



Lancing Prep Hove

A Lancing College Preparatory School

Anti-Bullying Policy (Including Cyberbullying) 2026-2027

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

INTRODUCTION

This policy refers to the whole school, including those that work in the EYFS setting. It is an aim of the school that it will “provide a safe, welcoming, supportive and tolerant environment in which each pupil feels valued as an individual, and in turn, learns the importance of tolerance and consideration towards others.”

We believe that the school should be a happy and positive community. We expect pupils to be diligent, honest and considerate in their relationships with others. The example set by staff is of itself helpful in creating a climate in which pupils feel valued, secure and happy. The mutual respect with which staff regard 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.

The scope of this policy extends to bullying actions occurring out of school that have a negative effect on pupils in school and the school has a responsibility to respond to disclosures of bullying to its pupils occurring outside the school, in particular where a pupil's wellbeing and progress in school may be affected.

The school adopts a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and child-on-child abuse. Bullying will never be dismissed as banter, harmless fun, part of growing up or an accepted aspect of school life. All reports will be taken seriously, investigated appropriately and acted upon without delay.

DEFINITION

Bullying is a negative action that is intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally. Bullying may be a group or individual activity; it may be a single incident, or a pattern of behaviour repeated over time. It is often motivated by prejudice, for example on grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. It may occur directly or through cyber-technology (social networking websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email). It may result in serious physical and/ or psychological damage for the victim and, in the most tragic of circumstances, may lead to suicide.

AIM

Lancing Prep Hove aims 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 matters of concern to them, and that their concerns will be heard and acted upon. Bullying can only thrive in a culture of secrecy and silence. Pupils, parents and staff should be aware that bullying of any sort is not tolerated at Lancing Prep Hove. All members of staff should be acquainted with the anti-bullying policy and procedures. All staff should be sensitive to the needs of pupils who are the victims of bullying.

OBJECTIVES

- To ensure the protection of pupils from bullying
- To promote communication and good listening
- To ensure that correct procedures are followed
- To make sure that pupils know that involvement in bullying as a serious offence and will be treated as such by the school
- To ensure that pupils and staff are aware that cyber-bullying and bullying outside school should also be reported and will be acted upon.

IDENTIFYING BULLYING

Bullying:

- is sometimes a group activity
- may be one-off or systematic
- is deliberately hostile
- leads to personal distress
- may include the use of technology to perpetrate the abuse, eg “cyberbullying”

It includes:

- threats of violence
- actual violence
- ignoring/shunning
- teasing
- name-calling
- interfering with property
- racially offensive remarks and behaviour
- sexually offensive remarks and behaviour
- incitement 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
- ‘banter’ – verbal sparring or joking where the intention is to hurt, embarrass or discomfort or where this is the outcome in a relationship where there is an imbalance of power

Pupils may also be involved in or subject to other forms of child-on-child abuse, which may include (but are not limited to):

- gender-based violence or intimidation
- initiation rites
- sexual assault
- sending sexually explicit material/ pictures or coercing others to do so or sharing such images (‘Sexting’)

The school recognises that some pupils, including those with SEND, mental health needs, social care involvement or other vulnerabilities, may be at increased risk of bullying or may experience barriers to reporting concerns.

BULLIES AND VICTIMS

It would be impossible, and wrong, to quantify what makes someone likely to bully and why some individuals may be subject to such behaviour, but there are some patterns which staff may note:

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

Young people who are bullied:

- may be unable to manage social situations with ease and lack self-confidence
- 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, religious belief, disability etc)
- may experience difficulties forming friendships

Those who exhibit bullying behaviour may also have been bullied. Lancing Prep Hove, whilst dealing stringently with any form of bullying, will also work with, support, counsel and educate those who have bullied as well as caring for those who have been the victims of bullying.

SIGNS OF BULLYING

A pupil may not disclose that bullying is taking place but there may be outward signs that would alert staff to concern that this might be the case:

- property and work damaged or lost more than is usual for the age group
- unexplained injuries or an injury inconsistent with the explanation
- a pupil becoming withdrawn and reluctant to say why
- indicators of anxiety – eg hyper-alert behaviour, stomach aches
- a decline in academic attainment
- a reluctance to attend school
- requests to be accompanied to and from school
- unusual patterns of behaviour regarding money and possessions
- depression in the pupil; a reluctance to eat or play normally; unhappiness, moodiness, irritability
- a pupil who frequently visits pupil wellbeing officer or says that they are unwell
- significant change in generally observed mood, behaviour and responses
- anger and aggression

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.

