THE PERSE SCHOOL
CAMBRIDGE

Anti-Bullying Policy (Pupils)

The Perse School

September 2026

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SCOPE

This is the Anti-Bullying policy of The Perse School ("the School") which comprises the Perse Pelican Nursery and Pre Preparatory School including the EYFS setting ("the Perse Pelican School"), the Perse Preparatory School ("the Perse Prep School") and the Perse Upper School ("the Upper School").

This policy applies to the whole School including the Early Years Foundation Stage (**EYFS**).

This policy applies to all pupils at the School and at all times when a pupil is:

- In or at school (to include any period of remote provision);
- Representing the School or wearing School uniform;
- Travelling to or from School;
- On School-organised trips;
- Associated with the School at any time; or
- In the care of the School or not and the School becomes aware of an incident of bullying.

This policy shall also apply to pupils at all times and places in circumstances were failing to apply this policy may:

- Affect the health, safety or wellbeing of a member of the School community or a member of the public
- Have repercussions for the orderly running of the School; or
- Bring the School into disrepute.

This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.

The Board of Governors has overall responsibility for all matters which are the subject of this policy.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The School aims to produce a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety.

In keeping with its values, the School believes that all children and all adults in the Perse community should value one another by behaving in a kind and considerate fashion.

Bullying is wrong and damages children. The School therefore does all it can to prevent it, by developing a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable. The aims of this policy are:

- to actively promote and safeguard the welfare of all its pupils.
- To maintain and drive a positive and supportive culture amongst all pupils and staff throughout the School.
- to make all those connected with the School aware of its opposition to bullying and makes clear each person's responsibilities with regard to the prevention of bullying in school.
- to produce a consistent response to any bullying on a case-by-case basis.
- to help to promote a whole school culture of openness, safety, equality and protection from all forms of harm and abuse to comply with the School's duties under the Equality Act 2010.

This policy forms part of the School's whole school approach to promoting child safeguarding and wellbeing, which seeks to involve everyone at the School to ensure that the best interests of pupils underpins and is at the heart of all decisions, systems, processes and policies.

Although this policy is necessarily detailed, it is important to the School that our policies and procedures are transparent, clear and easy to understand for staff, pupils, parents and carers. The School welcomes feedback on how we can continue to improve our policies.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

This policy has been drawn up with assistance from guidance issued by the Department for Education (**DfE**), Preventing and tackling bullying (July 2017), and will be reviewed against any new government guidance issued from time to time. This policy also has regard to the following guidance and advice: Keeping children safe in education (DfE September 2025); Working together to safeguard children 2026; Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners (DfE, May 2024); Sexual and sexist bullying: developing effective anti-bullying practice (Anti-Bullying Alliance), Equality Act 2010: advice for schools (DfE, June 2018), Searching screening and confiscation: advice for schools (DfE, July 2022, in force from September 2022); Relationships education, relationships and sex education and health education guidance (DfE, July 2025 for implementation from 1 September 2026), Advice and guidance: How can we stop prejudice based bullying in schools (Equality and Human Rights Commission); Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people (DSIT and UKSIC, March 2024); Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff (DfE, February 2024); Mobile phones in schools: guidance (DfE, February 2026); Technical guidance for schools in England (Equality and Human Rights Commission, July 2024); Plan technology for your school (HM Government, September 2024); and Generative AI: product safety expectations (DfE, January 2025).

ADDITIONAL ADVISORY MATERIALS FOR PARENTS AND STAFF

The DfE has also published the following advice notes to supplement *Preventing and tackling bullying* (July 2017):

Cyber Bullying: Advice for Head teachers and School Staff
Advice for Parents and Carers on Cyberbullying.

These can be found on the Government website at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying.

The following websites provide a source of information and advice:

Changing Faces
Show Racism the Red Card
https://www.annefrank.org.uk/Child Exploitation and Online Protection Education
Childnet International
Equality and Human Rights Commission: Advice and Guidance: How can we stop prejudice-based bullying in schools

1 BULLYING

1.1. It is a regrettable feature of the modern world that bullies can be found in many areas of life. Bullying is not confined to any particular sex, age, ethnicity or occupation. In schools in the UK, bullying is thought to affect many thousands of pupils. Bullying can cause profound unhappiness, psychological damage and even suicide.

