Anti-Bullying Policy
Including EYFS
Abbotsford Preparatory School

1. Introduction

It is a Government requirement that all schools have an anti-bullying policy. Our policy reflects the DfE guidance, in particular 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (DfE, 2017) and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (DfE, 2025).

This policy should be read in conjunction with the policies listed below:

- Admissions and Exclusions
- Behaviour and Discipline
- Non-Discrimination and Inclusion
- PSHCE
- Safeguarding and Child Protection

2. Policy Aims

The aim of this policy is to prevent and deal with bullying, so students can enjoy an environment to safely learn, work and play in. Bullying is incredibly serious, with both potential physical and emotional effects, which may cause psychological damage.

Official and community-decided definitions of bullying, descriptions of the school's procedures, and outlining the support offered to victims will assist in reaching this aim.

3. What is Bullying?

The DfE guidance defines bullying as actions that are meant to be hurtful, and which happen on a regular basis. Bullying can be direct (either physical or verbal) or indirect (e.g. being ignored or not spoken to).

The NSPCC's definition of bullying is 'when individuals or groups seek to harm, intimidate or coerce someone who is perceived to be vulnerable (Oxford English Dictionary, 2018). It can involve people of any age, and can happen anywhere – at home, school or using digital technologies (cyberbullying). This means it can happen at any time. Bullying encompasses a range of behaviours which are often combined. Bullying also can overlap and may also mean child-on-child abuse is occurring. For more information on this, please read the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.

Our students were asked the question 'What is bullying?' and the school has adopted the following collaborative definition of bullying which is our shared understanding of what bullying is:

"Bullying is any deliberate, hurtful, upsetting, frightening, or threatening behaviour by an individual or a group towards other people. It is repeated over a period of time, and it is very difficult for victims to defend themselves. Bullying is mean and results in worry, fear, pain and distress to the victim/s".

Bullying can happen anywhere in the classroom, in the corridor, in the toilets, in the dining hall, in the playground; it can happen outside school (e.g. offsite visits, cyberbullying)

Methods of bullying:

- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, throwing stones, biting, spitting, punching, or any other forms of violence, taking or hiding someone's things.
- Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, threats, teasing, making rude remarks, making fun of someone, also includes writing down hurtful material.
- Gestures: Offensive hand gestures, malicious imitation, or any bodily action intended to communicate a spiteful message.
- Indirect /emotional: excluding an individual from social groups, spreading nasty stories about a person, nasty rumours, tormenting, ridicule, humiliation.
- Online/cyber: setting up 'hate websites', sending offensive text messages, emails and abusing the victims via their mobile phones, 'trolling', creating, and sharing embarrassing or malicious images or videos, excluding from online group, hijacking identities.
- Initiation/'Ceremonies': practice of rituals, challenges and other activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group. The initiation rites can range from relatively benign pranks to protracted patterns of behaviour that can rise to the level of abuse or criminal misconduct. It may include physical or psychological abuse. It may include nudity or sexual assault and are aware this could look different at different ages in our school.

Direction of bullying (including Prejudiced-based bullying due to a protected characteristic):

- Cultural: Focusing on and/or playing off perceived cultural differences or similarities.
- Homophobic: focussing on the issue of sexuality directed towards people who are or are perceived as gay or bisexual.
- Racist: Targeting individuals for their race or ethnicity.
- Religious: Attacking faith, belief, religious practice or custom.
- Sexual: Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
- Sexist: Use of sexual language, negative stereotyping, or disrespectful actions on the basis of gender.
- SEND: Remarking upon, drawing attention to, or discriminating against persons with physical disabilities or learning difficulties or other identified special educational needs.
- Transphobic: bullying based on the topic of someone's gender identity.
- Personal: Bullying can be targeted at individuals for their recent actions, or their personal relationships/identity, outside of a wider group such as the categories above. Repeatedly targeting individuals for non-categorizable reasons or a combination of multiple factors still counts as bullying and will not be tolerated.

Students sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise, it is not classed as bullying. The school has pastoral systems in place to support with friendship and behaviour issues. This includes recording all incidents, so that any patterns can be identified, and one-off incidents can be discounted as being the start of bullying.

4. Training

Through our online training portal Educare, INSETs, and other appropriate mediums, the school will provide training on the following areas:

- ensuring the principles of the school policy are understood;
- reporting and recording arrangements;
- ensuring legal responsibilities are known;
- ensuring action is defined to resolve and prevent problems, including in relation to on-line bullying;
- understanding that sources of support are available, particularly to understand the needs of and support students with protected characteristics (SEND, LGBT, etc).

5. School systems for reporting and monitoring bullying

When it is reported that a student is being bullied (either by themselves or by someone else) then action will be taken promptly and firmly, usually within a day. The allegation will be thoroughly investigated by the Headteacher, (or nominated senior member of staff). Both victim and alleged bully will be interviewed separately, and a record of the incident will be kept by the Headteacher. The bully will be informed that such behaviour is unacceptable and be made aware of the consequences of their actions (in line with our Behaviour and Discipline policy). Whenever an accusation is made, staff will gather as much information as possible to ascertain the facts before any action is taken, unless of course there appears to be a health and safety risk. The Headteacher will monitor patterns of behaviour by protected characteristics so that action can be taken.