Pupils may report concerns to any trusted adult, their Form Tutor, Pastoral Lead, Peer Mentor, the DSL or Deputy DSL, through pastoral surveys, or by asking a parent to raise concerns on their behalf.

CYBERBULLYING

Cyberbullying is the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to hurt or upset someone else. Cyberbullying may consist of threats, harassment, embarrassment, humiliation, defamation, or impersonation. Cyberbullying may involve the use of email, VLEs, chat rooms, web sites, social networking sites, mobile phones, digital cameras, games, and virtual world sites.

Some features of cyberbullying are different from other forms of bullying: Cyberbullying can take place 24/7, intruding into the home and places that have previously been regarded as safe and private. Cyberbullying may also include the creation, sharing or distribution of AI-generated content, including manipulated images, videos, deepfakes or digitally altered material intended to intimidate, humiliate, threaten or harm another person.

The audience can be very large and rapidly reached. The difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages means that the scope and scale of cyberbullying can be greater than for other forms of bullying.

The profile of the person being bullied, and bully may not rely on traditional power imbalances. The target of the bully will have evidence of its occurrence through the 'digital footprint', which can potentially be used as evidence.

There may not be a clear intention to hurt or distress, in some cases. The person responsible may not realise that remarks are publicly accessible or persistent or the amplified effect that technologies produce.

We believe that pupils can be positively used to combat cyberbullying through the awareness and positive intervention of senior pupils through the 'Peer mentor' scheme currently under development and through the opportunity to hear and respond to pupil voice through Form tutor time or the School Council.

Cyberbullying: roles and responsibilities for online safety

Our Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy states that: Every pupil should feel safe and protected from any form of abuse (including that perpetrated by the use of technology i.e. Cyberbullying – 1.7).

The Deputy Head and the Head take a lead on incidents of the misuse of IT and in overseeing anti-cyberbullying activity. They work closely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead whose role is to oversee the wider safeguarding strategy including online safety. The Head of IT and Head of PSHE include teaching online safety as part of their respective curriculums and share responsibility for the effective delivery of this.

The Head of PSHE liaises with the Head of IT, the Deputy Head and Head of Pre-Prep in ensuring the delivery of age appropriate PSHE Education focused on such issues.

The school has robust data protection policies, and the management of personal data is in line with statutory requirements under the terms of the Data Protection Act. The Data Controller is Mark Milling (Chief Privacy Officer)

Cyberbullying and the Law

Whilst there is not a specific criminal offence called cyberbullying, activities can be a criminal offence under a range of laws including:

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997

The Malicious Communications Act 1988

Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003

The Public Order Act 1986

The Defamation Acts of 1952 and 1996.

Cyberbullying: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff 2014

Acceptable Use Policies

These govern both pupil and staff use of technologies. All pupil and staff users of ICT within the school agree to abide by and within these policies. The policies scope includes:

Rules on the use of equipment, software and network access provided by the school (eg iPads, VLE, internet access).

The use of staff and pupil owned equipment and internet access routes, where they are used on school premises (eg mobile phones, laptops, digital cameras).

Acceptable behaviour for pupils and employees, including behaviour out of school where potential harm to others or bringing the school into disrepute might be occasioned.

Combatting Cyberbullying

All pupils in the Prep School are trained in Digital Safety awareness and Online Citizenship, including age-appropriate information about grooming, internet sites containing violent or adult content, and sharing personal information / photographs.

Parents are invited to events throughout the year focused towards supporting pupils in their Online Safety, including where visiting speakers share advice and expertise. The Head of PSHE Education and Deputy Head speak to all pupils in Years 5 – 8 annually about Digital Safety and write to the parents about keeping their children safe online, particularly in relation to social media. In addition, children are taught how to stay safe online in their IT lessons by the Head of IT.

A number of staff have undertaken specific online safety safeguarding training including the Head of PSHE Education and Head of IT. This has been cascaded to the staff.

The Policy to promote good behaviour, the Code of Conduct, Acceptable Use Policies, and the Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policies all outline school guidance and information relevant to cyberbullying.

Acceptable Use Policies provide guidance in the classroom and beyond for all users including staff, pupils, and visitors, as does the Social Media Policy. There are clear sanctions outlined for the failure to adhere to these policies.

