



REPTON

Anti-Bullying Policy

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Anti-Bullying Policy

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1. Introduction

The Repton community is wholeheartedly committed to providing a safe, caring, welcoming and friendly atmosphere in which individuality will flourish. Our ethos is one of acceptance, respect, integrity, honesty and courage, and it is clear that, in this context, bullying will not be tolerated.

It is our primary aim to create a school culture which prevents instances of bullying from being a serious problem in the first place. We do not simply wait for bullying to happen and are conscious that the nature of the boarding environment (and the long day for day pupils) can, potentially, intensify issues such as peer pressure. Boarding staff remain particularly vigilant during evenings, overnight periods, free time and other less structured times when bullying behaviour may be more likely to occur. A pro-active approach is entrenched throughout Repton life through strategies such as our PSHE programme, the strong 'family' house system, powerful modelling of appropriate behaviour by those in authority, positive messages delivered via regular lectures, assemblies and Chapel services, peer-mentoring schemes, rewards to encourage positive behaviour, as well as regular and appropriate training for both staff and pupils. We consequently hope to engender the values and traits required for living positively and constructively in a close-knit boarding community. This means respecting the space, privacy and property of others, treating all members of the community with respect, acceptance and compassion, respecting personal boundaries and wishes, celebrating our differences, and offering support and encouragement to each other at all times. We expect pupils to maintain these values at all times and within and beyond the school site. The School recognises its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and will give particular consideration to incidents involving prejudice or discrimination relating to protected characteristics.

Whilst this is the ideal to which we hope to guide all Reptonians, the School nevertheless accepts that bullying does occur and that this can lead to significant and long-term physical, emotional, and psychological damage in the affected pupil. Bullying is also destructive of the wider community and undermines the mission of the School to provide a safe and secure environment for all its pupils. If bullying goes unchecked, it can also be very damaging for the long-term personal development of both the perpetrator and those who witness bullying as such behaviour may become learned and habituated. It is for these reasons that the School views bullying as a significant offence which can in the most serious instances be punished by exclusion, both temporary and also permanent. The Senior Management Team monitor and review bullying data, at least termly, to identify possible trends and recurring themes. Pupils are regularly consulted about safety, and anti-bullying measures are reviewed through pupil voice mechanisms.

2. Definition

Bullying is any behaviour carried out by an individual or a group, usually repeated over a period of time, or a highly serious single incident, which thoughtlessly or deliberately causes pain, suffering, unhappiness or humiliation in another. Bullying behaviour often involves an imbalance of power, and it may be difficult for the person on the receiving end to defend themselves.

Bullying takes many direct and indirect forms – verbal, psychological, emotional, physical, sexual – and is often motivated by prejudice against particular individuals or groups on grounds of race, religion, culture, gender, sexuality, special educational needs, disability, or family situation. It may take place directly, or through the use of technology.

Some bullying behaviour may also constitute child-on-child abuse and therefore be treated as a safeguarding matter. It can take different forms, including, online abuse, image-based abuse, prejudice-based bullying, physical abuse, harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment and sexual violence, which may include misogyny/misandry, initiation/hazing type violence and rituals, be standalone or as part of wider abuse. Further information about child-on-child abuse, including the procedures to follow when an incident of child-on-child abuse is reported can be found in the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

We view the following as examples of bullying:

- name-calling, teasing, mocking, taunting or the use of derogatory language;
- initiation ceremonies, hazing or actions designed to humiliate, intimidate or degrade others;
- deliberately excluding or isolating an individual from social groups, activities, conversations or online communities;
- spreading rumours, gossip or misinformation about an individual;
- the deliberate humiliation, embarrassment or undermining of another person;
- pushing, hitting, kicking, threatening, damaging property or any other form of physical intimidation;
- intimidating, coercing or manipulating another person into doing something against their wishes;
- preventing another person from participating in activities or expressing themselves through intimidation or pressure;
- exploiting an imbalance of power, influence, status, age, strength, popularity or social position;
- deliberately invading another person's privacy, personal space or property in a manner that causes distress;
- racist, sexist, misogynistic, misandrist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, disability-related, faith-based or other prejudice-based behaviour;
- sending, posting or sharing malicious, threatening, offensive, humiliating or harmful messages, comments, images, videos or other content online;
- creating, sharing or threatening to share embarrassing, intimate, manipulated or AI-generated images or content designed to cause harm;
- creating fake accounts, impersonating others online, or misusing digital identities;
- encouraging self-harm, social exclusion, harassment or abuse through online platforms, messaging services, gaming communities or social media; and
- any other behaviour which causes physical, emotional or psychological harm and which exploits a real or perceived imbalance of power.

We do not generally consider the following, in isolation, to be bullying:

- a disagreement, difference of opinion or occasional conflict between individuals where there is no intention to cause harm and no imbalance of power;
- a one-off incident of unkindness, although this may still require staff intervention and support;
- age-appropriate responsibilities, leadership roles or supervisory duties undertaken by pupils as part of the normal life of the School, provided these are exercised appropriately, respectfully and in accordance with School expectations.

However, any behaviour that becomes repetitive, targeted, intimidating, coercive, discriminatory, exploitative or harmful may be regarded as bullying, regardless of the relationship between those involved.

3. Responsibilities

Bullying thrives on secrecy and so it is the responsibility of every member of the Repton community to remain vigilant to the threat of bullying at all times and to act immediately if they see or suspect that bullying is happening.

It is important to remember that any pupil, regardless of age, personality and profile within the community, may be subject to bullying from other members of the community. Staff must also appreciate that in the context of a residential setting, there may be enhanced potential for such negative behaviour.

Staff should be particularly mindful that some pupils may be more vulnerable to bullying, including:

- those who are new to the School or community, including pupils who may be adjusting to a new environment or experiencing changes in their circumstances;
- pupils whose backgrounds, identities, beliefs, or circumstances may differ from those of the majority of their peers, including pupils with protected characteristics;
- those who may find social interaction, communication or friendship formation more challenging;
- any pupil who may be vulnerable to exclusion, manipulation, prejudice or discrimination;
- those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND);
- those with mental health needs, medical conditions, caring responsibilities, looked-after or previously looked-after status, or other circumstances that may increase vulnerability;
- any pupil who, for whatever reason, may be perceived as different by others.

Possible behavioural signs that indicate that bullying might be occurring include:

- Pupils appearing withdrawn, unduly sensitive, or crying easily.
- A lack of confidence and sense of self-esteem.
- Absence from school or from certain school activities.
- Physical injuries such as cuts and bruises.
- Rapid gain or loss in weight.
- Any sudden change in or uncharacteristic behaviour.
- It is important to remember that these signs are not necessarily the result of bullying. There may well be other reasons for such behaviour but the warning signs must never be ignored by staff.

The Deputy Head (Operations and Behaviour) acts as the School's Senior Anti-Bullying Lead, providing leadership and oversight of the School's anti-bullying strategy. In partnership with the Deputy Head (Safeguarding) and the Deputy Head Pupil Wellbeing and (Pastoral), they ensure that bullying concerns are identified early, responded to effectively and, where appropriate, managed as safeguarding matters. They are responsible for monitoring patterns, trend analysis, staff training, coordinating interventions and promoting a safe, inclusive and supportive environment for all pupils.

4. Procedures, Investigation and Recording

If a pupil is being bullied, or feels that they are being bullied, it is hoped that they will seek help and advice immediately. This message is delivered regularly and both formally and informally in a variety of ways, such as new pupil induction programmes, PSHE lessons, the publication of posters and notices throughout the school site and regular, positive messages delivered through Chapel and assemblies, outside speakers and the Anti-Bullying Week initiative.