1.2. Bullying is always unacceptable and will not be dismissed as being normal or as "banter", "just having a laugh", "boys will be boys" or simply "part of growing up". Bullying will not be tolerated by the School because:

1.2.1. It is harmful to the person who is bullied, to those who engage in bullying behaviour, and those who support them, and can in some cases lead to lasting psychological damage and even suicide;

1.2.2. It interferes with a pupil's right to enjoy their learning and leisure time free from intimidation; and

1.2.3. It is contrary to all our aims and values, our internal culture and the reputation of the School.

1.3. Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups and may involve an imbalance of power. Bullying may be:

1.3.1. **Physical**: hitting, kicking, pushing people around, spitting, shaking, biting, hair pulling or taking, damaging or hiding possessions;

1.3.2. **Verbal**: name-calling, gossiping, taunting, teasing, insulting, threatening or undermining, humiliating or demanding money;

1.3.3. **Non-verbal abuse**: hand signs or text messages (see also cyberbullying below);

1.3.4. **Emotional abuse**: controlling or manipulating someone, making silent, hoax or abusive calls;

1.3.5. **Exclusionary behaviour**: intimidating, isolating or excluding a person from a group;

1.3.6. **General unkindness**: constant criticism, spreading rumours or writing unkind notes, mobile phone texts or emails;

1.3.7. **Initiation / hazing type behaviour:** rituals which may include but is not limited to activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group;

1.3.8. **Low level disruptive behaviour**: wearing "banter" and "horseplay" over a prolonged period of time;

1.3.9. **Cyberbullying**: bullying that takes place using technology. This may include bullying through the use of mobile electronic devices, social media or gaming sites. See Appendix 1 to this policy for guidance for pupils about cyberbullying. The School's separate *Acceptable Use of ICT Policy for Pupils* sets out the School rules about the use of technology including mobile electronic devices;

1.3.10. **Prejudice-based bullying:** bullying that is motivated by actual or perceived differences between children, such as where a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities;

1.3.11. **Harmful sexual behaviours**: includes sexual harassment and sexual violence;

1.3.12. **Sexual harassment**: unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that can occur online and offline. It can include but is not limited to:

- sexual comments, such as telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
- sexual jokes or taunting;
- physical behaviour such as deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with their clothes, displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature;

- online sexual harassment which may include: non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos (sharing of nudes or semi nudes images and videos, otherwise known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery, including digitally manipulated or AI-generated sexual imagery); inappropriate sexual comments on social media; exploitation; coercion and threats; upskirting.

  Incidences of sexual harassment will be investigated to ensure they are not part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and / or sexual violence.

1.3.13. **Sexual violence**: sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, specifically rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault and causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent.

1.4. Discrimination-based bullying may also be:

- racist, or regarding someone's religion, belief or culture;
- sexist - related to a person's sex or gender reassignment;
- related to a person's sexual orientation (homophobic bullying);
- related to a person's age;
- related to pregnancy and/or maternity;
- related to a person's disability, special educational needs, learning difficulty, health or appearance;
- related to a person's home circumstances;
- cyber bullying that takes place using technology see paragraph 2.4 below.

1.5. Pupils who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning/trans (LGBT+) can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a pupil who is perceived by other pupils to be LGBT+ (whether they are nor not) can be just as vulnerable as pupils who identify as LGBT+. Risks can be compounded where pupils who are LGBT+ lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced and provide a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with a member of staff, to help counter homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and abuse.

1.6. Racial, sexual, biphobic, transphobic or homophobic bullying and bullying someone because they have a disability are also hate crimes.

1.7. Some individuals may see their hurtful conduct as "teasing" or "a game" or "for the good of" the other person and not deliberately intended to hurt. It can sometimes hurt to be different, or to be made to feel different. These forms of behaviour are equally unacceptable but may not be malicious and can often be corrected quickly depending on the circumstances with advice and without disciplinary sanctions. If left unchallenged or dismissed, low level disruptive behaviour over a prolonged period of time such as "banter" and "horseplay" can have a wearing and significant impact on targeted individuals exposed to such behaviour and may lead to a culture of failing to report. This is not a culture the School adopts. In some circumstances it may be necessary to consider disciplinary sanctions in response to this type of behaviour.

1.8. A person who makes a physical or sexual assault on another, or who steals or causes damage to the property of another, commits a criminal offence. Bullying may also be regarded as threatening behaviour or harassment which be either a criminal offence or a civil wrong known as a "tort" for both of which there can be legal consequences outside the School. Certain acts of voyeurism e.g. upskirting which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing parts of their body or clothing not otherwise visible to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm, are criminal offences. Misuse of electronic communications could also be a criminal offence, for example it is an offence to send an electronic communication (such as a text message or e-mail) to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety.

