



LLOYD WILLIAMSON
FOUNDATION

The Lloyd Williamson Schools Foundation

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

2025

Updated by	Aaron Williams	14th March 2025
Due for update	March 2026	

Introduction

At LWSF, we are dedicated to fostering a safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environment where every student can thrive and reach their full potential, free from disruption, violence, and harassment. We believe that positive relationships built on mutual respect and understanding are essential to achieving this goal.

This policy outlines clear expectations for students, staff, and parents, providing detailed procedures for reporting, investigating, and addressing bullying in any form. It aligns with Independent Schools Association (ISA) standards and UK legal frameworks, including the Equality Act 2010 and the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

This policy is fully aligned with the principles outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2024 (Part 1 and Annex B), DfE guidance and the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) standards, with a robust focus on safeguarding, promoting positive mental health, and ensuring equality and diversity. It should be read alongside the following policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Core British Values Policy
- Cyber-security Policy
- Educational Visits
- Exclusion Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Media Policy
- Mental Health Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Positive Handling Policy
- Prevent Strategy
- PSHE Policy
- RHSE / RSE Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Search, Screen and Confiscate
- Use of Computers and Internet Access Policy

Our Expectations of Students:

We expect all our students to:

- **Treat all staff members with courtesy and co-operation**, recognising their role in creating a positive learning atmosphere. This includes actively listening in class, following instructions, and respecting their professional guidance.
- **Care for and support one another**, both within and outside of the school setting. This encompasses showing kindness, empathy, and respect to their peers, standing up to bullying or inappropriate behaviour, and fostering a sense of community.
- **Respect the school environment**, including its facilities and resources. This means maintaining cleanliness, respecting shared spaces, and avoiding any actions that could cause damage or disruption.
- **Uphold the school's values** by demonstrating integrity, honesty, and responsibility in their actions and words.

The Role of Parents/Guardians:

We recognise that parents/guardians play a vital role in reinforcing positive behaviour and supporting our school community. We encourage parents and carer to:

- **Work in partnership with the school** to maintain consistent expectations for behaviour at home and at school. Open communication and collaboration are essential for addressing any concerns or challenges.
- **Support the school's Anti Bullying Policy and Behaviour Policy** and discuss their principles with your child(ren). Reinforce the importance of respect, responsibility, and kindness in all aspects of their lives.
- **Actively participate in school events and initiatives** that promote positive behaviour and community engagement.

Staff Responsibilities:

We recognise that all members of staff, as well as volunteers, or those who are contracted play a vital role in reinforcing positive behaviour and supporting our school community. Staff and volunteers will:

- Model positive behaviour and foster a respectful environment.
- Be vigilant for signs of bullying and intervene immediately.
- Follow the school's procedures for addressing bullying.

Our Commitment to Addressing Inappropriate Behaviour:

LWSF has a zero-tolerance policy towards bullying, harassment, victimisation, and discrimination of any kind, whether directed at students or staff. We believe that everyone deserves to be treated fairly and with consideration.

Specifically:

- **Bullying in all forms is unacceptable**, including physical, verbal, emotional, and cyberbullying, as well as prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying. We will thoroughly investigate all reported incidents of bullying and take appropriate action to ensure the safety and well-being of all students.
- **We will provide support and resources** to both the victims of bullying and the perpetrators, focusing on education and rehabilitation to foster positive change.
- **Disciplinary measures** will be implemented, when necessary, in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy, which is available on our website and communicated to all staff and students.

Scope of this Policy:

This policy applies to all students, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), and covers actions that occur both within and outside of the school premises, including online interactions. The term "school" encompasses the Nursery, Lower School, and Upper School, recognising the interconnectedness of our entire learning community.

Communication and Accessibility:

This policy is readily accessible to parents of current and prospective students through our website. It is also communicated to all staff and students to ensure that everyone is aware of our expectations and procedures.