It is likely that pupils will turn to a figure of authority for help, support and guidance. This might include:

- Parents, siblings or friends
- Another pupil such as a Head of House, Prefect, or mentor
- The School Doctor, medical staff, Pupil Wellbeing & Mental Health Lead, or School Counsellor
- A member of House staff such as a Tutor or Matron
- Their Housemaster or Housemistress
- The Chaplain
- The Principal Deputy Head; the Deputy Head Pupil Wellbeing and Pastoral, Deputy Head Safeguarding or Deputy Head Operations and Behaviour
- The Independent listener/person
- A member of staff

There are also opportunities for pupils to report their concerns remotely or anonymously via:

- The School's anti-bullying email address – stopbullying@repton.org.uk
- The Boarding House suggestion boxes.

In many circumstances, allegations of negative behaviour will be reported directly to the Houseparent of the pupil being bullied who will then take action. On other occasions, the affected pupil may choose to speak to another member of staff in the first instance, or the report may be made by a concerned fellow-pupil. However, in all instances staff should adhere to the following procedural advice:

- Always take the allegation seriously and reassure the pupil that they will be listened to and supported.
- Establish whether there is any immediate threat to their welfare, either physical or psychological.
- Be sensitive, reassuring and emphasise that they are not alone in dealing with the problem and make sure that they are aware of all the support mechanisms available both within and outside the School.
- Use open questions to encourage them to describe the situation in their own words.
- Do not promise confidentiality and let the pupil know that the matter must be reported to the Houseparent.
- Do not attempt to resolve the issue on your own and, wherever possible, take the matter immediately to the relevant Houseparent.
- Written records should be made as soon as reasonably practicable following any report, disclosure, incident or concern. Accurate and contemporaneous recording is an essential part of both the School's pastoral and safeguarding processes and may form an important component of any subsequent investigation. Any physical injury or concern regarding a pupil's physical wellbeing must be reported without delay to the Designated

Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or, in their absence, a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL). The pupil should also be assessed by the School Nurse, where appropriate, and any necessary medical attention sought promptly to ensure their immediate welfare needs are met.

- If the evidence of bullying is on a mobile phone, confiscate the phone but do not access the material. This should be done only by the DSL, or DDSL, (with assistance from the IT Dept).

It can, of course, be extremely difficult for a pupil to speak out, whether they are directly affected or see the bullying of another. Even if a disclosure or report has not been made but a member of staff suspects that a pupil is subject to bullying from others, this must be reported to the Houseparent. An opportunity will then be created by an appropriate member of staff (eg Houseparent, Chaplain or Matron) for the pupil to speak in private and in a safe environment.

Any potential safeguarding issue must be reported directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL), who will decide whether it is appropriate to involve local agencies including children's social care and the police. A bullying incident must be treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. Staff must act strictly in accordance with the School's Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy at all times.

However, in exceptional circumstances or if any pupil is in immediate danger, the instruction above does not prevent any member of staff from contacting the police and /or Derbyshire Children's Social Care. Thereafter, the member of staff should report the incident as quickly as possible to the DSL, or, in their absence, a DDSL.

In non-safeguarding issues, the Houseparent, or Houseparents if pupils from more than one House are involved, will inform the Deputy Head (Operations and Behaviour) and an investigation will be conducted in accordance with the school guidelines and disciplinary procedures: staff should refer to the School Rules, the Behaviour Management Policy and the Serious Incidents Protocol flowchart. This process is likely to involve interviews with a range of pupils (the affected pupil, alleged perpetrator, other members of the peer group and school community, particularly senior pupils), consultation with appropriate staff (tutor, Matron and SMT), and the gathering of any relevant evidence (such as screen-shots or photographs). The most serious incidents will be reported to the Principal Deputy Head and Headmaster.

Houseparents will lead on communication with parents, who should be advised of the situation as early as possible. Allegations of bullying can be highly emotive for parents on all sides and it is essential to ensure that they are kept well-informed throughout and able to support their children.

