EST. 1525
Sedbergh
SCHOOL

Counter-Bullying Policy	
Version	2026.2
Effective from	October 2026
Extent of Policy	Sedbergh School
Policy Owner	Senior Deputy Head (Pastoral)
Authorised by	Designated Safeguarding Governor
Review by	August 2027
Frequency of Audit	Annual
Circulation	All Employees Parents via website
Publication	The Hub Website

Principles

- **Kindness is a fundamental value of Sedbergh School and, as such, bullying has no place in our School community.**
- **The Headmaster, staff and pupils of Sedbergh School agree that we will not tolerate any form of bullying, whether this takes place in person or online.**
- **Everyone who is part of the Sedbergh School community has a responsibility for one another.**
- **Anyone who witnesses or is aware of bullying behaviour should report it and seek help.**
- **Our priority is to prevent bullying, rather than just punish it. It should be recognised, however, that bullying is a significant offence and may be punished by suspension or, ultimately, expulsion.**
- **Roles are fluid and can change over time; therefore we talk about a perpetrator rather than a bully and a target rather than a victim so that pupils do not feel defined by their behaviour or victimised.**

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1. Definition of bullying

Bullying is behaviour that is likely but not necessarily repeated over time. It is negative behaviour that is intended to make others feel upset, uncomfortable or unsafe. It may occur in person or online (social media platforms, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email).

Bullying may be:

- **Physical**: causing physical harm to another person; made to give up money or belongings; having property, clothes or belongings damaged; being forced to do something they don't want to.
- **Indirect**: having negative stories told or rumours spread about them, either in person, online or in group messages; being made to feel isolated or excluded.
- **Verbal**: name-calling, sarcasm, making remarks about clothing or appearance; making discriminatory remarks, especially those based on protected characteristics; sexualised remarks or taunting.
- **Emotional**: excluding other people, particularly from groups; tormenting, threatening, ridiculing, humiliating, or taunting.
- **Online bullying**: any of the above sent via mobile phones or other internet-enabled devices (messages, calls, emails, social media).

2. Identifying incidences of bullying

At the start of the School year, and at other times throughout, pupils and staff are made aware of how to identify incidences of bullying.

- Each House displays information about what bullying is, and what pupils can do about it.
- Heads of Houses (or other House prefects) give regular presentations and reminders to their Houses on counter-bullying.
- Pupil training and education on bullying, including online bullying, is provided in Sedbergh Compass lessons, in-House presentations (drawing attention to the role of **bystanders**), tutor group meetings, Assemblies, presentations by external speakers and INSET (for staff).
- All staff will undergo refresher training every year on aspects of bullying, online bullying and how to respond.
- All staff are aware of the role they play in the prevention, identification and reporting of bullying.

3. Recording incidents of bullying

a) An incident should be recorded on CPOMS as a child-on-child incident, detailing the bullying concern, and assigned to the Counter-Bullying Officers. The Senior Deputy Head (Pastoral) and the relevant HSM(s) should be alerted to the Incident.

b) After discussion with the relevant HSM, the CBO may assign appropriate members of staff to speak to the pupils involved and ensure that all sides of the concern are heard. These conversations should be recorded as Actions on the CPOMS Incident.

c) All actions subsequently taken, both School sanctions and support measures, should be recorded on CPOMS and/or iSAMS as Actions.

d) The log of bullying incidents and actions, and their progress and outcome, will be reviewed as a standing agenda item at fortnightly Pastoral Committee meetings.

e) Feedback on actions and outcomes, where appropriate, may be shared with the original discloser.

4. Investigation and action

a) When addressing an incidence of bullying, the CBO will ensure that the target(s) is/are well supported and feel(s) safe. All relevant House staff will also be informed via CPOMS Alerts.

b) Appropriate measures will be implemented to end the bullying behaviour.

c) In most cases, actions will include educational responses as well as disciplinary action. 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.

d) Staff will reinforce to the alleged perpetrator that their behaviour is unacceptable and, if possible, the pupils will be reconciled.

e) An attempt will be made, and support given, to help the alleged perpetrator understand and change their behaviour as well as making sure that pupils are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders. It will be important to try to discover what the triggers are for bullying, ie is something going on in the child's life which is giving rise to

poor behaviour towards others? (Reference is made to the School's Safeguarding Policy and signs of abuse.)

f) In serious cases of bullying, the SDH(P) and CBO will consider whether the incident is a child protection/safeguarding issue. In such cases, the Designated Safeguarding Lead in School, Children's Services or police may be consulted (see Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy).