1.9. Bullying causes fear and distress for the victim and may distract them from schoolwork. It often affects other children who witness the bullying. It may damage the atmosphere of a class, and even the climate of a school.

2. SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE

2.1. Bullying is closely connected with pupil wellbeing and therefore will invariably require a safeguarding response. Bullying demonstrates a lack of respect for others which can overlap with abusive and harassing behaviour and which, in turn, can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children. All this informs the school's zero-tolerance approach, and it is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers that are actually abusive in nature.

2.2. The School recognises that bullying may intersect with racism, discrimination, online harms, group-based exploitation, teenage relationship abuse, coercive control and other overlapping harms, and will consider whether concerns indicate wider safeguarding risks.

2.3. Child on child abuse can occur both inside and outside of School and may be taking place whilst not being reported. A one size fits all approach is not appropriate for all pupils, and a contextualised approach for more vulnerable pupils, victims of abuse and pupils with special educational needs and disabilities or certain medical or physical health conditions may be required. Certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and create an unsafe environment for pupils. In worst case scenarios, dismissing sexual harassment can led to a culture that normalises abuse and pupils accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

2.4. Technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Pupils are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face. This can take the form of abusive, harassing, misogynistic and misandristic messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography.

2.5. In line with the School's aims and culture of openness and encouragement to report, the School's policy and procedures with regard to child-on-child abuse are set out in the School's *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy*. Concerns about a pupil's welfare because they are the victim, witness or perpetrator of bullying behaviour must be reported in accordance with the *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy* and appropriate action taken, taking into account the Cambridgeshire Safeguarding threshold document.

3. ANTI-BULLYING CULTURE AND SYSTEMS

3.1. The Governing Body has overall responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of pupils at the School, ensuring that those in leadership and management positions actively promote pupil well-being. This includes providing that appropriate values, policies and procedures are in place and implemented effectively to:

- facilitate an inclusive environment where pupils can openly discuss the cause of their bullying, without fear of further bullying;
- minimise the risk of bullying at the School so that pupils feel safe and secure;
- intervene early in low-level disruption to prevent negative behaviours escalating;
- make it easy for pupils to report bullying so that they are assured that they will be listened to and incidents acted on. (Pupils should refer to section 5 of this policy for guidance on how they can report concerns);
- deal swiftly with allegations of bullying at the School so that pupils and staff feel confident that all incidents will be dealt with appropriately; and
- consider incidents of sexual harassment in broad terms so that it is challenged in order to prevent the normalisation of behaviours which can provide an environment that may lead to sexual violence.

3.2. The School wishes to enhance pupils' self-esteem. It aims to provide pupils with a secure and caring environment in which bullying is neither ignored, condoned nor tolerated. The School cannot do this alone; all members of the School - including staff, parents and governors, as well as pupils - must demonstrate that they believe that any form of bullying is unacceptable and set an example which reflects that view.

3.3. In particular the School expects all its members to:

- uphold the School rules and values;
- report an incident of bullying in accordance with the terms of this policy;
- ensure that a complaint of bullying will always be taken seriously;
- ensure that no-one will tolerate unkind actions or remarks or stand by when someone is being bullied;
- value one another and treat each other with respect and sensitivity;
- think carefully before speaking/acting in ways which may cause argument, distress or embarrassment;
- respect differences and variety (of origin, appearance, personality and interests) - remembering that everyone has both rights and duties;
- realise that sometimes what may seem fun to some (especially a group) may seem much more threatening to others (especially an individual);
- work together to create a School in which people live harmoniously;
- help protect and support those who are unhappy or vulnerable;
- make a stand against those who ignore or resist these aims.

All of the above apply to interaction in person and in cyberspace (through the use of any or all forms of technology).

3.4. It is everyone's responsibility to ensure, whatever the circumstances, that no-one becomes a victim of bullying. A person may be vulnerable to bullying because of their age, physical appearance, nationality, colour, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment (or gender questioning), religion or belief, culture or learning difficulty, disability, home circumstances or because they are new in the School, appears to be uncertain or has no friends. They may also become a target because of an irrational decision by a bully.