The school's commitment to the ICT infrastructure, to developing teaching and learning strategies using the VLE and iPads and to fostering independent learning ensures that engaging use of technologies is supported and the positive use of technology is modelled through safe and effective practice.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe when using ICT and are aware of their responsibilities in their use of such technologies.

Pupils at Lancing Prep Hove are not allowed to bring mobile phones or other devices which connect to the internet into school. If a pupil needs a mobile phone as s/he travels to school independently, s/he must hand it in to the office on arrival at school. It is returned to the pupil on departure. Pupils who fail to hand their phones in receive sanctions according to the sanctions described in the policy to promote good behaviour.

The school may, in law, confiscate and search any mobile phone where there is reasonable cause to believe it contains pornographic images or has been used to commit an offence or contains material which could cause personal injury to any person (including the pupil owning it). Please see link below for further information:

[Searching, Screening and Confiscation \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/612222/Searching_Screening_and_Confiscation.pdf)

The school's technical provision and infrastructure filters and monitors inappropriate content and alerts the school to safeguarding issues; and the IT Department at Lancing College are active in flagging concerns.

The school provides class sets of iPads for use in classrooms. These are monitored closely by the teachers in class and are subject to the school's filters which monitor inappropriate content and alert the school to safeguarding issues. Pupils who misuse school iPads are subject to the sanctions described in the Policy to promote good behaviour.

Through a focus on Safer Internet Day; through discussion; through PSHE Education and through the PSHE for Parents Programme at both the school and Lancing College, the school builds resilience and awareness in our pupils as well as ensuring our parents are informed about online safety and the part they can play.

Procedures for dealing with cyberbullying

Teachers should respond as for any bullying incident with the addition that:

The victim should be advised to keep any records of the abuse – text, emails, voice mail, web site or instant message. Screen shots should be taken of messages or web pages and a careful record taken of time, date, and site address.

The member of staff should collect such information as is immediately available (eg copies of emails, text messages, photos) and pass on this material/ evidence to those undertaking further investigation.

The victim should be advised not to retaliate to incidents.

If brought into school, a phone / iPad/ other device which is deemed likely to have been used in cyberbullying should be removed from the likely perpetrator and may be searched. The list of appropriate people to whom such an incident be reported would include the Director of IT at Lancing College.

Procedures to follow when reporting bullying, including cyber-bullying, and bullying outside school

Any staff member suspecting that a child is being bullied or seeing clear evidence of bullying, including cyber-bullying, or bullying outside school, must report this immediately to the Deputy Head who will report it to the SMT. A record is made in the Pupil Notes on iSAMS for all children concerned, the Record of Bullying Incidents and in the Record of further sanctions for imposed for misbehaviour as and when sanctions are applied. This ensures that bullying issues can be monitored, and patterns identified. It also enables us to note the effectiveness of the approach adopted by the school.

Records of bullying incidents will be maintained securely in accordance with safeguarding and data protection requirements. Information will be shared with relevant staff and agencies where necessary to safeguard children and promote their welfare.

COMBATting BULLYING – SUPPORT STRUCTURES

The school recognises that bullying incidents can affect victims, those displaying bullying behaviour and bystanders. Appropriate pastoral support, education and intervention will be provided to all those involved to promote wellbeing and prevent recurrence.

1. All staff, in particular class teachers, have a responsibility for promoting an atmosphere of respect and tolerance. The Lancing Prep 'ABC' reinforces this expectation.
2. Gary Bird is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at Lancing College, responsible for matters of child protection, which includes the anti-bullying policy. Dan Clifton is the DSL at the Prep School, himself supported by Lianne Morrison (Deputy DSL).
3. Alun Price is the Deputy Head and is in overall charge of pastoral matters in school.
4. Lianne Morrison (Pre-Prep), Dan Clifton (Y3-5) and Alun Price (Y6-8) are pastoral leads for allotted year groups.
5. At the beginning of the school year, Alun Price / Dan Clifton / Lianne Morrison deliver an assembly to all Pre-prep and Prep school pupils to explain what any child should do should they feel that they are the victim of bullying or are witness to a bullying incident. Clear reference is made to the school policy and 'protected characteristics' are discussed
6. Each term, all pupils in school are asked to complete a pastoral survey which mentions interactions with peers and their understanding of how to deal with any concerns. The data collected from these surveys is analysed by the SLT and informs any necessary Form tutor or whole school interventions
7. Anti-Bullying Week in the autumn term each year to give focus for discussion and particular initiatives. Workshops are provided for the Pre-Prep children as part of their continuing relationships education.
8. PSHE Education & RSE (Relationships and Sex Education) teaching and learning supports all children in developing an understanding positive relationships with peers and having respect for others who may be different both **offline and online** (see PSHE Education schemes of work for more information). Pre-prep staff deliver lessons, and regularly refer, to trusted adults that they can speak with if they have any concerns. In the Early Years

Foundation Stage, staff will respond immediately to behaviour that may constitute bullying and will support children through age-appropriate teaching, modelling, discussion and restorative approaches. Concerns will be shared with parents promptly and recorded as appropriate. Children's developmental stage will be taken into account when assessing incidents.

