



UT VOCE ITA VITA

EXETER CATHEDRAL SCHOOL

Nursery | Pre-Prep | Prep

Anti-Bullying Policy

Last reviewed: May 2026

Next review: May 2027

Governor oversight: Full Board

This policy applies to Exeter Cathedral School ('the School') which comprises the Nursery and Pre-Prep (including the EYFS setting) and the Prep School.

This policy applies to all pupils and staff at the School, irrespective of their age and whether or not the pupil is in the care of the School when / if bullying behaviour occurs.

This policy should be read alongside the School's Safeguarding policy, its Behaviour and Discipline Policy, and its Acceptable Use of ICT policy.

An accessible document for pupils, entitled 'What to do if you are really worried about something' is readily available, and referred to in this policy.

This policy relates to paragraph 10 of the ISI Commentary on the Regulatory Requirements March 2023.

1. Aims

1.1 As a School community, we seek to foster an environment which is safe, secure, caring, and happy, where all can learn, play, live and serve without anxiety.

1.2 Bullying is wrong and damages children and their self-esteem. We therefore do all that we can to prevent it, by fostering and promoting a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable: where it is neither condoned, ignored, nor tolerated. The School cannot do this alone; all members of the School community - and this includes staff, parents, visitors and governors, as well as pupils - have a responsibility to demonstrate that they believe that any form of bullying is unacceptable and to set an example which reflects that view.

1.3 We want all those connected with the school to be aware of our opposition to bullying, and we want each member of our community to know their responsibilities with regard to the prevention of bullying in our school.

1.4 The School is committed to actively promoting and safeguarding the welfare of pupils at the School. This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incident that may occur and to comply with the School's duties under the Equality Act 2010.

1.5 This policy relates to any bullying incident whether on or off school premises and inside or outside of school hours.

2. Defining bullying

2.1 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 gender, age, ethnicity or occupation. In schools in the UK, bullying is thought to affect many thousands of pupils, and it can cause profound unhappiness, psychological damage and even suicide.

2.2 Although bullying is not a specific offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour. 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 and also a civil wrong (known as a “tort”): for both of these there can be legal consequences outside the School. Misuse of electronic communications could also be a criminal offence.

2.3 There are various definitions of bullying, but the School considers that most have three things in common: i. It is deliberately hurtful behaviour; ii. It is repeated over time; and iii. There is an imbalance of power which makes it hard for those being bullied to defend themselves.

2.3i Exeter Cathedral School therefore defines bullying as:

Repeated, deliberate behaviour which causes, or which threatens to cause, harm, hurt, or humiliation, often involving an imbalance of power.

2.4 Bullying is behaviour which harasses, humiliates, intimidates or oppresses other people. It may take the form of abuse of person or property, verbal criticism, teasing or taunting, psychological pressure, or sexual harassment; and it may be:

- i. racist, or regarding someone's religion, belief or culture;
- ii. sexual - talking to or touching someone in a sexually inappropriate way;
- iii. sexist - related to a person's gender or gender reassignment;
- iv. related to a person's sexual orientation (homophobic);
- v. related to pregnancy or maternity;
- vi. related to a person's disability, special educational needs, learning difficulty, health or appearance;
- vii. related to a person's home circumstances;
- viii. related to a person's intellectual or other abilities or lack thereof; and/or
- ix. cyber bullying that takes place using technology.

2.5 Bullying causes fear and distress for the victim and may distract him or her from school work. It often affects other children who witness the bullying. It may damage the atmosphere of a class, and even the climate of a school.

2.6 The School acknowledges that, sometimes, bullying is just thoughtless, or is not deliberate or intended to hurt. It can sometimes hurt to be different, or to be made to feel different.

2.7 Physical bullying: examples may include fighting; hitting; slapping; biting; pushing; kicking; pulling hair; giving ‘Chinese burns’; tripping; holding (restraining) another person against their will; damaging or hiding someone else's belongings or clothes.

2.8 Psychological bullying: examples may include excluding someone from a group, activity or place; aggressive name-calling; unpleasant e-mails, text messages/whatsapps or telephone calls, or unpleasant material placed on websites; racism, negative remarks about appearance, family, abilities, accomplishments, nationality, religion, disability, gender or sexuality.

