LOCHINVER HOUSE

Anti-Bullying Policy

Lochinver House School is committed to providing all our pupils with a caring, safe and listening environment where all pupils are treated with respect and dignity. The School actively promotes equality and the welfare of all the pupils at the School and ensures their well-being is protected at all times. The aim of the Anti-Bullying Strategy is to ensure that pupils learn in a supportive, friendly, and respectful environment without fear of being bullied.

Bullying is anti-social behaviour and has wide ranging effects; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. The School recognises the severe and negative effects that bullying can have. Both physical and emotional bullying are serious and may cause psychological damage and can even result in suicide. Bullying at the School is prevented in so far as reasonably practicable, by the drawing up and implementation of an effective anti-bullying strategy. The record of bullying is reviewed termly by the Senior Leadership Team ("SLT") and any themes, trends or patterns identified are addressed including incidents of bullying which are based on protected characteristics and cyberbullying. The record is reported on, at Education Committee meetings which are held termly.

Pupils and parents of pupils should be assured that known incidents of bullying will be responded to. Any issues of bullying are treated by the School very seriously, including those involving protected characteristics. The ethos of the School fosters high expectations of good behaviour and respect and any behaviour that falls below this, will be consistently challenged.

Definition

Bullying can be motivated by prejudice or discrimination relating to protected characteristics, including race, religion or belief, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity; . , or because a child is adopted or is a carer.. Pupils, staff and/or parents may all be perpetrators and/or victims of bullying.. Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to hurt, intimidate or cause distress. It is usually repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power, whether physical, emotional, social or online. The School recognises that a single significant incident can also have a serious impact and will be recorded and addressed appropriately. This approach will also assist the School to identify patterns and to ensure a single incident does not become the first in a series. Bullying may occur directly at school or home or through online technology and online platforms (social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email) which can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially larger audience, as people forward on content. Bullying behaviour may include:

- Emotional and Social: being unfriendly, excluding from social groups, spreading rumours, tormenting (eg hiding books, threatening gestures).
- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
- Verbal: name calling, teasing, sarcasm, making remarks.
- Racist, Cultural or Religious–cultural, racist or religious taunts, symbols, graffiti or gestures.
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive comments including homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language.
- Written.

- Through online technology and online platforms:

- sending threatening or abusive text messages
- creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos
- 'trolling' - the sending of menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games
- excluding children from online games, activities or friendship groups
- setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child
- encouraging young people to self-harm
- voting for or against someone in an abusive poll
- creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name
- sending explicit messages or images, also known as sexting or sending nudes
- pressuring children into sending sexual images or engaging in sexual conversations
- Upskirting

Identification of Bullying

Staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers and it could be happening even if there are no reports of it in School. Abuse should never be passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'.

Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, becoming unusually aggressive, feigning illness, taking unusual absences, or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting from School. Parents and staff should be observant in these changes in behaviour and report them to the School.

Although bullying is not a criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour. The School seeks to counter any form of bullying through the active promotion of pupil well-being, dealing sensitively with each incident and ensuring every opportunity is given to listen to pupils and taking action when required.

We aim to raise awareness of bullying through training, so that the principles of the School policy are understood, legal responsibilities are known, action is defined to resolve and prevent problems, and sources of support are available.

Some forms of bullying are illegal and should be reported to the Police. These include violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment, or intimidation and hate crimes. Where appropriate, the School invests in specialised skills to help understand the needs of our pupils, including those with special educational needs or protected characteristics.

The School's staff are alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with School policy. Bullying concerns are raised at staff meetings and anti-bullying strategies are discussed and training provided where necessary. Where a bullying concern has been raised by a pupil, parent, member of staff or another member of our community, an entry on SchoolBase is completed and shared with the Deputy Head Pastoral. This information will be entered into the School's bullying log, by the Deputy Head Pastoral.

Staff recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. A whole school approach to preventive education ensures that the curriculum, school policies, pastoral support and ethos complement one another to create an environment that helps to prevent negative behaviour. Our policies make it clear that victims of child on child abuse will be supported as will the perpetrator. The School recognises that in cases of child on child abuse that all the children involved, whether perpetrator or victim, are treated as being "at risk" and will act accordingly to safeguard their welfare.