The Houseparent, in tandem with the Deputy Head (Operations and Behaviour) will be responsible for ensuring that appropriate records of the incident are maintained. Once the investigation and the disciplinary procedure have been concluded, the Houseparent will complete a Bullying Log, with a copy being saved in all relevant pupils' files and another copy sent to the Deputy Head (Operations and Behaviour). Bullying data will be analysed termly by members of SMT, and all prejudice-related incidents will be recorded separately. This is to ensure that any patterns in bullying behaviour or peer-to-peer issues within the school community can be identified and addressed and the effectiveness of the school's strategies be evaluated through SMT oversight.

5. Strategies

No two incidents of bullying are identical and it is therefore impossible to specify the exact strategy which will be employed when dealing with negative behaviour. The following, however, represent the variety of strategies which can be used in order to move things forward positively:

For the affected pupil:

- Offering counselling, often via the School Chaplain or School Counsellor, to enable pupils to talk through their experiences and come to terms with these, to help build self-esteem and to restore a sense of well-being
- Discussing and developing strategies which might help them become more assertive, though not aggressive, and therefore more resilient
- Following up with regular meetings for those involved or, indeed, for whole year groups to address general issues
- Continued close monitoring of the situation by Houseparent, Tutor and any other appropriate staff
- Effective liaison with parents
- Seeking opportunities to use their experience in a positive way, for example in supporting younger pupils, promoting anti-bullying messages etc.

For the pupil responsible for the behaviour:

- A formal interview with a member of SMT during which the School's expectations with regard to negative behaviour will be made clear: bullying has no place in the school community.
- The parents of the pupil responsible for the behaviour will usually be informed and asked to work with the School to prevent and tackle bullying and also to enable the pupil to act within expected norms.
- Sanctions, as detailed in the Behaviour Management Policy, are available to be used. These may include detentions or periods of loss of privileges, with a strong emphasis on making positive reparations to the community. In the most serious of instances, temporary or permanent exclusion will be employed.
- Offering counselling, often via the School Chaplain or School Counsellor, to help them understand the negative impact of their behaviour and what might have caused such behaviour in the first place, and to educate them as to how to improve their conduct
- Developing practical strategies for handling their frustrations and anxieties and finding more positive ways of interacting with their peers.
- Continued support for any issues within their school or home lives.
- Positive reintegration into their peer group.
- Close monitoring of the situation by Houseparent, Tutor and any other relevant staff and effective liaison with the parents.

It is important to recognise that the impact of such incidents can be very long-lasting. Relevant staff should be briefed appropriately and remain vigilant with regard to relationships and aware of the need to support all parties in the long term.

Although bullying is not in itself a specific criminal offence in the UK, some forms of bullying, harassment, threatening behaviour and online abuse may constitute criminal offences. Relevant legislation may include the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, the Public Order Act 1986 and

the Online Safety Act 2023. Where staff believe that a criminal offence may have been committed, they should seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or in their absence, a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and, where appropriate, the police. Examples may include harassment, threats, hate crime, sharing intimate images without consent, encouraging self-harm, cyber-flashing, malicious communications or other abusive online conduct.

6. Mediation and Reconciliation

In some circumstances, restorative approaches may be considered more appropriate rather than implementing a more formal disciplinary sanction. Consideration to the seriousness of the incident and the views of the pupils involved should be given.

In some instances it may be appropriate to begin the process of rebuilding with a 'no-blame' approach, recognising that in many conflicts responsibility can lie on both sides. In such cases, all parties concerned are encouraged to see the situation from the perspective of each other, thus developing a mature sense of empathy. We strongly believe that by supporting the growth of sophisticated emotional skills, we are more likely to create a sustainable solution to the problem.