5. Review of Bullying incidents and the effectiveness of the Counter-Bullying Policy

a) The Bullying Log (CPOMS) is a standing agenda item at fortnightly meetings of the Pastoral Committee.

The Pastoral Committee will:

i) review individual cases of bullying;
ii) analyse reported cases to identify trends and patterns of behaviour;
iii) evaluate the effectiveness of the approaches adopted to deal with bullying behaviour;
iv) consider the possible impact, risks and needs associated with pupils' SEND, behavioural or pastoral history, or other pertinent factors.

Minutes from these meetings may be shared with the Headmaster, HSMs and other colleagues where appropriate. Any trends or patterns identified will be shared by the Senior Deputy Head Pastoral at weekly SMT and HSM meetings.

The SDH(P)/CBOs will give regular updates to the Common Room and the Parents' Association to inform them of trends within School and of any changes to guidelines or policy.

The CBOs will also organise an annual whole School assembly to discuss issues of bullying at Sedbergh as part of the Sedbergh Compass programme.

Further information can be found via the following DfE advice on preventing and tackling bullying**:**

Preventing bullying - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Appendix A

COMBATING ONLINE BULLYING

Online bullying is recognised as a major problem nationally and as such deserves its own section in our Counter-Bullying Policy. It is addressed in detail here. Please also refer to the School's ICT Acceptable Use Policy. The DSL is responsible for overseeing online safety, as well as the counter-bullying content of the Compass curriculum.

Online bullying can be defined as 'the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones, email and via social networking sites on the internet, deliberately to upset someone else'. It can be an extension of face-to-face bullying, with technology providing the perpetrator with another route to harass their target.

However, it differs in several significant ways from other kinds of bullying:

- the invasion of home and personal space;
- the difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages;
- the size of the audience;
- perceived anonymity.

Online bullying takes different forms:

- threats and intimidation;
- harassment or 'cyber-stalking' (eg repeatedly sending unwanted texts, instant messages or by people trying to befriend someone on a social networking site);
- vilification/defamation;
- exclusion or peer rejection;
- Impersonation;
- unauthorised publication or manipulation of private information or images.

Some online bullying is clearly deliberate and aggressive, but it is important to recognise that some incidents of cyber-bullying are known to be unintentional and the result of simply not thinking about the consequences. What may be sent as a joke may not be received as one, and indeed the distance that technology allows in communication means the sender may not see the impact of the message on the receiver. There is also less opportunity for either party to resolve any misunderstanding or to feel empathy. It is important that pupils are made aware of the effects of their actions.

In cases of online bullying, bystanders can easily become perpetrators, e.g. by passing on or showing to others images designed to humiliate, or by taking part in online polls or discussion groups. They may not recognise themselves as participating in bullying, but their involvement compounds the impact on the person targeted. It is important that pupils are aware that their actions may have severe and distressing consequences, and that participating in such activity will not be tolerated.

There are particular features of online bullying that differ from other forms of bullying which need to be recognised and taken into account when determining how to respond effectively. The key differences are:

- **Impact** — the scale and scope of cyber-bullying can be greater than other forms of bullying.
- **Targets and perpetrators** — the nature of social media can expose perpetrators and targets to a significantly wider group of people.
- **Location** — the 24/7 and any-place nature of cyber-bullying.
- **Anonymity** — the person being bullied will not always know who is targeting them.
- **Motivation** — some pupils may not be aware that what they are doing is bullying.
- **Evidence** — unlike other forms of bullying, the target of the bullying will have evidence of its occurrence.
- Further information can be found via the following DfE advice on Cyberbullying: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/374850/Cyberbullying_Advice_for_Headteachers_and_School_Staff_121114.pdf

Appendix B

Job Description: Counter-Bullying Officer

Reporting to: Senior Deputy Head (Pastoral)