9. Regular staff training (including Child Protection (Safeguarding) induction and update training) raises awareness, ensures that school policy is understood and responsibilities are known, legal responsibilities are known, actions are defined to resolve and prevent problems and sources of support are explicitly known about. All staff know that a bullying incident should be treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. All staff are aware of their responsibility to pass on a record of any bullying concern/incident to the DSL as well as the Deputy Head. Pastoral issues are raised weekly during the Pastoral team meeting, staff briefings and also weekly SMT meetings for discussion, review and action where applicable.
10. The Prep School runs a Peer mentor programme (coordinated by Sophie White) whereby selected pupils in Y7-8 train as peer mentors and make themselves available to listen to questions or concerns from other pupils. Training takes place over 6 hours where students learn the importance of wellbeing, why using a peer approach is so beneficial and how to react to different situations children might bring their way. They are also taught who they should speak to in the case of a safeguarding/bullying concern etc.
11. Details of outside agencies (eg Childline) are made available to pupils.
12. School prefects play a role in looking after younger pupils and provide reassurance and advice
13. Opportunities are explored to involve parents in relevant training, eg from external speakers

COMBATTING BULLYING – THE CURRICULUM

1. Religious and Moral education: The aim of promoting a tolerant, supportive environment within the school is reinforced in the continuing religious and moral education as delivered in Religion, Ethics and Philosophy lessons and through assemblies.
2. PSHE Education: The problem of bullying is discussed in the PSHE Education programme.
3. IT: Safer Internet Day is given full focus, as well as visiting speakers / advice groups giving presentations to children and parents regarding safe, positive and responsible use of IT and emerging technologies.
4. 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, (or 'banter' where discomfort is perceived) and communicate concerns swiftly with the form teacher of pupils concerned.

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH BULLYING

If as a member of staff (and this includes *any* person employed by the school: teachers, support staff, peripatetic teachers, Gap Students etc.) 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 the 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 and indicate what actions you will take in follow up and who you will inform
- remember that you are not able to guarantee secrecy
- offer support to the pupil – assure him/her 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.
- if cyberbullying is involved, collect as much information as is immediately available (eg copies of emails / screenshots / text messages / photos) and pass on this material / evidence to those undertaking further investigation

Then:

- refer the incident as soon as possible to the appropriate person (Form teacher, Lianne Morrison (PP), Dan Clifton (Y3-5) or Alun Price (Y6-8))
- 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
- pass on a brief record to relevant member of staff who maintain a central record of alleged bullying incidents
- continue to support the pupil

SANCTIONS

For bullying these could range from a quiet word with those involved to expulsion, depending on the nature of the incident and the previous record of those involved. Other responses might include lunchtime detention, evening detention, suspension or a combination of these. In the case of cyberbullying, any of the above might be deemed appropriate, as might a period of confiscation of a device or circumscribed use of the Prep school network. In all bullying incidents, parents are involved / informed of concerns at the earliest opportunity and partnership with parents is seen as crucial in making sure that pupils are clear about the part they can play in preventing bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders.

In particular circumstances, if the law has been broken in a bullying incident, the school will refer the matter to the police. Where it is unclear whether the law has been broken, the school will seek the guidance of a Police Liaison Officer in order to inform a response. A child protection referral will be made in respect of a bullying incident where there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

The school's view is that a pupil who persistently makes life miserable for others should not expect to remain at the school.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

The Policy to promote good behaviour (including sanctions)

The Safeguarding policy

Child on child abuse policy

Online safety policy

The SEND policy

PSHE Education schemes of work

Recent government guidance to schools is recommended reading for all staff: [Behaviour in Schools - Advice for headteachers and school staff \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/672222/behaviour-in-schools-guidance.pdf)

Date: September 2026 (AP)

For review: September 2027 by Alun Price, Deputy Head