Procedures

Procedures should be followed by staff as closely as possible when a complaint of bullying is brought to their attention. In the first instance, care should be taken to reassure and comfort the victim and deal with the situation as quickly as is reasonably possible.

i. Listen to the complaint carefully, make notes if necessary. Do not make judgements at this stage. Make a record using the 'Student Incident File', copy to the Headteacher and place in the student files (instigator and victim). This enables staff to see if there is a pattern of bullying emerging and to decide whether parents should be informed.
ii. Gather evidence to support the claim from other adults or students who may have witnessed the incident. (seek advice from senior colleagues if necessary). Hear what the victim and perpetrator have to say, really listening and allowing them to express their feelings at length.
iii. Convene a meeting of those involved in the bullying, including the instigators and some observers (the victim can be absent if they prefer)
iv. Explain that there is a problem for the victim and recount their story in a clear way so that the feelings of distress are described.
v. State that you know members of the group are responsible people and can do something about it.
vi. Ask group members for suggestions about ways in which they might help and ensure that these are put into place. Follow-up to ensure that the matter has been resolved.
vii. All details of the procedure should be recorded, including whether the bullying is prejudice-based (of protected characteristics).

As per child-on-child abuse procedures, if staff suspect or know that a student is being harmed or is likely to suffer significant harm, that incidence of bullying is treated as a child protection concern, the DSL will be alerted, and school safeguarding procedures will be followed. Similarly, if a student

is at risk of immediate harm, then staff will follow the school's safeguarding procedures and will report immediately to the LADO. Finally, if the school suspects or believes that a crime may have been committed, the school will inform the police.

In most cases, once a bullying incident has been reported and the students involved spoken to, there will be no further incidents. If bullying persists then parents of both the bully and the victim will be informed and encouraged to work with the school to stop this happening again. In such cases the students involved will be highlighted to all staff to help monitor and prevent the bullying. The Headteacher (or nominated senior member of staff) is responsible for investigating. **(The Headteacher must be consulted before contacting parents.)**

Where it is found that a student is carrying out bullying, the Headteacher (or nominated senior member of staff) arranges a separate meeting with the parents of both the bully and the victim. Both the victim and the bully may be offered counselling and support. It may be necessary to exclude the bully if they do not stop bullying. Exclusions procedures will be followed (please see Admissions and Exclusions Policy).

Preventing Bullying

Staff should be familiar with the school's behaviour policy promoting positive behaviour through the school council, circle time, assemblies, displays, stories etc. Members of the school community should be encouraged to report instances of bullying straight away. Students may also be used to support other students e.g., circle of friends, peer mediation. Students should be made aware that being a bystander to bullying could mean being complicit in that bullying. Whistle-blowers who act in good faith will be supported irrespective of the outcome. All classes have behaviour expectations in the classrooms and children are reminded about these on a regular basis.

6. Who bullying can be reported to?

All members of staff take bullying seriously. Students are encouraged to tell someone straight away if they think they are being bullied or if one of their friends is being bullied, or if they find themselves as a bystander to a bullying situation. In assemblies/PSHCE lessons they are told they can tell any adult including:

- A member of staff in the playground
- Their class teacher
- Lunch time supervisors
- Classroom assistants
- Office staff
- The Headteacher
- Their parents
- A friend or fellow student who is prepared to tell an adult

Parents should approach the class teacher in the first instance if they have concerns about their child being bullied. If their concerns continue, they can speak to the Deputy Headteacher or Headteacher.

If bullying remains a consistent problem, then reporting to, and asking for advice from external agencies (such as Family Lives 0808 800 2222) may be necessary. Further helplines and agencies are listed at the end of this policy.

7. Support for Students

Victims will be:

- encouraged to confide in a named member of staff if the bullying continues;
- helped to develop positive strategies and appropriate assertive skills;
- monitored in class by teacher and in playground by meal supervisors;
- told how the bullies have been dealt with;
- encouraged to share feelings during class discussion times;
- supported through restorative justice methods if bullying persists;

Bullies will be:

- made aware of the seriousness of their actions and possible consequences;
- monitored in class by teacher and in playground by lunch time supervisors;
- where behaviour does not improve, have their own personal behaviour plan.

If bullying persists parents of victim and bullies will be informed and involved in the restorative justice process.

After the bullying has ceased, the students and families involved will continue to receive support from the school from time to time in order to ensure that incidents are not continuing.

All students will also be supported through the use of the curriculum, where it can be used to:

- raise awareness about bullying and the anti-bullying policy;
- increase understanding for victims and help build an anti-bullying ethos;
- build resilience in pupils to protect themselves and their peers through education and information;
- teach students how constructively to manage their relationships with others.

At the School opportunities for students to discuss bullying and relationships are found through the following means:

- Assemblies
- Class assemblies
- Direct teaching through PSHCE
- Circle time
- Cooperative group work

Care is taken to include students with SEND in curriculum work about bullying in an appropriate way for their individual needs. The school recognises that pupils with SEND may be more vulnerable and at risk of being the victim of bullying and therefore maintain vigilance regarding this. .

8. Sources of further information support and help

There is a vast amount of information and guidance available about bullying that can provide a wide range of support and help. The following list is just a small selection of the support available that teachers, parents and students have found useful.

Childline	0800 1111 (Helpline for children)	www.childline.org.uk
Parentline Plus	0808 800 2222	www.parentline.org.uk
NSPCC	0808 800 5000	www.nspcc.org.uk
The Children's Legal Centre	01206 872 466	www.childrenslegalcentre.com
Department for Education	0370 000 2288	https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education

9. Monitoring and evaluation of the policy

As with all our policies, the school will strive to ensure this policy is effective, follows the relevant guidance, and adheres to the principles of the School. This will be achieved through regular monitoring and evaluation by the Headteacher, who holds the responsibility of this policy. During this review, amendments will be made where necessary and agreed upon with the Proprietor.

Date	Position	Name of Reviewer	Date of Next Review
August 2025	Headteacher	C Howard	August 2026
August 2025	Proprietor	Mr A. Khan	August 2026