Child Protection and Safeguarding: The welfare of children is of the highest priority to Sedbergh School. Every employee of the School has a responsibility to:

- Protect children from abuse
- Be aware of the School's safeguarding procedures
- Know how to access and implement the required procedures
- Keep a sufficient record of any significant complaint, conversation or event
- Report any matters of concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Attend annual in-service training provided by the School

Aim

- To prioritise and nurture kindness across the School
- To reduce the number of incidents of bullying in School
- To support those affected by bullying
- To counsel and help educate perpetrators

How

- To review and update the School's Counter-Bullying Policy
- To raise awareness within the School of bullying behaviour and how to combat it through:
    - Assemblies
    - Liaison with Sedbergh Compass teaching staff
    - Management of pupil-led counter bullying team (developing strategies)
    - Be a member of the Pastoral Committee
    - Research into and training of counter-bullying prefects
    - Staff training
- To gather and analyse information about bullying in the School:
    - Post-incident interviews with pupils involved (motivations, identifying ways to support both the perpetrator and the target)
    - Develop effective information-sharing process
    - To assist the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSLs in dealing with incidents of bullying (in a non-disciplinary role).

Appendix C

Staff awareness of potential bullying issues

All Sedbergh School staff should be aware that a child may indicate, by different signs or behaviour, that he or she is being bullied. We all need to be aware of these possible signs and investigate further if a child is:

- frightened of coming into School, does not want to leave the house, has a pattern of being ill on the same day/during the same lessons, refuses to get out of the car in the morning
- begins to feign illness on regular days to avoid e.g. games
- becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning or regularly reports to the Medical Centre
- begins to underperform in School work
- comes back to the boarding house with clothes torn or books damaged
- regularly reports possessions going 'missing'
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to give to the perpetrator)
- has unexplained cut or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what is wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be taken seriously and investigated as soon as possible. Staff must therefore raise any concerns about the welfare of children with Housemasters/ Housemistresses.

However, a lot of this can be dealt with by the member of staff, commenting on the spot eg "that comment is not ok" / "we don't speak to/about people like that here".

Appendix D

Staff strategies to prevent bullying

- Teachers need to define a clear, fair set of expectations that protect the interests of all class members, and ensure that all voices are heard.
- Teachers need to remember that they teach people, not just a subject.
- Teachers should produce a seating plan for lessons, and teachers/coaches should choose pairs and groups for set tasks, rather than allowing pupils to make these choices for themselves.
- Care should be exercised when dealing with the parties involved. There may be more to an incident than meets the eye: for example, a target's reaction could be mistaken for bullying.
- Punctuality is vital. Bullying may occur before class starts or as pupils go from one lesson to the next.
- In the boarding house, staff should be very aware of the dangers of bullying or teasing.
- Staff should watch out for queue barging and the exclusion of individuals from a table or the same pupils being made to clear each meal.
- On the games field, staff must not lose sight of the fact that they are primarily teachers, as well as coaches and referees. They should not tolerate anti-social or rude behaviour, regardless of circumstances. We are all very proud of our excellent sporting record, but that must be secondary to good conduct.
- Do not accept lies or false excuses: "I didn't do it, she's got the wrong end of the stick", "it was a game", "we were having a joke", "it was an accident," "he offered to lend it to me". These matters are hard to prove when the target has no witnesses to back him or her up but could be important as it may well help to uncover patterns of behaviour.
- Tell Housemasters/Housemistresses if you are concerned about a child's welfare. However, all staff must inform SDH(P) and CBO with any allegations of bullying.

Appendix G

HELP ORGANISATIONS FOR PUPILS

Advisory Centre for Education	0808 800 5793
Children's Legal Centre	0845 345 4345
Kidscape Parents' helpline (Mon-10am-4pm)	0845 1 205 204
Parent line plus	0808 800 2222
Youth Access	020 8772 9900
Bullying online	www.bullying.co.uk
Young Minds	0800 01821138
ChildLine	0800 1111
Children's Commissioner	0800 528 0731
Independent listener (Judy Blair)	independentlistener@sedberghschool.org
Anti-Bullying Alliance	If you're being bullied (anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)