3.5. In School and in every year group:

- discriminatory and offensive words and behaviour are treated as unacceptable;
- positive attitudes are fostered towards people with any protected characteristic including those who are disabled and towards ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic groups within and outside the School;
- positive attitudes are fostered towards gender and sexuality differences through the curriculum and tutorials; and
- incidents of bullying which are based on protected characteristics will be distinguished in the School's records

3.6. Through their training and experience, members of staff and volunteers are expected to promote an anti-bullying culture by:

- celebrating achievement;
- anticipating problems and providing support;
- adopting a proactive interactive approach to bullying by gathering intelligence about issues between pupils which might provoke conflict and developing strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place;
- disciplining perpetrators fairly, consistently and reasonably, taking into account any special educational needs or disabilities of the pupil, taking into account the motivations and any underlying safety concerns of the perpetrator and providing support as appropriate;
- making opportunities to listen to pupils;
- being vigilant to seemingly minor acts and exercising professional curiosity to check whether words or actions are unkind or not;
- acting as advocates of pupils;
- reporting concerning behaviour in accordance with the provisions outlined in this policy, adopting an 'it could happen here' approach;
- being alert to the fact that some victims, witnesses and perpetrators may themselves be vulnerable to bullying or harassment following any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment;
- exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for in order to detect abuse and to identify children who may be in need of help or protection.

3.7. Members of staff and volunteers are vigilant at all times but particularly:

- at the start and end of the school day when pupils arrive and leave the site;
- before lessons;
- in the queue for the dining hall and in the dining hall itself;

- in School corridors and outside spaces;
- on School transport / School trips.

3.8. Staff awareness is raised through discussion in scheduled meetings between staff, and strategies put in place for action to be taken to reduce the risk of bullying at times and in places where it is most likely to occur. The result of these meetings is to feedback information about friendship patterns, particular incidents, any pupil who seems to be isolated, any growing "power base" and any known conflict between pupils so that strategies can be developed to prevent bullying. Appropriate training in all aspects of care will be arranged for staff in relevant roles to ensure they have the necessary professional skills to identify the risks and indications of child abuse and bullying and to deal with cases or potential cases which are detected (see also paragraph 6.7 below).

3.9. The School will take active measures to promote an anti-bullying culture and the message to parents that bullying will not be tolerated in the School. This is achieved through form time, tutorials, Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE), Emotional Wellbeing (EW) and Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education (SMSC), Assemblies, Anti-Bullying Ambassadors (Upper School) and via parent newsletters.

3.10. **Prep and Upper Schools**

Pupils: A document **"What to do if Something is Seriously Concerning you – A Pupil's Guide"** is available and gives advice to pupils who feel that they may be being bullied or are worried about another pupil who is, or may be, being bullied. This also includes their ability to call Childline on 0800 1111 or the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000. A copy of this document can be accessed by Upper School pupils in the Welfare area of the School IT system and is available to Prep School pupils in the Pupil Planner.

Parents: Parents who are concerned that their child or another pupil is, or may be, being bullied should contact the child's Form Teacher (Prep School) or Tutor, Head of Year or Head of Section (Upper School) without delay.

3.11. **Pelican School:**

Pupils: A pupil who is being bullied, or who is worried about another pupil who is or may be being bullied should report this without delay by telling their parents, or any member of staff. They can also call Childline on 0800 1111 or the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000.

Parents: Parents who are concerned that their child or another pupil is or may be being bullied should contact their child's Class Teacher without delay.

4. WHY INCIDENTS MAY NOT BE REPORTED:

4.1. There are many reasons why a pupil who has suffered bullying may be reluctant to report it. They may become demoralised and may think, for example:

- it is telling tales;
- they won't believe me because the person I am complaining about is popular and I am not, and I will become even more unpopular;
- the things they are saying and doing are too embarrassing to discuss with an adult;
- it is all my fault anyway for being overweight / too studious etc;
- there are too many of them; there is nothing the staff can do;
- it will get back to my parents and they will think less of me;

- I will just try and toughen up and grow a thicker skin;
- I will lie low and not draw attention to myself;
- this is a normal part of growing up and going to school.

4.2. There are also reasons why a pupil who has witnessed or learned of bullying behaviour may not want to make a report. They may think:

- it is "grassing" or “snitching” and I will become unpopular;
- it is not my concern anyway;
- I don't like the victim and I would find it embarrassing to be associated with them.

4.3. Any of these responses would be contrary to our culture at the School. When we implement this policy we encourage every pupil (and their parents) to understand that:

- every complaint of bullying will be taken seriously;
- members of staff and volunteers will deal with a complaint correctly and effectively in accordance with their experience and the training they have received;
- there is a solution to nearly every problem of bullying;
- a pupil who complains will receive support and advice and in many cases the problem can be dealt with on a no-names basis;
- the primary aim will be for the bullying to cease, not the punishment of the bully unless this is necessary;
- there may be a need to support the bully as well so School staff can address the causes of bullying behaviour.