2.9 Sexual harassment: examples may include making inappropriate comments about appearance and attractiveness; uninvited propositions; uninvited touching; and using innuendo or inappropriate imagery.

2.10 The School limits provision and availability of IT and it limits use of electronic devices (including mobile phones) by pupils to help safeguard pupils. The School has a policy on mobile phones in School, including in the EYFS setting. Staff are vigilant around the School site.

2.11 Cyberbullying: this is bullying which occurs using technology, particularly mobile phones and the internet, social media or gaming sites. Cyberbullying is particularly pernicious as it can occur 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and can affect the victim in his/her home wherever a mobile device is accessed. An incident of cyberbullying will be dealt with in accordance with the procedures in this policy. The School provides guidance for pupils about cyberbullying. The School provides Upper Years pupils with Digital Literacy & Wellbeing lessons (as part of our PSHE curriculum, incorporated into ICT lessons), through which it seeks to make clear appropriate/inappropriate online/mobile activity and to make pupils aware of how to stay safe online.

2.12 Any behaviour which a reasonable bystander would say was calculated or intended to hurt or upset the victim is wrong. The School recognises that children will sometimes cause hurt or upset to other children, intentionally or unintentionally, and that not all such incidences should automatically be considered to be bullying. However, such incidences may well constitute bullying, and the School recognises the importance of not being complacent (see 'definition of bullying' above).

2.13 Bullying behaviour may become a safeguarding concern if there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, or if the bullying behaviour includes any form of sexual harassment. In such an instance, the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead should be informed. Pupils must also have regard to the school policy on child-on-child sexual abuse and sexual harassment. This is set out in detail in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Pupils should note that this behaviour will not be passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'.

3. Playing our part in preventing bullying

3.1 All members of the School should help to create an atmosphere in which bullying will be spoken of openly, taken seriously and responded to with appropriate action. A pupil who is being bullied should tell his/her parents/guardians, and preferably his/her Form Teacher, Head of Section (Head of Pre-Prep, Head of Lower Years or Head of Upper Years), or another member of staff.

3.2 It is important that any cases of bullying are reported to someone whom the victim feels able to talk to. The School wants to help, and has many years' experience of doing so.

3.3 The Governing Body has overall responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of pupils at the School, ensuring that those in leadership and management position actively promote pupil wellbeing. This includes providing that appropriate policies and procedures be in place and implemented effectively to:

3.3i minimise the risk of bullying at the School so that pupils feel safe and secure; and

3.3ii deal swiftly with allegations of bullying at the School so that pupils feel confident that all incidents will be dealt with appropriately.

3.4 In particular, the School expects all of its members to:

- i. treat each other with respect and sensitivity;
- ii. be tolerant and welcoming of all School members, and of the differences they bring, remembering that everyone has both rights and duties;
- iii. think carefully before speaking/acting in ways which may cause argument, distress or embarrassment;
- iv. realise that sometimes what may seem fun to some (especially a group) may seem much more threatening to others (especially an individual);

- v. work together to create a School in which people live, work, play and serve harmoniously;
- vi. help protect and support those who are unhappy or vulnerable;
- vii. be mindful of the sentiment expressed in Luke 6.31 and Matthew 7.12: 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.';
- viii. 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).

3.5 Awareness of the Anti-Bullying 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 prevent and resolve problems.

3.6 Staff awareness is heightened through announcements in staff briefing, discussion in staff meetings, updates to policy during training and meetings, and through daily interactions and knowledge of the pupils in their care. Appropriate training will be arranged for staff 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.

3.7 The School will take active measures to promote an anti-bullying culture and the positive values of respect and concern for all. This is achieved through form time, Emotional Wellbeing tutorials, PSHE, Morning Worship Assemblies, in lessons, through informal discussion, and via parent newsletters. In the EYFS setting and in the Pre-Prep, the Pre-Prep Golden Habits are clearly on display, and staff refer to them regularly, particularly when they detect unkind behaviour.

3.8 Class or Form Teachers will 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.

3.9 Online safety is a key aspect of the School's Digital Wellbeing and Literacy lessons and is encouraged and promoted as appropriate in all areas of the curriculum. The school's Online Safety Lead will actively promote online safety to pupils and provide support to parents/carers.