Actions include educating pupils to recognise the signs of this type of abuse and the systems in place to report it, as well as giving support and counselling to both the victim and perpetrator, and working in partnership with parents. Bullying behaviour may overlap with child-on-child abuse, including sexual violence, sexual harassment, harmful sexual behaviour, discriminatory behaviour and online abuse. Such concerns will be managed in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Staff talk regularly with pupils through formal forums such as assemblies, Lochinver Wellbeing Committee (LWC) meetings and the School Council tasks and sessions. Within the curriculum, the School raises awareness of the nature of bullying through PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education)/PSED (Personal, Social and Emotional Development), Form or Tutorial time and in subject areas such as Drama, English, History, RS (Religious Studies) and TPR (Theology, Philosophy and Religion) in an attempt to eradicate any such behaviour. Through these forums we also aim to build resilience to enable pupils to protect themselves and others, promote and understand the differences between people and avoid prejudice-based language.

Also discussed are the part pupils and parents play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders. There is also informal discussion to assess areas in the School, and times in the day when bullying is most likely to occur so that action can be taken to reduce the risk of it happening. When concerns are raised about unkind or bullying behaviour taking place in a certain area of the School, these are patrolled regularly by a member of staff. The School may take action in response to bullying that occurs outside school, including online activity, where it impacts the wellbeing, safety or education of pupils within the School community.

Preventative Approach

At Lochinver House, we believe that preventing bullying is more effective than simply responding to incidents when they occur. We are committed to fostering a culture of kindness, respect and respect (our Core Values), inclusion and positive relationships, where every pupil feels safe, valued and able to be themselves. Through our curriculum, pastoral care, assemblies, pupil leadership opportunities and everyday interactions, we proactively promote empathy, resilience and respect for difference. Pupils are encouraged to speak up if they are concerned about themselves or others and are supported to understand the important role they play in creating a positive and inclusive school community.

- Promoting kindness, respect and inclusion
- Educating pupils about bystander behaviour
- Celebrating diversity and difference
- Developing emotional literacy and resilience
- Regular pupil surveys and pupil voice activities to identify concerns.

The Lochinver Wellbeing Committee (LWC)

At Lochinver House the LWC has been set up for, amongst a wide spectrum of areas, pupils to help each other address bullying issues. Wellbeing members receive special training to support their work and hold regular meetings where a wide range of issues are discussed.

Pupils who are being bullied are encouraged to talk to any adult in the School, a member of the Wellbeing Council, or any other member of the School community. Pages within the pupils' planner (Year 3 and above) highlight people within School to talk to and organisations where help and advice can be sought. Pupils are also made aware of the anonymous electronic reporting system SHARP (Student Help and Advice Reporting Page). In addition to this the NSPCC speak to our Year 1-6 pupils via their Speak Out Stay Safe campaign, biennially.

Using Technology

Pupils are educated in Computing and Digital Learning lessons and through PSHE/PSED on acceptable use of technology. The Head of Computing and Digital Leader is a CEOP (The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre) trained ambassador, and we have visiting speakers who work with pupils on safe use of cyber technology. All PCs have 'screen capture' software installed called Securus which captures any inappropriate text.

The E-Safety Policy, Acceptable Use Policy, Use of Mobile Devices in the EYFS Policy and E-Safety Agreements give guidance on the use of technology and devices in the classroom and beyond. When signing in, contractors and visitors are made aware that personal mobile devices, such as mobile phones, tablets, cameras and those with imaging and sharing capabilities, must not be used on the School site in the presence of children.

Parents may be given specific permission to take photographs of their children during class assemblies, concerts, events and performances, both on and off-site. Digital media involving other children may only be taken with the express permission from the respective parents. All videos and photographs must be taken in the presence of a

member of the Lochinver House staff and should not be uploaded to social media platforms, including class WhatsApp groups.They must be for personal use only.

Dealing with Bullying

The following steps are taken when dealing with incidents. This helps identify any patterns:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident is investigated and dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached.
- School staff record incidents where sanctions have been applied under the names of those pupils involved on SchoolBase (our School database) with an account of the incident including those involved. Any comments or concerns are also recorded. The Deputy Head Pastoral is informed. The SLT additionally record any bullying incident on the School's Bullying Log.
- It may be necessary to refer the incident immediately to the Head of Year, Deputy Head Pastoral or Head or in their absence another member of SLT who may then want to conduct further interviews and investigation.
- It may be necessary, if the School feels it is appropriate, to consult and/or meet with parents or carers to ensure that there is consistent support for those involved at home and at School.
- Sanctions will be used as appropriate following the Behaviour Policy and recorded on SchoolBase, and on the School's Bullying Log. They will reflect the seriousness of an incident and convey a deterrent effect.
- The centralised record of bullying incidents (Bullying Log) is kept in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the School's approach to bullying and also to enable any patterns to be identified.