5. REPORTING CONCERNS

5.1. A pupil who is being bullied, or who is worried about another pupil being bullied, should tell their parents, and preferably:

- **Pelican School:** the pupil’s Class Teacher or another member of staff.
- **Prep School:** the pupil’s Form Teacher, Head of Year, Assistant Head (Pastoral) or another member of staff; or
- **Upper School:** the pupil’s Tutor, Head of Year or another member of staff;

However, it is most important that any cases of bullying are reported to someone to whom the victim feels able to talk and a report may accordingly be made to any member of staff. The School wants to help and has many years’ experience of doing so.

5.2. **Initial complaint:** Any member of staff who learns of alleged bullying behaviour should:

(a) firstly, respond quickly and sensitively by offering advice, support and reassurance to the alleged victim. The member of staff should:

- listen carefully and keep an open mind;
- not ask leading questions; and
- reassure the pupil but not give a guarantee of confidentiality;

(b) if the incident is not too serious, possible outcomes may be that there has been a misunderstanding which can be explained sympathetically to the alleged victim with advice to the alleged bully, or the complaint is justified in whole or in part, and further action will be needed.

In a case in which a serious criminal offence is suspected, advice should be sought from the Upper School Head or Deputy Head (Pupil development and welfare), or Head of the Prep or Pelican School as appropriate; or in all other cases:

(c) report the allegation to:

(a) **In the Upper School**: via MyConcern (as all allegations relate to pupil welfare) which will be shared with the tutor of the alleged victim and of the alleged bully as soon as possible.

- The Head of Year and Head of Section will be informed as soon as possible and a strategy agreed for investigating and dealing with the matter. See Assessment of Concerns below.
- The matter will be brought to the attention of the Deputy Head (Pupil development and welfare).
- Records will be kept by the Deputy Head (Pupil development and welfare) in the anti-bullying file including those where allegations were not substantiated. All information and outcomes related to pupil welfare will also be recorded on MyConcern.

b. **In the Prep School**: the Assistant Head (Pastoral) or Deputy Head.

- The Form Teacher and Head of Year of the alleged victim and of the alleged bully will be informed as soon as possible and a strategy agreed for dealing with the matter. See Assessment of Concerns below.
- The matter will be brought to the attention of the Head and SLT.
- Records will be kept by the Deputy Head in the anti-bullying file (which is stored in the Head's Office) including those where allegations were not substantiated.

c. **In the Pelican School**: the child's class teacher who will liaise with The Pelican Deputy Head and in their absence to the Head. See Assessment of Concerns below.

- Records will be kept by the Head in a file including those where allegations were not substantiated. All information and outcomes related to pupil welfare will also be recorded on MyConcern.

6. ASSESSMENT OF CONCERNS

6.1. The pupil's Head of Year (Upper and Prep Schools) or Deputy Head of the Pelican will normally see the victim and (unless the case is very serious) any witnesses without delay and form an initial view of the allegation. The assessment will consider:

- the nature of the incident(s): physical? sexual? verbal? exclusionary?
- is it a "one-off" incident involving an individual or a group?
- is it part of a pattern of behaviour by an individual or a group?

- has physical injury been caused?
- who should be informed: Head? Parents? the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead? children's social care? the police?
- can the alleged bully be questioned without disclosing the victim's identity?
- what is the likely outcome if the allegation proves to be correct?

6.2. At this stage, the possible outcomes for an incident which is not too serious include:

- there has been a misunderstanding which can be explained sympathetically to the alleged victim with advice to the alleged bully; or
- the complaint is justified in whole or in part, and further action will be needed.

6.3. If at any stage the alleged bullying behaviour raises a safeguarding concern, the matter should be reported in accordance with the School's *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy* before any further investigation is carried out. This will always be the case where consensual or non-consensual sharing nude or semi-nude images or videos / sexting (including digitally manipulated or AI-generated nude or semi-nude imagery) or other harmful sexual behaviours are involved. Where bullying allegedly involves youth produced sexual imagery, staff will not view or forward sexual imagery reported to them and will follow the School's policy on sharing consensual or non-consensual nude and semi-nude images as set out in Appendix 1 of the School's *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy* and Procedures.

6.4. Except in a case in which a serious criminal offence is suspected (see paragraph 5.2 above), in the event of an observed or reported instance of serious bullying behaviour has occurred involving a pupil or has recurred after warnings have been given, the alleged victim(s), perpetrator(s) and/or witness(es) will be interviewed by the case manager without delay. They may decide to ask another senior member of staff to be present.

