

consent to search through electronic devices is not required but they will be informed after the event unless doing so presents a further risk to any child.

The School may also erase any data or files from the device if the School considers there to be good reason to do so, unless there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the device may contain evidence in relation to a criminal offence, where the files should not be deleted, and the device must be given to the Police without delay.

If, following a search, the member of staff determines that the device does not contain any evidence in relation to an offence, or are advised by the Police following a report to them that they will not take any further action to investigate an alleged offence, the School can decide whether it is appropriate to delete any files or data from the device, and may retain the device as evidence of a breach of this policy and the *Behaviour Management Policy*. The School may then take steps to sanction the pupil in accordance with the *Behaviour Management Policy* and the *Discipline, Exclusions and Required Removal Policy*, where appropriate. In the event that the search highlights a safeguarding concern in respect of any pupil, the School will follow the procedures set out in the School's *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy*.

The School will keep a record of all searches carried out, including the results of any search, and the actions taken following that search.

EYFS Children

Even the School's youngest children are encouraged to behave towards each other with kindness and consideration. They are encouraged to learn to look after their own possessions and to respect others' possessions. We expect them to be honest, helpful, and polite, and to work hard and to listen to others. They should respect everyone and learn to value differences and diversity. Ellie Tagger, the Head of EYFS oversees the management of behaviour in the EYFS setting.

We explain to our EYFS children why some forms of behaviour are unacceptable and hurtful to others. We rarely need to impose sanctions in the EYFS setting; but sometimes we may remove a privilege for hurtful behaviour. Occasionally, a child may be sent to see Bethany Woolfenden, Head of Pastoral Care, who will discuss (possibly with the support of a member of SLT) the inappropriateness of a particular action/behaviour and help them to reflect on it; but such instances are rare. Parents are always informed when any sanction or reproof is needed towards their child, and in cases of repeated instances of hurtful or inappropriate behaviour, parents will be invited into the School to discuss the situation with the child's teacher and/or the Head of EYFS and if appropriate a member of SLT, to agree a joint way of moving forward.

Please see the EYFS Policy and Junior School Positive Behaviour Policy for more information.

Complaints Procedure

Parents and pupils are encouraged to use our *Complaints Policy and Procedure* (which is published on our website) if they feel that any concerns about bullying (or anything else) are not being addressed properly. Parents of boarders and of EYFS children should be aware that they have the right to refer a complaint directly to Ofsted or the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI), if they are unhappy with the way in which their complaint has been handled (the *Complaints Policy and Procedure* explains how to complain to Ofsted/ISI).

Monitoring and Review

The School will record all incidents of reported bullying in accordance with this policy.

The Head of Juniors and the Deputy Head Pastoral and Boarding will review all incidents of reported bullying to help identify patterns of behaviour, so that the School can take appropriate steps to address bullying behaviours within

the School. Records of bullying incidents will also be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the School's anti-bullying procedures, and to highlight any necessary amendments.

Appendix A

Useful websites and telephone numbers:

www.childline.org.uk

Tel 0800 1111 freephone number, helpline for children and young people providing advice and support by phone and online 24 hours a day

www.nspcc.org.uk

Tel 0800 800 5000 helpline for parents, adults and children for advice and support to report suspected incidents of bullying

www.familylives.org.uk

www.youngminds.org.uk

www.childnet.com

Thinkuknow: Parents and Carers

www.kidscape.org.uk

www.Kooth.com

www.cyberbullying.org

www.changingfaces.org.uk

www.theredcard.org

Appendix B

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using technology.

Pupils should remember the following:

- The *Pupil Internet and IT Acceptable Use Policy* sets out the School rules about the use of School and personal devices and technology.

- Think before you send – whatever you send can be made public very quickly and could stay online forever and could be viewed by the public, family and friends and by future employers.

- Respect others. Think about what language you use online and what images you send/share.

- If you or someone you know are being cyberbullied, then tell someone. Tell someone you trust such as your parents, any member of staff, or a helpline such as Childline on 0800 1111.

- Do not reply online.

- Save the evidence – learn how to keep recording of messages, pictures, or online conversations and this will help to show what is happening and can be used by the School to investigate the matter.

- Don't do nothing. Block the bully and report him/her.

The following websites may be helpful:

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

Thinkuknow: Parents and carers

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

https://mysafetynet.org.uk/