In cases where responsibility for the behaviour is more clearly established, the School may consider mediation, reconciliation and restorative approaches, with the aim of rebuilding relationships and developing understanding of the impact of the behaviour on others. Such an approach acknowledges the reality of what has occurred and the right of the affected pupil to have their concerns recognised and addressed. It also recognises that, in many cases, the pupil responsible for the behaviour may feel genuine remorse and value the opportunity to rebuild trust and repair relationships with both the affected pupil and the wider community. Schools should be transformational places for all members of their community, and we therefore believe it is important to provide pupils with opportunities to learn from their mistakes, take responsibility for their actions, and demonstrate personal growth and positive change.

By pursuing a 'restorative' approach to justice, we hope to develop sustainable and long-term improvement in the behaviour of 'offenders' whilst at the same time rebuilding a sense of self-esteem and well-being in the affected pupil by involving them in the process of reparation and giving them the opportunity to forgive.

Restorative approaches may include:

- A verbal or written apology
- Restorative reflection with a member of staff
- A restorative/educative task
- A restorative meeting between the affected pupil and alleged perpetrator, facilitated by a member of staff
- 1:1 or small group intervention
- Girls on Board informed strategies.

This approach may be used in the first instance in place of a sanction or, in the case of more serious or repeated instances of negative behaviour, by placing the events in the context of a community predicated on values such as forgiveness, a sense of responsibility for one's own actions and mutual understanding. However, pupils should remain in no doubt that instances of negative behaviour will not be tolerated and in the most serious or repeated instances can result in suspension or expulsion.

Restorative approaches will only be used where appropriate, proportionate, and in the best interests of all pupils involved. Participation will be voluntary, and restorative processes will not replace safeguarding procedures or be used where they may place a pupil at further risk of harm.

7. Promoting the message and raising awareness: what we do

We are wholeheartedly committed to providing positive models of behaviour from staff and pupils alike, as well as spreading strong and consistent messages about positive behaviour. Engendering positive values within the school community and ensuring that the message that bullying is not tolerated at Repton School is achieved through a variety of educational channels which include:

- The Code is printed as part of the School Rules in the calendar, a copy of which is given to all pupils each year, and it is displayed on notice boards around the School. Explicit reference will regularly be made to it when dealing with allegations of negative behaviour between pupils.
- The same values of tolerance and respect for others are explicit in the Repton Code of Conduct.

The PSHE programme is a vital part of school life and anti-bullying topics are regularly covered both by specialist PSHE teachers and also house tutors; outside speakers also reinforce this message.

- Areas of the curriculum also provide the opportunity for moral and spiritual discussion and development.
- Both classroom education and life across the School offer the opportunity to celebrate difference and to emphasise the importance of avoiding prejudice-based language.
- Chapel is an integral part of Repton life in which the Chaplain, staff and pupils themselves can use the opportunity to discuss and present positive narratives on moral and spiritual topics.
- House assemblies, meetings and Lists (whole-school assemblies) also provide the opportunity for senior figures in the school community to emphasise the positive values for which Repton stands.
- The House system itself, upon which the Repton community is founded, is pivotal in the development of all Reptonians. Housemasters/Housemistresses model the positive behaviour which they expect in others, and will provide both formal and informal opportunities for pupils to exercise leadership, service and responsibilities. This includes a system of mentoring in which older pupils and prefects take responsibility for the welfare and wellbeing of new pupils.
- The School is committed to regular training for both staff and pupils on issues of bullying, including practical measures on how to recognise, deter and deal with its incidence and to be aware of the times and places when bullying is most likely to occur. For staff this includes anti-bullying training as part of induction, internal and external INSET; for senior pupils we run practical training for Heads of Houses and Deputies during which the topic of bullying and how to deal with bullying issues takes a central place, and this is a regular topic of discussion and development between Senior Management and School Prefects and between Houseparents and their House Prefect teams.
- We regularly enlist the help of external agencies and speakers to develop our pastoral programme: for example, hosting lectures for staff, pupils and parents on topics such as cyberbullying and e-safety, and developing links with the Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (DDSCP)

8. What parents can do

We understand that, while Repton is predominantly a boarding community, a strong and trusting partnership between the School and parents is vital in tackling bullying. To this end we advise parents to:

- be aware of distress or changes in behaviour or attitude in their children. For day pupils, this may be a reluctance to go to school or, for boarders, to return after a weekend at home.
- take an active interest in their children's social lives, discussing friendships and how free time is spent.
- encourage their children to report bullying immediately whether they be witnesses or directly affected by negative behaviour.
- share information or concerns openly with staff.
- take advantage of events organised by the School to promote the anti-bullying message or share effective strategies.
- take an active role in supporting the School's expectations and judgements in the aftermath of any bullying incident.
- remain in contact with Houseparents to monitor relationships after any incident.

9. Staff and Parents

9.1. Staff

Any allegations of bullying of pupils by a member of staff should be reported to the Headmaster immediately and will be dealt with according to the Staff Code of Conduct.

E-mail: headmaster@repton.org.uk
Telephone: 01283 559200

As per the Staff Code of Conduct, Repton is clear in communicating to its staff that they are in a position of trust. If ever a situation arises where a pupil (or the parent/guardian of a pupil) feels that a member of staff has behaved unprofessionally towards a pupil and abused this position of trust, it should be reported to the Headmaster.

In any instance where a member of staff is alleged to have behaved unprofessionally towards a pupil and abused their position of trust, the Headmaster will be made aware of the allegation and a formal investigation will follow. The pupil and their parents/guardian will be informed that an investigation will be conducted, and any conclusions or consequences will be reported to them once completed.

9.2. Parents

Intimidation and bullying type behaviour by parents towards their own or other children in a school setting or context (e.g. at the side of a sports pitch) should also be reported immediately to the Headmaster and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or, in their absence, a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.

10. Other useful sources of information and advice

Anti-Bullying Alliance – www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
Coram Kidscape – <https://coramkidscape.org.uk>
Restorative Justice Council – www.restorativejustice.org.uk
Childnet – www.childnet.com
Childline – www.childline.org.uk
Stonewall – www.stonewall.org.uk
Mencap – www.mencap.org.uk
CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection – www.thinkuknow.co.uk
Children's Commissioner – www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk
Derbyshire Constabulary Online Safety Advice – <https://www.derbyshire.police.uk>

Annex A - Preventing Cyber-Bullying

1. Introduction and definition of cyber-bullying

Repton School recognises that technology plays a central role in the lives of children and young people and provides many positive opportunities for learning, communication and social interaction. However, technology can also be used in ways that cause harm, distress, humiliation or fear.

Cyberbullying is a form of bullying that takes place through the use of technology and electronic communication. It may occur through mobile phones, messaging services, email, social media platforms, gaming communities, websites, online forums, artificial intelligence (AI) tools or any other digital technology.

Cyberbullying can have a significant impact on a child's emotional wellbeing, mental health, self-esteem and sense of safety. Unlike some other forms of bullying, cyberbullying can take place at any time, can quickly reach a large audience and can be difficult for the affected pupil to escape.

The School treats cyberbullying with the same seriousness as all other forms of bullying and recognises that certain incidents may also constitute safeguarding concerns, child-on-child abuse or criminal offences.

Cyberbullying, or online bullying, can be defined as **the use of technologies by an individual or by a group of people to deliberately and repeatedly upset someone else**. It can be an extension of face-to-face bullying, with technology providing the bully 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, and even the profile of the person doing the bullying and their target.

Policies linked with prevention of cyber- bullying:

- Anti-Bullying Code
- The Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy
- Code of Conduct (Staff Employment Handbook)
- Pupil Behaviour Management Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Online Safety policy

Repton School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils in its care. As is made clear in the Anti-Bullying policy, Repton rejects any and all forms of bullying behaviour.