6.5. A record will be made of the facts of the case including who was involved, what happened, when and where, and the findings will be passed to the relevant Form or Class Teacher or Tutor(s), who will liaise with:

- **Pelican School:** The Head or Deputy Head. The Head will record incidents of bullying in a file which is kept in the Head's Office and will monitor this file at least at the end of each term in order to enable any patterns which might emerge to be identified, both in relation to individual pupils and across the Pelican School as a whole; or
- **Prep School:** The Assistant Head (Pastoral) and/or Deputy Head, who will be responsible for informing the Head. The Deputy Head will record incidents of bullying in a file which is kept in the Prep Head's Office and will monitor this file at least at the end of each term in order to enable any patterns which might emerge to be identified, both in relation to individual pupils and across the Prep School as a whole; or
- **Upper School:** Relevant Head of Section who is responsible for ensuring that the Deputy Head (Pupil development and welfare) receives a record of the incident. The Deputy Head (Pupil development and welfare) will record incidents of bullying in a file which is kept in a secure section of Sharepoint with restricted access for staff and will monitor this file at least at the end of each term in order to enable any patterns which might emerge to be identified, both in relation to individual pupils and across the Upper School as a whole.

6.6. Together with the Head, the Assistant Head or relevant Head of Section (as appropriate) will decide on the action to be taken in accordance with this policy.

6.7. The School will keep relevant parents informed if and when it may be dealing with a significant bullying situation (including online safety issues and the School's strategies to safeguard pupils) through correspondence and events held by the School to raise awareness. Parents are asked to let the School (normally the Class Teacher (Pelican School), Form Teacher, Head of Year, Assistant Head - Pastoral or Deputy Head (Prep School) or Tutor, Head of Year or the Head of Section (Upper School), in the first instance) know directly if they have cause for concern, either on behalf of their own children or because of rumours about incidents involving others. The School always tries to handle information discreetly, and while it has obligations to follow up such matters it does not do so without considering appropriate consultation. It is much easier to manage problems or potential problems at an early stage.

7. RESPONSE TO CONCERNS

7.1. **Range of actions:** Once investigated, and when a complaint of bullying behaviour is upheld, every effort will be made to resolve the problem through action including one or more of the following:

- consideration as to whether the bullying incident should be addressed as a safeguarding concern and if so, the School's *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy* will be followed.
- counselling of all appropriate parties.
- advice and support for the victim and, where appropriate, establishing a course of action to help the victim, including support from a School counsellor or from external services such as CAMHS or Centre 33 where appropriate.
- advice and support for the bully in trying to change their behaviour. This may include clear instructions and a warning or final warning.
- consideration of the motivation behind the bullying behaviour and whether external services should be used to tackle any underlying issues of the bully which contributed to the bullying behaviour. If these considerations lead to any safeguarding concerns relating to the bullying, the School's child protection procedures will be followed.
- a supervised meeting between the bully and the victim to discuss their differences and the way in which they may be able to avoid future conflict (only with the victim's express agreement).
- a disciplinary sanction against the bully, in accordance with the School's *Behaviour and Discipline Policy*. Sanctions should reflect the seriousness of an incident and carry a deterrent effect. In a very serious case or a case of persistent bullying, a pupil may, after appropriate investigations and hearing(s), be required to leave the School permanently in accordance with the School's *Behaviour and Discipline Policy* and *Permanent Exclusion and Removal: Review Procedure*. Any disciplinary action will be applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, taking into account any special educational needs or disabilities and the needs of vulnerable pupils.
- action to break up a "power base".
- confiscation of mobile electronic devices, increased monitoring procedures or limiting access to the School's internet and email facilities if cyberbullying (see also the School's *Acceptable Use of ICT Policy for Pupils*).
- moving either the bully or victim to another form group after consultation with the pupil their parents and the relevant staff.

- involving Children's Social Care or the police after following due process and collaboration with the parents.
- notifying the parents of one or both pupils about the case and the action which has been taken.
- notifying external agencies where appropriate.
- such other action as may appear to the Head to be appropriate.

7.2. Otherwise, in serious cases parents will be informed and consulted**.** This process will normally be carried out by:

- **Pelican School:** the pupil's Class Teacher, working in conjunction with the Head or Deputy Head.
- **Prep School:** the Deputy Head, Assistant Head (Pastoral) or the pupil's Head of Year or Form Teacher
- **Upper School:** the pupil's Tutor, Head of Year or Head of Section or the Deputy Head (Pupil development and welfare).