Pupils who have been bullied are reviewed in weekly meetings with the Deputy Head Pastoral to determine if referral to the School Nurse or Child and Family Support Worker is required. If it is felt a referral to an external agency, such as the police, is required, a meeting to discuss the pupil(s) will be arranged immediately. A bullying incident is treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a pupil is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. Such cases are reported to the DSL in line with the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedure (incorporating Staff Behaviour and Code of Conduct).

Pupils who have been bullied are supported by:

- offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a teacher with potential use of our *Friendology* relationship framework
- carrying out further investigation if necessary
- reassuring the pupil
- offering continuous support
- restoring self-esteem and confidence
- informing parents, if the School decides that it is appropriate
- offering the opportunity through a mediator to meet with the bully(ies) to help build a positive relationship
- spending time with the Child and Family Support Worker, if necessary.
- However, there may be circumstances in which the police need to be called in, either as a last resort or because of the seriousness of an incident:
    - A bullying incident could have serious consequences for the victim - making a judgement about this can be very difficult because even incidents which are perceived as being minor by an observer can have potentially serious long-term consequences for a victim.
    - Other strategies have failed or are considered to be inappropriate because of the seriousness of what has happened.
    - There is a reasonable possibility that making such a report could make the bullying less likely to recur and produce an outcome that helps the victim.

Pupils who have bullied are helped by:

- discussing what happened with potential use of our *Friendology* relationship framework
- discovering why the pupil became involved
- establishing the wrongdoing and need to change
- creating the opportunity for apology
- undertaking any necessary sanction. Exclusion may be necessary in cases of severe or persistent bullying
- informing parents, if the School decides that it is appropriate
- spending time with the Child and Family Support Worker if necessary
- informing outside agencies such as the police or Hertfordshire Social Care Team where necessary.

Any disciplinary steps taken will follow the Behaviour Policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governors: review bullying data and challenge trends.
Head & Deputy Head Pastoral: ensure implementation of the strategy.
DSL: monitor incidents and provide support.
Staff: challenge bullying immediately and record concerns.
Pupils: report concerns and support peers.
Parents: inform the School of concerns promptly and work collaboratively.

Pupil Voice

Pupil voice plays an important role in helping the School understand pupils' experiences and perceptions of bullying. Through the LWC, School Council, pastoral discussions, surveys and informal conversations, pupils are encouraged to share their views and raise any concerns. This feedback helps the School identify emerging issues, evaluate the effectiveness of its anti-bullying measures and shape future preventative strategies, ensuring that pupils remain at the centre of creating a safe, respectful and inclusive school environment.

Monitoring, Assessment & Review

The School regularly reviews and evaluates the effectiveness of its anti-bullying strategy to help ensure that all pupils feel safe, supported and respected. Records of bullying concerns and incidents are analysed termly by the Senior Leadership Team to identify any patterns, trends or emerging concerns. This includes consideration of year groups, locations, times of day, types of bullying, incidents involving protected characteristics, and online or cyberbullying concerns. Findings from this analysis are used to inform staff training, supervision arrangements, curriculum planning, pastoral interventions and preventative education.

The School also considers feedback from pupils, parents and staff, including information gathered through the Wellbeing Council, School Council, surveys and pastoral discussions, to assess the impact of its approach and identify opportunities for further improvement. The effectiveness of the School's anti-bullying measures is reported to the Education Committee, ensuring ongoing oversight, accountability and a continued commitment to fostering a positive and inclusive school culture.

Where to get help and advice
There are many organisations that provide support and advice if you are worried about bullying. These are just a few:

- Anti-Bullying Alliance
- Bullying advice | Family Lives
- Childline | Childline
- The Diana Award (diana-award.org.uk)
- Information, Advice and Support to Keep Children Safe Online (internetmatters.org)
- Help With Bullying (kidscape.org.uk)
- https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/
- UK Council for Internet Safety - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- www.childnet-int.org/
- www.nspcc.org.uk/

The Head of EYFS is the named practitioner responsible for behaviour management issues regarding Early Years pupils.

Reviewed By	Deputy Head Pastoral
Approval Body/ Committee	Education
Last Review	Autumn 2026
Next Review	Autumn 2027
Policy Linked To	Acceptable Use Policy, Behaviour Policy, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedure (incorporating Staff Behaviour and Code of Conduct), Data Protection Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy, E-Safety Policy, EYFS Supervision, Keeping Children Safe in Education, Privacy Notice, Personal, Social, Health and Education (PSHE) Policy, Supervision Policy, Use of Mobile Devices in Early Years Foundation Stage Policy.

Any data held in relation to the content of this policy will be managed in accordance with our Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice.