



SEVENOAKS

PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy forms part of Sevenoaks Prep School's safeguarding, pastoral and behaviour framework. It sets out how the School prevents, identifies, records and responds to bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based bullying, discriminatory bullying and child-on-child abuse.

Date of last review:	September 2026
Review Frequency:	At least annually

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and/or following any lessons learnt and/or updates to national or local guidance and procedures.

Status and Review Cycle	Statutory / At least annually
Policy reviewed and amended	September 2026
Next review date	September 2027
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1. Aims and objectives

At Sevenoaks Prep School, our community is based upon respect, good manners, kindness and fair play. We are committed to providing a safe, caring and inclusive environment that is free from disruption, violence, harassment, victimisation and discrimination, so that every pupil can develop to their full potential.

This policy applies to all pupils, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and to behaviour within school, online, on school trips, during school-related activities and outside school where the behaviour affects pupils, staff or the reputation and safety of the School. It should be read alongside the Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Internet Safety Policy, Equality, Diversity & Inclusions Policy, SEND Policy, Complaints Procedure and Discipline, Exclusions and Required Removal Policy.

2. Definition of bullying

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts, harms or humiliates another individual or group, either physically or emotionally. Bullying may be physical, verbal, emotional, social, online, sexual, prejudice-based or discriminatory. It may include exclusion, name-calling, threats, intimidation, spreading rumours, manipulation of others, cyberbullying, sharing images without consent, harassment, humiliation or behaviour connected to protected characteristics, SEND, health conditions, family circumstances or perceived difference.

Bullying may amount to child-on-child abuse. It can happen face to face or online, inside or outside school, and may involve an imbalance of power. In line with KCSIE 2026, staff must recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, maintain an attitude of "it could happen here", act promptly on concerns, and understand that harmful behaviour such as misogyny, sexual harassment, violence, prejudice-based harm and online abuse must never be dismissed as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up".

3. The School's response to bullying

The School treats all reports of bullying seriously. Staff will reassure pupils that they are being listened to, that they will be taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. The immediate physical safety of pupils is always the first priority, while recognising that emotional and online bullying can also cause significant harm, including anxiety, low self-esteem, self-harm, eating difficulties and suicidal ideation.

Where bullying causes, or may cause, significant harm, staff must follow the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and refer to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy DSL without delay. Pupils who have been bullied will receive appropriate pastoral support, and pupils who have engaged in bullying behaviour will be supported to understand and change their behaviour, while also being subject to proportionate sanctions where appropriate.

4. Signs of bullying

- unwillingness to return to school, frequent absence, erratic attendance or lateness;
- withdrawal, unusual quietness, anxiety, low mood, loss of confidence or choosing adult company rather than peers;
- work that is unfinished, unusually poor, copied, interfered with or damaged;

- belongings, money, books or bags going missing or being damaged;
- unexplained injuries, frequent visits to the medical centre, headaches, stomach pains or other stress-related symptoms;
- difficulty sleeping, nightmares, changes in eating, talk of self-harm, suicide or running away.

These signs may have other causes, but a pattern, repetition or combination of indicators must be noticed, explored and recorded appropriately. Staff should remain particularly alert to pupils who may face additional barriers to reporting, including pupils with SEND, certain health conditions, those affected by prejudice-based harm, younger children, pupils with communication needs and pupils who may be vulnerable because of their circumstances.

5. Preventative measures

The School promotes an ethos in which pupils treat each other with kindness, respect and dignity at all times. Expectations are taught through the behaviour curriculum, assemblies, PSHE, pastoral work, online safety education and day-to-day routines. Pupils are taught how to report bullying, including cyberbullying and prejudice-based bullying, and are reassured that reports made in good faith will be taken seriously and that they will be supported.

Staff receive guidance on recognising, responding to, recording and escalating bullying concerns. All reported incidents are recorded on CPOMS and monitored so that patterns can be identified. Staff supervision, pastoral support, wellbeing support and counselling may be used where appropriate. Parents are encouraged to contact the School promptly if they know or suspect that their child, or another pupil, is being bullied, and the School welcomes feedback on the effectiveness of its preventative measures.

6. Procedures for dealing with reported bullying

Any member of staff who receives a report of bullying, notices possible signs of bullying or becomes aware of a concern must listen carefully, avoid leading questions, reassure the pupil and make a factual written record. The concern must be recorded on CPOMS and shared with the appropriate pastoral lead, Assistant Head of Key Stage, and/or DSL as appropriate. Staff must not delay reporting because they are unsure whether the concern is serious enough.

The School will investigate promptly and proportionately. Pupils involved will normally be spoken to separately and offered suitable support. Parents or guardians of relevant pupils will be informed where appropriate. A clear way forward will be agreed, including support, restorative work where suitable, sanctions under relevant behaviour policies, safeguarding referrals where necessary, and a monitoring and review plan. Serious or persistent bullying may lead to further disciplinary action, including temporary or permanent exclusion in line with the School's policies.

7. Cyberbullying and online safety

Cyberbullying is the use of technology to support deliberate, repeated and hostile behaviour intended to harm others. It may include threatening or abusive messages, humiliating images or videos, impersonation, exclusion, unauthorised sharing of private information or images, online harassment, sexualised abuse, sharing nudes or semi-nudes, upskirting, discriminatory comments, misogynistic abuse, misinformation or harmful online content.

The School expects the same standards of behaviour online as offline. Pupils are taught to behave with kindness, respect and dignity online and to seek help if they experience or witness online harm. The School will respond to cyberbullying in line with this policy, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, the Behaviour Policy and the Internet Safety Policy. Where an incident involves sharing nudes or semi-nudes, criminal behaviour, significant harm or a safeguarding risk, the DSL will be informed without delay and external agencies may be contacted.

8. EYFS children

Even the youngest children are encouraged to behave towards each other with kindness and consideration. Children in the EYFS are supported to learn how to care for their own possessions, respect others' possessions, listen to others, use kind words, understand differences and recognise when behaviour may hurt another person. Parents are informed when sanctions or reproofs are needed, and repeated or serious concerns are discussed with parents so that the School and family can agree a joint approach.

9. Complaints, monitoring and review

Parents and pupils are encouraged to use the School's Complaints Procedure if they feel that concerns about bullying are not being addressed appropriately. The School will record and monitor all reported bullying incidents, review patterns and trends, evaluate the effectiveness of preventative measures and make amendments where needed. This policy will be reviewed at least annually by the Senior Management Team and Governors, and sooner where there are changes to statutory guidance, local procedures or lessons learned from incidents.