7.3. The position should be monitored for as long as necessary thereafter. Action may include:

- sharing information with some or all colleagues and with pupils in the Form or Year so that they may be alert to the need to monitor certain pupils closely;
- ongoing counselling and support;
- vigilance;
- mentioning the incident at meetings of staff;
- reviewing vulnerable individuals and areas of the School.

7.4. **Supporting those severely impacted by bullying:** The School recognises that removing bullied pupils from school is disruptive and can make it difficult to reintegrate. The School understands in some circumstances however, the consequences of being bullied may have had a severe impact on a pupil's social, emotional or mental health and may have impacted seriously on a pupil's ability to learn. The School will do all that is reasonably possible to ensure bullied pupils continue to attend school and maintain their educational progression by putting in place proportionate short term alternative on-site provision where necessary.

7.5. If the pupil is considered to have significantly greater difficulty learning than the majority of those of the same age, because of the impact of bullying, the School will consider whether the pupil will benefit from being assessed for special educational needs.

7.6. For all incidents of bullying (whether isolated or occurring over a period of time), disciplinary sanctions will be applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, taking into account any special educational needs or disabilities of the pupil and the needs of vulnerable pupils. Such sanctions may extend to fixed term exclusion, required removal or - in the gravest cases of severe or persistent bullying – permanent exclusion. In the Pelican School sanctions may also extend to time-out and reporting to the Head at regular intervals. Counselling may, however, be maintained for both parties even after sanctions have been applied.

7.7. If at any stage the alleged bullying behaviour raises a safeguarding concern, the School's *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy* should be followed before further investigation is carried out. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, the School may need to draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child engaging in bullying.

8. THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY

8.1. Awareness of this policy is promoted through appropriate staff training to ensure the principles of the policy are understood, legal responsibilities in line with the Equality Act 2010 are known and guidance is given to help staff in relevant roles prevent and resolve problems.

8.2. Positive values of mutual respect and concern (valuing one another) will be promoted to pupils by explicit encouragement in a wide range of contexts from assembly and tutorial time-periods to informal discussion.

8.3. The PSHE course will address the topic of bullying periodically in all forms in the Pelican, Prep Schools and Upper School. Class or Form Teachers or Tutors will also remind pupils at the start of each 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. Staff are aware of learning opportunities in class (often in projects, drama, stories or literature) avoiding prejudice-based language.

8.4. Online safety is a key aspect of all areas of the curriculum. Parents are informed about online safety issues and the School's strategies to safeguard pupils through correspondence and events held by the School to raise awareness. See the School's *Online Safety Policy* and *Acceptable Use of ICT Policy* for Pupils for further information about the School's online safety strategy.

8.5. The School recognises that children with special educational needs and disabilities or certain medical or physical health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges, including the potential to be disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as peer group isolation, bullying, without outwardly showing any signs. The School will consider extra pastoral support for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, as required.

9. TRAINING

9.1. The School ensures that regular guidance and training are arranged as appropriate on induction and at regular intervals thereafter to ensure that staff, governors and volunteers understand what is expected of them by this policy and have the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their roles, especially:

- having an understanding of the groups who may be more vulnerable to bullying;
- awareness of the risk and indications of bullying, and how to deal with cases;
- listening and supporting skills (including bereavement); and
- awareness of the risks of child-on-child abuse including sexual violence and sexual harassment and how bullying behaviour may give rise to safeguarding concerns.

9.2. The level and frequency of training depends on the role of the individual member of staff. The School maintains written records of all staff training.

9.3. We emphasise with older pupils the role which is expected of them in setting a good example and being helpful to younger pupils and each other.

10. RISK ASSESSMENT

10.1. Where a concern about a pupil's welfare is identified, the risks to that pupil's welfare will be assessed and appropriate action will be taken to reduce the risks identified.

10.2. The format of risk assessment may vary and may be included as part of the School's overall response to a welfare issue, including the use of individual pupil welfare plans (such as behaviour, healthcare and education plans, as appropriate). Regardless of the form used, the School's approach to promoting pupil welfare will be systematic and pupil focused.

10.3. The Upper School Head, Prep School Head or Pelican School Head, as appropriate, has overall responsibility for ensuring that matters which affect pupil welfare in each school are adequately risk assessed and for ensuring that the relevant findings are implemented, monitored and evaluated.

10.4. Day to day responsibility to carry out risk assessments under this policy will be delegated to the Deputy Head (Pupil development and welfare), Prep School Deputy Head or Pelican School Deputy Head, as appropriate, who has been properly trained in, and tasked with, carrying out the particular assessment.

11. MONITORING AND REVIEW

11.1. School staff maintain records of the welfare and development of individual pupils. Every complaint or report of bullying is recorded centrally and monitored to enable patterns to be identified, both in relation to individual pupils and across the school as a whole and to evaluate the effectiveness of the School's approach.

11.2. The Upper School Deputy Head (Pupil development and welfare), and Heads of the Prep and Pelican Schools will maintain a centralised record of all allegations or reports of bullying, including details of those involved and the action taken.

11.3. The Upper School Deputy Head (Pupil development and welfare) and Head of the Prep and Pelican Schools will monitor the individual school's centralised record of bullying incidents on a regular basis to identify patterns in behaviour and the effectiveness of the School's anti-bullying procedures. This information will be reported to the Upper, Prep and Pelican SMT's and to the Education Committee so that senior staff and Governors actively monitor bullying incidents and the effectiveness of the School's anti-bullying procedures.

11.4. This policy will be reviewed by the Upper School Deputy Head (Pupil development and welfare), and Prep and Pelican School's Deputy Heads and revisions made on an annual basis, or more regularly as required and taking into account any advice published by the DfE together with the records of any bullying incidents. In undertaking the review, the Deputy Head (Pupil development and welfare), and Prep and Pelican School's Deputy Heads will take into account the results of the monitoring above, as well as any changes in legislation and/or statutory guidance and other relevant information gathered (such as through a bullying survey).

11.5. The Board of Governors will consider the revisions made as part of its collective responsibility to carry out an annual review of safeguarding.

11.6. The policy is carried out in conjunction with the School's *Behaviour and Discipline Policy*.

12. RECORD KEEPING

12.1. All records created in accordance with this policy are managed in accordance with the School's policies that apply to the retention and destruction of records.

12.2. The information created in connection with this policy may contain personal data. The School's use of personal data will be in accordance with data protection law. The School has published privacy notices on its website which explain how the School will use personal data. The School's approach to data protection compliance is set out in the School's Data Protection Policies and Procedures. In addition, staff must ensure that they follow the School's data protection policies and procedures when handing personal data created in connection with this policy. This includes the School's *Data Protection Policy* and *Information Security and Sharing Data Guidance*.

13. VERSION CONTROL

Date of adoption of this policy	3 September 2026
Date of last review of this policy	June 2026
Date for next review of this policy	June 2027 or earlier if necessary
Policy owner (SLT)	Senior Deputy Head – Upper School, Prep Deputy Head, Pelican Deputy Head
Authorised by	Jonathan Scott On behalf of the Board of Governors
Circulation	Governors / teaching staff / all staff parents / pupils [on request] Published on the School's website and PersePortal and available from the School Office on request
Status	Non-Contractual. Complies with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (SI2014/3283), Education and Skills Act 2008, Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UKGDPR) and the Equality Act 2010.

APPENDIX - CYBERBULLYING

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using technology.

It can take the form of many behaviours including:

- Harmful messages (text, instant, multimedia, email)
- impersonating another person online
- sharing private messages
- uploading photographs or videos of another person that leads to shame and embarrassment
- creating hate websites/social media pages
- excluding people from online groups

Pupils should remember the following:

- use the security settings when using technology.
- regularly change your password and keep it private.
- Always respect others - be careful what you say online and what images you send.
- Think before you send - whatever you send can be made public very quickly and could stay online forever.
- If you or someone you know are being cyberbullied, **tell someone**. You have the right not to be harassed or bullied online. Tell an adult you trust - your parents, any member of staff or volunteer, or a helpline such as ChildLine on 0800 1111 and the NSPCC on 0808 800 5000.
- Don't retaliate or reply online.
- Save the evidence - learn how to keep records of offending messages, pictures or online conversations. Ask someone if you are unsure how to do this. This will help to show what is happening and can be used by the School to investigate the matter.
- Block the bully. Most social media websites and online or mobile services allow you block someone who is behaving badly.
- Don't do nothing - if you see cyberbullying going on, support the victim and report the bullying.

You may find the following websites helpful:

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

https://www.childnet.com/resources/smartie-the-penguin/

https://www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre/How-can-CEOP-help-me-YP/

https://www.bbc.com/ownit

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

https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/young-people

https://mysafetynet.org.uk/

The Department for Education's guidance Preventing and Tackling Bullying (DfE, July 2017) states that ('The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyberbullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click'). For further information and guidance about cyberbullying and e-safety, please see the Department of Education's Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying (DfE, November 2014).