3.10 Chorister welfare meetings are held weekly and attended by the Cathedral Director of Music, the Cathedral Assistant Director of Music, the Precentor, the School's Chorister Tutor, the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead, and sometimes the Headmaster. Pastoral matters, and any incidences of bullying behaviour, are discussed and courses of action agreed. The Chorister Tutor liaise with class teachers/form tutors and other relevant staff.

4. Reporting bullying

4.1 Prep School

A document "What to do if Something is Seriously Concerning you – A Pupil's Guide" is available and gives advice to pupils who may be being bullied or are worried about another pupil who is or may be being bullied. In summary, it:

- States that bullying is wrong, and that we don't accept it here
- Gives a definition of bullying
- Advises pupils to tell someone if they feel they are being bullied: a friend, a parent, a prefect, librarian, a teacher, your form tutor, your Head of Section: the important thing is that a member of staff needs to know.
- Suggests ways in which a pupil could tell someone they think they are being bullied
- Advises pupils to tell someone if they think one of their friends is being bullied
- Advises pupils to speak to someone (parent, friend, staff member) if they think they, or someone they know, are (is) engaging in bullying behaviour.
- Gives the childline number that they may choose to call
- Makes reference to this Anti-Bullying Policy

4.1i Parents who are concerned that their child or another pupil is or may be being bullied should contact the child's class teacher/form tutor or Head of Section without delay.

4.2 Choristers

Chorister parents/guardians may also wish to contact the Chorister Tutor. Sending a text message via the Choir Phone is not an appropriate means of communicating this type of concern: email, a phone call or face-to-face contact are advised. The Chorister Tutor will then inform the pupil's form teacher/Head of Section.

4.4 EYFS and Pre-Prep:

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 his/her parents, or any member of staff. They can also call Childline on 0800 1111.

Parents: Parents who are concerned that their child is or may be being bullied should inform their child's Class Teacher without delay. They can also contact the Head of Nursery, Head of Pre-Prep, Deputy Head (Pupils) or Headmaster.

5. Responding to allegations of bullying

5.1 In its response to allegations of bullying, the School will always try neither to trivialise nor sensationalise.

5.2 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:

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

(b) ensure there are written accounts produced

(c) then report the allegation to the Head of Section (or Head of Nursery, Head of Pre-Prep) of the alleged victim and of the alleged bully - and hand over the written accounts. The Form Teacher 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. The matter will be brought to the attention of the Deputy Head (Pupils), the Headmaster and the SLT. Records will be kept in the anti-bullying file.

5.3 If the alleged bullying behaviour raises a safeguarding concern, the matter should be reported in accordance with the School's Safeguarding Policy before any further investigation is carried out.

5.4 It will often be the case that, during the investigating stages (eliciting the write-ups), the focus will be on 'fact finding' and not on 'telling off' or issuing sanctions. It is important for all facts (or as many as is reasonably possible) to be established and agreed by all parties before sanctions are imposed.

5a. Record keeping and communication

5a i Written accounts (from victim, witness(es) and bully) will be vital in establishing facts and dealing with the incident effectively, fairly, sensitively and consistently.

5a ii It will be necessary to ask the victim(s) and a witness(es) (if appropriate) to write accounts of the incident. This must be done separately and supervised. In the case of EYFS and the Pre-prep (and some younger pupils in the Prep School), it may be better for the member of staff to write down what the child says (verbatim - staff must not use inflammatory vocabulary or make suppositions). In this case, it is important

to get the child's 'sign off' on the account by reading it back to them and asking them to confirm they are happy with the content/wording. This should be noted and the account dated and signed. Where a pupil writes the account, they must date and sign it.

5a iii Pupils should be encouraged to write about 2 things: 1. the specifics of the incident in question (facts - who, what, when, how, how often, where, why) - being clear to draw distinctions between what they saw happening and what they think happened; 2. anything else they would like to tell us (context, relationship with the bully, names of other people affected). Staff should be at pains to explain to pupils that it matters that they be entirely truthful in these accounts (they must be honest about their own involvement, too).

5a iv These written accounts must then be passed to the relevant class teacher/form tutor (or Head of Section) without delay, who will liaise with:

5a v EYFS and Pre-Prep

The Head of Nursery or Head of Pre-Prep. The Head of Pre-Prep will record incidents of bullying in a file which is kept in her 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 EYFS and Pre-Prep as a whole; minor incidents are recorded and monitored to ensure that a pattern of low level bullying or other behavioural issues are not emerging;

5a vi Prep School

Deputy Head (Pupils) will record incidents of bullying in a file which is kept in her 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.