We believe that by working together – students, staff, and parents – we can create a positive and supportive learning environment where every member of the LWSF community feels valued, respected, and empowered to succeed.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying can be defined as repeated behaviour by an individual or group that intentionally harms another individual or group, either physically or emotionally. It's important to note that not every instance of unkindness between children constitutes bullying. The school will consider the details of each incident to determine whether it is, or is not, bullying.

We believe bullying is the intentional hurting, harming, or humiliating of another person. It can manifest in various forms, including:

- **Physical:** This encompasses any threat or use of violence of any kind.
- **Sexual:** This includes the sharing of nude or semi-nude images.
- **Verbal:** This covers cyberbullying via email, social media, gaming platforms, and instant messaging services, as well as direct verbal abuse.
- **Emotional:** This involves exclusion, sarcasm, name-calling, tormenting, spreading malicious rumours, or any other action intended to cause emotional distress.

Bullying can also involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone, or actions that fall short of direct participation, such as encouraging others to bully or joining in with laughing at a victim.

Bullying can be subtle and hidden, or overt and intimidating. It often involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim, whether that imbalance is physical, psychological, intellectual, or through the perpetrator's capacity to socially isolate the victim.

Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups and may involve actions or comments regarding a person's race, religion, ¹ gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), or familial circumstances, such as being adopted, in care, or having caring responsibilities. Bullying may be motivated by actual or perceived differences between children. For example, homophobic bullying can occur even if directed towards a child perceived to be gay, regardless of their actual sexual orientation.

Bullying can happen anywhere, at any time, and can involve anyone – pupils, other young people, staff, and parents.

Response to Bullying

LWSF will always treat bullying incidents with the utmost seriousness. When bullying occurs, we will act swiftly and decisively. We will never dismiss bullying as mere "banter" or "horseplay." All reported incidents will be thoroughly investigated and addressed by staff in accordance with this policy.

LWSF recognises the potential for bullying to cause significant physical, emotional, and psychological harm, including eating disorders, self-harm, and even suicidal thoughts. Ensuring the immediate safety of pupils and stopping any physical violence is our priority. We also understand that emotional bullying can be particularly damaging, and staff will use their professional judgement when dealing with incidents, within the framework of this policy and the Behaviour Policy. While bullying

itself is not a specific criminal offence, several criminal laws apply to related behaviours, including harassment, sexual violence and assault, sexting, the sharing of nude or semi-nude images (in certain circumstances), upskirting, and violent or threatening behaviour.

Every individual has the right to **be treated with respect**.

We acknowledge that children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions may be more vulnerable to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying). We also recognise that some children may face additional barriers to reporting bullying incidents due to their vulnerability, disability, sex, ethnicity, and/or sexual orientation.

Pupils who are bullied will receive our full support and be assured of our commitment to their safety. Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour will face appropriate disciplinary action. Where possible, they will also be supported in learning positive behavioural changes and offered support relevant to their circumstances.

This policy applies to bullying incidents that occur on school trips or outside of the school premises. Teachers are authorised, where appropriate, to discipline pupils for misbehaviour that occurs outside of school premises and school hours.

Signs of Bullying: Recognising the Signs

- Changes in a pupil's behaviour can sometimes indicate that they are experiencing bullying. It's important to be aware of these potential signs:
- Reluctance to attend school: A sudden or persistent unwillingness to go to school can be a major red flag.
- Increased anxiety and withdrawal: Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn, unusually quiet, or tearful can suggest emotional distress related to bullying.
- Decline in academic performance: A noticeable failure to produce work, or producing unusually poor work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with, or spoilt by others¹ should be taken seriously.
- Missing or damaged belongings: The sudden disappearance of books, bags, money, or other belongings, or finding them damaged, could indicate bullying, theft, or extortion.
- Changes in routines and social behaviour: Altered behaviour patterns, such as giving up extracurricular activities, not wanting to go out at break times, avoiding certain places or people, or changes in friendship groups may suggest difficulties.
- Lowered self-confidence: A diminished level of self-confidence, self-esteem, or increased self-blame can be a consequence of bullying.

- Physical symptoms: Frequent physical complaints, such as stomach aches, headaches, or other ailments, may be related to stress and anxiety caused by bullying.
- Unexplained injuries: Unexplained cuts, bruises, or other injuries could be a sign of physical bullying or aggression.
- Attendance problems: Frequent absences, erratic attendance, or lateness to class can sometimes be linked to a fear of facing bullies.
- Preference for adult company: Choosing the company of adults rather than peers might indicate a lack of positive relationships with other children due to bullying.
- Changes in body language: Displaying repressed body language, avoiding eye contact, or appearing unusually subdued could suggest emotional distress or fear.
- Sleep disturbances: Difficulty sleeping, experiencing nightmares, or bedwetting can be triggered by stress and anxiety.
- Talk of running away or self-harm: Talking about running away from home or school, or expressing thoughts about suicide or self-harm should be treated as a serious concern and requires immediate attention.

We understand that there can be other reasons for some of the symptoms listed above. However, we recognise that a recurrence or a combination of these possible signs should be investigated by parents and teachers. Any concerns should be reported and recorded appropriately, in accordance with this policy.

Bullying - Preventative Measures

LWSF actively seeks to raise awareness of and prevent bullying becoming a problem in the first place.

We do this by:

- Promoting an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat each other with respect at all times, inside and outside of school;
- Offering regular anti-bullying workshops via assemblies for students and staff meetings for staff.
- Embedding kindness and respect into school culture through assemblies and PSHE.
- Promoting a visible anti-bullying campaign – posters, student-led initiatives, and peer support groups
- Actively monitoring high-risk areas (playgrounds, corridors, online spaces).
- Creating a culture in which our pupils feel able to share their concerns openly, in a non-judgemental environment with a trusted adult;

- Establishing conditions in which our pupils can aspire to and realise safe and healthy relationships;
- Encouraging a culture of respect amongst all members of the school.
- All new pupils are briefed thoroughly on the School's expected standards of behaviour. They are told what to do if they encounter bullying. Those who report bullying in good faith will not be punished and will be supported;
- We work on educating all pupils through assemblies and PSHE to reinforce our expectation of mutual respect.
- We promote the importance of equality and diversity and pupils are encouraged to avoid prejudicial and exclusionary language;
- All of our pupils are encouraged to tell any member of staff at once if they are being bullied, or if they know or suspect that bullying is taking place;
- All pupils (including EYFS pupils) know how to report anxieties to an appropriate member of staff;
- The School buildings display advice on where pupils can seek help, including details of confidential help lines and websites where they can connect with external specialists, such as ChildLine, Kidscape, Bullying UK, and the Samaritans.
- The School does not tolerate peer-group "initiation ceremonies" or hazing rituals designed to cause pain, anxiety or humiliation to pupils, and all staff remain alert to such actions.
- New members of staff are given training and guidance on the School's anti-bullying policy and on how to react to, and record allegations of bullying on AIMS.
- We recognise that certain children may be more at risk of bullying than others, and may require additional support when dealing with an incident of bullying, for example SEND and LGBTQ+ pupils. Staff receive appropriate training to be able to understand the specific needs of our pupils, and to enable all staff to provide an inclusive environment for all pupils.
- All reported incidents are recorded on AIMS and investigated at once. Records of any incidents are kept securely to ensure patterns of behaviour can be identified and monitored.
- LWSF has an experienced Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL: Clare Smart) and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs: Shaun Watson, Emma Lima,) who are trained in how to handle incidents as an

immediate priority, and who are alert to possible signs of bullying and will know when to apply our safeguarding procedures to bullying incidents.

- Staff are always on duty at times when pupils are not in class and there are appropriate levels of supervision in place across the sites. Staff discuss in staff briefings particular areas where bullying might occur. They are also trained to be alert to inappropriate language or behaviour at all times.
- LWSF has the right to investigate incidents of bullying involving LWSF pupils which take place outside school hours, on school visits and trips, or that otherwise occur outside of school.
- This policy is available on the Schools' website so that Parents are clear about our approach to bullying and what to do if their child experiences bullying.
- We encourage close contact between the school and parents / guardians and will always make contact if we are concerned about a pupil's well-being.
- If parents know or suspect that their child, or another pupil, is being bullied, they should contact the school without delay. All concerns will be taken seriously.
- We welcome feedback from parents / guardians on the effectiveness of our preventative measures and all other aspects and implementation of this anti-bullying policy.

Procedures for Dealing with Reported Bullying

Reporting and Investigation Procedures

Step 1: Reporting Bullying

- Students and parents can report bullying to any trusted staff member.
- Anonymous reporting options are available, such as leaving a note for a teacher
- Staff must document all reports on AIMS and discuss with the DSL and / or Headteacher.

Step 2: Initial Response and Documentation

- Immediate support will be offered to the victim.
- Perpetrators will not be confronted immediately—investigations will take place first.

Step 3: Investigation Process

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a senior teacher will lead investigations.
- Interviews will be conducted separately with victims, perpetrators, and witnesses.
- Evidence will be gathered, including messages, CCTV footage, and written statements.

Step 4: Outcome and Action

- Support for the victim – counseling, peer support, or schedule adjustments.
- Restorative approaches may be used where appropriate.
- Consequences for the perpetrator – warnings, detentions, behavior contracts, or suspension.

Reporting

All reported instances or concerns of bullying and cyberbullying, whether occurring on or off school premises, are recorded on AIMS. These records, detailing both instances and allegations of bullying, are maintained to enable the school to identify patterns of behaviour and assess the effectiveness of this anti-bullying policy.

The school understands that pupils are most likely to report bullying to a trusted individual, who could be any member of staff. All staff receive training in handling allegations of bullying, which emphasises active listening without leading questions, and accurate written record-keeping to the best of their ability.

Investigations

All reports of bullying, however minor, will be investigated. If a bullying incident is reported, the following procedure will be followed:

1. The staff member who received the report or witnessed the situation will take control, offering reassurance and support to the pupil(s) involved, while explaining the limits of confidentiality. They will inform an appropriate Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Senior Management Team (SMT) member as soon as possible about the allegation.
2. The DSL or SMT member will speak with the pupil(s) involved, allowing them time to explain what happened and reassuring them that the allegation will be taken seriously and investigated. Staff will be transparent that others may need to be consulted. They will record and report the information as detailed above. An SMT member will lead the investigation.
3. The alleged victim and perpetrator(s) will be interviewed separately, with an appropriate adult present for support. Notes taken will be reviewed with the pupil/s to ensure accuracy. Pupils may also be asked to provide their own written account of events.

4. Written accounts should be signed and dated. Notes, where possible should be recorded on AIMS. Written accounts by the pupils will be scanned and recorded / stored securely on AIMS.
5. Evidence will be gathered, including messages, CCTV footage, and written statements
6. The SMT member handling the incident will determine the necessary actions following the investigation. They will communicate the outcome to relevant parties, such as pupils, the headteacher, relevant teachers, and parents/guardians.

Outcome of the Investigation

When bullying is confirmed, both the victim/s and perpetrator/s will receive support from the school.

1. **Support for the victim:** The victim will be offered support to develop coping strategies. They will be explicitly told why revenge or retaliation is not appropriate. Support will aim to help them recover from the negative effects of bullying and regain a positive experience at school. This support could include mentoring by a trusted member of staff, a recommendation for counselling if the school and parents deem this appropriate.
2. **Considering the perpetrator's needs:** The reasons behind the perpetrator's behaviour will be explored. If it's believed the perpetrator is also at risk of harm, a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be consulted, and protective measures may be implemented according to the Safeguarding Policy.
3. **Addressing the perpetrator's behaviour:** The perpetrator(s) will be clearly informed why their behaviour was unacceptable. They will receive support and guidance to help them change their behaviour.
4. **Restorative approaches:** Where appropriate, a supervised meeting between victim(s) and perpetrator(s) may help develop a strategy for resolution and closure.
5. **Parental involvement:** The parents/guardians of all involved parties will be informed and may be invited to school to discuss the matter. Their support will be sought for preventative measures, and any concerns from either side will be addressed.

Sanctions

Each bullying incident will be dealt with on an individual basis, and any disciplinary action will depend on the severity of the incident. The Behaviour Policy and, depending on the seriousness, the Exclusion Policy, outline the range of possible

sanctions. Pupils found to have bullied other pupils or staff can expect, at a minimum, a school detention. More serious consequences may be considered. In severe cases, bullying can lead to permanent exclusion.

Disciplinary measures will be fair, consistent, and reasonable, taking into account any special educational needs or disabilities and the needs of vulnerable pupil

Further Considerations

Child Protection and Bullying: Procedures and Protocols

All allegations of child-on-child abuse are treated as safeguarding concerns and will be investigated and managed in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy.

When pupil behaviour or bullying raises "reasonable cause to suspect" that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, staff must follow the procedures outlined in the Safeguarding Policy.

The school prioritises the best interests of the pupil and the school as a whole when addressing bullying or suspected bullying, even if this conflicts with parental wishes.

Reporting and Investigation:

If an investigating staff member believes reported bullying behaviour may be criminal, or that there may be a risk of harm, they will consult with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Headteacher. The DSL will report the matter to the police without delay if necessary. The school will then follow the procedures in the Safeguarding Policy and any police guidance.

Serious Cases:

In serious cases, the DSL and Headteacher will be involved, and it may be necessary to report to the police and/or local authority Children's Services. Many issues can be resolved internally under this policy and the School's Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy.

Immediate Action:

In cases of immediately apparent or suspected criminal activity, the police will be called immediately.

Cyber-Bullying

Cyberbullying: Definition, Forms, and School's Role

Cyberbullying is defined as "the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that

is intended to harm others" (Belsey, <http://www.cyber-bullying.org/>). It is an intentional act often carried out repeatedly over time, frequently targeting a victim who struggles to defend themselves. LWSF recognises that cyberbullying can occur inside and outside of school, at any time.

Forms of Cyberbullying:

Cyberbullying can involve various electronic media, including:

- Texts, instant messages, emails, or calls on mobile phones;
- The use of mobile phone camera images to cause distress, fear, or humiliation;
- Posting threatening, abusive, sexual, discriminatory, offensive, or humiliating material or comments on websites (including blogs, personal websites, and social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, TikTok, YouTube, and/or any other platforms);
- Hijacking/cloning social media and/or email accounts.

Examples of Cyberbullying:

Cyberbullying can manifest in many forms, such as:

- Cyber-stalking
- Exclusion or peer rejection
- Impersonation
- Unauthorised publication of private information or images
- Encouraging derogatory comments on online platforms
- Sharing nude/semi-nude images
- Upskirting
- Sexting

LWSF's Role:

LWSF plays a crucial role in educating pupils about the knowledge and behaviours that promote safe and confident navigation of the online world, regardless of device, platform, or app.

Prevention of Cyber-Bullying

To prevent cyberbullying, LWSF implements several measures in addition to those previously described:

Acceptable Use and Monitoring:

- All pupils are expected to follow the school's policy for safe internet and technology use.
- Our filtering system blocks certain sites, and our ICT Lead monitors pupil activity on school devices and platforms.

Consequences for Misuse:

- Disciplinary action, in line with the Behaviour Policy, may be taken for misuse or attempted misuse of the internet or technology.

Education and Guidance:

- PSHE lessons provide guidance on safe social networking and cyberbullying, covering:
 - Awareness of the various forms of cyberbullying, its severe consequences, and the school's zero-tolerance stance.
 - Guidance on protecting personal information, including names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers, and other details.

Mobile Phone Policy:

- Mobile phones are not permitted during the school day. They are collected at the start of the day and returned at home time.

Procedures for Dealing with Cyber-Bullying

LWSF will follow the procedures in this policy and the Safeguarding Policy for cyberbullying incidents. The school will take reasonable action to manage pupil behaviour, protect its reputation, and safeguard pupil welfare.

While cyberbullying is not a specific crime, criminal laws may apply to harassing or threatening communications, unauthorised publication of private images, upskirting, sharing nude or semi-nude images, and sexting. If the school believes a reported cyberbullying incident may be a criminal offence, the police will be informed.

Responding to Cyberbullying:

- Report and document all incidents.
- Assess the severity – if criminal, refer to authorities.
- Educate the perpetrator on digital responsibility.
- Ensure the victim's online safety (adjust privacy settings, block users)

Electronic Devices: Search and Confiscation

Authority to Search:

In response to a cyberbullying allegation, designated staff, authorised by the Head, may search electronic devices (e.g., mobile phones) without parental or pupil consent if they have reasonable grounds to suspect the pupil possesses a prohibited item. The search will follow the **Search, Screen and Confiscation Policy**.

Examination of Data:

If a search reveals a prohibited electronic device, or if staff reasonably suspect it has been or may be used to commit an offence, cause harm, or damage property, the school may examine its data or files if there is good reason (e.g., a cyberbullying allegation). Parental consent may be sought but is not required.

Data Erasure:

The school may erase data or files if deemed necessary, unless there are reasonable grounds to suspect the device contains evidence of a criminal offence. In such cases, the files must not be deleted, and the device must be given to the police immediately.

Post-Search Procedures:

If a search finds no evidence of an offence, or the police advise they won't investigate, the school may delete files or data and retain the device as evidence of a policy breach. The school may then discipline the pupil under the Behaviour Policy. Safeguarding concerns arising from a search will be handled according to the **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**.

Record Keeping:

The school will maintain records of all searches, including findings and actions taken, on **AIMS**.

EYFS Children: Behaviour Principles

In the Nursery and EYFS, children are encouraged to:

- Treat each other with kindness and consideration.
- Care for their own and respect others' belongings.
- Be honest, helpful, and polite.
- Listen to others.
- Respect themselves and others, valuing diversity.

The EYFS Coordinator oversees behaviour management within the setting. We explain to EYFS children why certain behaviours are unacceptable and hurtful.

Sanctions and Parental Involvement:

Sanctions are rarely needed in the EYFS but may be necessary in line with the Behaviour Policy. Occasionally, a child might be sent to the headteacher, who will explain why their action was inappropriate and suggest a better alternative. Such instances are rare. Parents are always informed if a sanction is required. For repeated hurtful or inappropriate behaviour, parents will be invited to discuss the situation with the child's teacher and agree on a joint approach.

Child-on-Child Abuse

Bullying can sometimes constitute child-on-child abuse, defined as abuse by one or more pupils against another. The pupils involved may not be in the same age groups or year groups. Child-on-child abuse is a specific safeguarding concern. All staff must recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse, know how to identify it, and understand reporting procedures.

Staff with concerns about child-on-child abuse should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Such cases will be handled according to the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Complaints Procedure

Parents and pupils are encouraged to use our Complaints Procedure (published on our website) if they believe concerns about bullying (or any other matter) are not being addressed appropriately and in line with school policies. EYFS parents can refer a complaint directly to the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) if dissatisfied with the handling of their complaint.

Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed and updated at least annually.

February 2025

Review Date: September 2025

Appendix: Examples of Bullying Behaviour

Bullying can take many forms, and it's important to recognise the different ways it can manifest. Here are some examples:

Physical Bullying:

Physical bullying involves the use of physical force or actions to harm or intimidate someone. This can include:

- Direct physical assault: Hitting, kicking, punching, pinching, scratching, biting, or any other form of physical attack.
- Shoving and pushing: Jostling, shoving, pushing, or tripping someone.
- Spitting: Spitting at someone.
- Invasion of personal space: Intentionally invading someone's personal space, making them feel uncomfortable or threatened.
- Physical humiliation: Making someone perform degrading or humiliating acts.
- Property damage or theft: Taking, damaging, or hiding someone's belongings.

It's crucial to remember that physical bullying, if it involves assault, actual bodily harm, or wounding, is a criminal offence and will be treated accordingly.

Verbal Bullying:

Verbal bullying uses words to hurt or humiliate someone. This can include:

- Spoken abuse: Making unkind or hurtful remarks, insults, or threats.
- Written abuse: Sending hurtful or threatening notes, emails, or text messages.
- Cyberbullying: Improper use of websites and social media platforms to spread rumours, share embarrassing photos or videos, or send abusive messages.
- Phone abuse: Making harassing or threatening phone calls.
- Defacing property: Writing or drawing offensive messages or images on someone's property.
- Name-calling: Using derogatory or offensive names.
- Spreading rumours: Spreading false or malicious rumours about someone.
- Public shaming: Publicly blaming someone for something they haven't done.
- Circulating offensive material: Sharing unflattering drawings or photographic images of someone, whether created or sourced elsewhere.

Indirect or Manipulative Bullying:

Indirect or manipulative bullying aims to harm someone's social standing or reputation. This can include:

- **Social exclusion:** Ostracising a fellow pupil by refusing to sit with them in class, the dining hall, or other social settings, or deliberately moving away when they approach.
- **Manipulation of social groups:** Manipulating social networks to isolate, marginalise, or intimidate individuals, often through spreading gossip or lies.
- **Cyberbullying through exclusion:** Creating online groups or chats that deliberately exclude specific individuals.
- **Encouraging others to bully:** Pressuring or manipulating others to participate in bullying behaviour.

Examples of Bullying Behaviour Related to Protected Characteristics

Bullying can take many forms, and it's important to recognise the different ways it can manifest, especially when targeted at individuals with protected characteristics as defined in UK law. These characteristics include: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

Here are some examples of bullying behaviours that may be particularly relevant in this context:

Physical Bullying:

- **Targeted physical assault:** Hitting, kicking, or any physical attack motivated by prejudice against a protected characteristic (e.g., targeting someone due to their race or perceived sexual orientation).
- **Physical intimidation:** Using physical actions or proximity to intimidate someone due to their identity (e.g., aggressive behaviour towards someone because of their religion).
- **Property damage motivated by prejudice:** Damaging or destroying someone's belongings because of their association with a protected group (e.g., vandalising someone's locker with homophobic graffiti).

Verbal Bullying:

- **Slurs and derogatory language:** Using offensive language related to a protected characteristic (e.g., racist, homophobic, or transphobic slurs).

- **Discriminatory remarks:** Making comments that stereotype or demean individuals based on their protected characteristics (e.g., sexist or ableist remarks).
- **Hate speech:** Expressing hateful or discriminatory views towards individuals or groups based on their protected characteristics.
- **Cyberbullying with discriminatory content:** Spreading hateful messages, images, or videos online targeting someone's identity.

Indirect or Manipulative Bullying:

- **Exclusion based on identity:** Ostracising someone from social groups or activities because of their protected characteristics (e.g., excluding someone from a sports team due to their perceived gender identity).
- **Spreading prejudiced rumours:** Spreading false or malicious rumours about someone related to their protected characteristics (e.g., rumours about someone's sexual orientation or gender identity).
- **Manipulation to cause harm based on identity:** Manipulating situations to cause someone distress or harm due to their protected characteristics (e.g., outing someone's sexual orientation without their consent).
- **Online hate campaigns:** Organising or participating in online campaigns to target and harass individuals based on their protected characteristics.

Specific Examples Related to LGBTQ+ Individuals:

- **Homophobic or transphobic slurs:** Using derogatory terms related to sexual orientation or gender identity.
- **Misgendering:** Refusing to use a person's preferred pronouns or name.
- **Questioning someone's identity:** Repeatedly questioning or invalidating someone's gender identity or sexual orientation.
- **Bullying based on perceived nonconformity:** Targeting someone for not conforming to gender stereotypes or expectations.