5a vii As part of the investigation, the bully will be asked to write an account - as per the guidelines above.

5a viii The School will keep relevant parents/guardians informed if and when it may be dealing with a bullying situation. Parents are asked to let the School (normally the Key Worker or Class Teacher (EYFS and Pre-Prep) or form teacher/tutor (Prep School) 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.

5b Range of actions

5b i Once investigated, and when an allegation of bullying behaviour is upheld, every effort will be made to resolve the problem through action including one or more of the following:

5b ii Consideration as to whether the bullying incident should be addressed as a safeguarding concern and if so, the School's Safeguarding Policy will be followed

5b iii Talking with the victim

In cases of bullying, it is important that the victims knows that:

- i s/he has done the right thing in reporting the bullying
- ii the School supports her/him in her/his right to be able to go about her/his day without fear of intimidation of any kind
- iii the School is sorry for the behaviour the victim has experienced.
- iv the School does not tolerate bullying v the School wants to make this bullying stop
- vi the School will tread carefully and sensitively, so as to minimise risk of 'fall-out' or talk of 'telling tales'

Conversations with the victim will usually focus on how the bullying makes the victim feel, and what would make the victim's life at school better.

5b iv Advice and support will be offered to the victim, establishing a course of action. This may include: i. on-going meetings and regular 'check-ins'

ii. meetings with parents/guardians iii. some strategies for the victim to help him/her manage some aspects of the situation (eg response to provocation, avoiding conflict, 'safe spaces' around the School, designated people to talk to)
iv. support from an external counsellor

5b v Advice and support for the bully in trying to change his/her behaviour. This may include clear instructions, a warning or final warning, and a sanction.

5b vi 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 bully, the School's child protection procedures will be followed.

5b vii A conflict resolution meeting. This is a supervised and managed meeting between the bully and the victim to discuss their differences, the impact on the victim of the bully's behaviour, and the way in which they may be able to avoid future conflict. This will only go ahead with the victim's express agreement, and attempts will be made to allow the victim to choose the time of the meetings, and to give him/her time to write down thoughts/words in advance - perhaps at home. Conflict Resolution meetings will usually be managed and led by the Head of Section, the Head of Nursery, the Head of Preprep, the Deputy Head (Pupils), or the Headmaster.

5b viii The School will notify the parents/guardians of the victim and of the bully about the incident, and about the action that has been taken.

5b ix All staff with a pastoral responsibility for the child including the Deputy Head (Pupils), Head of Section and the form tutor will be informed of the outcome.

5b x It may be appropriate to ask parents to come into School to meet with the teacher/key worker or Head of Nursery (Nursery), class teacher or Head of Pre-Prep (Pre-Prep), form teacher/tutor, Head of Section, Deputy Head (Pupils) or Headmaster (Prep): to discuss the matter further with them, to make clear the School's standing on what has happened, to discuss the pupil's wellbeing, and to offer support to the pupil (victim and bully) and family in resolving and moving on from the incident in question.

5b xi Involving Children's Social Care, Front Door (MASH) or the police after following due process and, where appropriate, collaboration with the parents.

5b xii Such other action as may appear to the Deputy Head (Pupils) or Headmaster to be appropriate.

5c. Sanctions

5c i 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, and in accordance with the School's Rewards and Sanctions policy. Sanctions should reflect the seriousness of an incident. In serious cases, such sanctions may extend to internal fixed-term exclusion, external fixed-term exclusion, or - in the gravest cases of severe or persistent bullying - permanent exclusion.

6. Monitoring and review

6.1 The Head of Pre-Prep and the Deputy Head (Pupils) will monitor the individual school's record of bullying incidents on a regular (usually termly) basis to identify patterns in behaviour and the effectiveness of the School's anti-bullying procedures. The school uses CPOMs for record keeping facilitating identifying patterns in behaviour. This information will be reported to the School's SLT and to the relevant Governors' Sub-committee, so that senior staff and Governors actively monitor bullying incidents and the effectiveness of the School's anti-bullying procedures.

6.2 This Policy will be reviewed by the School's SLT and revisions made on an annual basis, or more regularly as required, and taking into account advice published by the DfE/ISI together with the records of any bullying incidents.

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