2. Differences between bullying and cyberbullying

Cyber-bullying is a form of bullying, although there are some particular features which set it apart from bullying in several important ways:

- It can occur 24 hours a day and extend beyond the School environment.
- Harmful material can be shared rapidly and reach a very large audience.
- Content may remain online indefinitely.
- Perpetrators may attempt to remain anonymous.
- Victims may feel there is no safe space away from the bullying.
- Digital evidence may be available and should be preserved wherever possible.

Examples of cyber-bullying may include:

- Harassment or stalking – repeatedly sending unwanted texts or instant messages.
- Threats and intimidation.
- Creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos.
- 'Trolling' - the sending of menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games.
- Vilification and defamation.
- Ostracism and peer rejection.
- AI-generated images and image-based abuse.
- Group chat abuse.
- Impersonation and identity misuse.
- Online abuse and hate incidents.
- Setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child.
- Harmful online influence such as encouraging young people to self-harm, engage in risk-taking behaviours.
- Voting for or against someone in an abusive poll.
- Publicly posting private information or images.
- Pressuring others into sending sexual images or engaging in sexual conversations.

3. Education to help prevent cyber-bullying

As with all aspects of pastoral care, education lies at the heart of our approach.

The School adopts a proactive approach to preventing cyberbullying through:

- PSHE and RSHE education.
- Online safety education across the curriculum.
- Education regarding healthy relationships, consent and respectful online behaviour.
- Awareness of misinformation, disinformation and manipulative online content.
- Education about social media influences, online risks and digital resilience.
- Promoting responsible and respectful use of technology.
- Staff training and safeguarding updates.
- Pupil leadership, mentoring and awareness initiatives.
- Engagement with parents regarding online safety and emerging risks.

Staff are provided with opportunities to develop their own understanding of electronic media and methods of reporting. Further reminders of the use of ICT in education are made available via the house system, Chapel services and via the use of expert speakers.

4. Support for those being bullied

Cyber-bullying is a particularly pernicious aspect of bullying and is recognised as posing significant risk to the welfare of children. Current research into the extent of cyber bullying indicates that it is a feature of many young people's lives. Cyber-bullying can have a seriously detrimental impact on an individual for a number of reasons.

- The sense of invasion of an individual's home and personal space.
- The anonymity (at least initially) of the bully.
- The difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages.
- The ability to broadcast upsetting messages and images to a potentially huge audience.
- The opportunity for others to become involved in the bullying activity.

4.1 Advice to staff

- Tell the pupil affected not to retaliate or return messages but keep the evidence.
- Give emotional support to the pupil affected.
- Where appropriate, remind the pupil of the need to think about the information they put in the public domain.
- Try to contain the incident by removing the offensive material from the web. Contact the Deputy Head Safeguarding and Designated Safeguarding Lead, or, in their absence a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Where possible, contact the host site (social networking site) to make a full report.

4.2 Working with parents

Parents should be informed at the earliest possible stage in a cyberbullying investigation. They should be aware that the school does not tolerate bullying and that they have confidence that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously and investigate/resolve as necessary and that the school systems will deal with the bullying in a way which protects their child;

5. Procedures - working with the affected pupil and the pupil responsible for the behaviour

The guiding principles and practices outlined in The Anti-Bullying Code underpin our approach when responding to any and all forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying. Restorative approaches can be effective and should be used in conjunction with – but not in place of – sanctions. The principle is that the pupil causing harm is held to account for their behaviour. Once the person responsible has been identified, steps are taken to ensure they understand and appreciate the impact of their actions and the need to change their attitude and behaviour. This is particularly important when dealing with examples of cyber-bullying as the bully may not witness directly the effect their behaviour has had on the affected pupil

This means:

- accepting responsibility for the harm caused to the individual being bullied.
- accepting responsibility for the harm caused to others (for example staff, friends or family).

- recognising the need to take action to begin to repair the harm caused; and agreeing a range of actions – in conjunction with all those involved – which will be monitored over an agreed period of time.

6. Sanctions

Pupils are also reminded that misconduct of this kind outside school will be subject to school discipline if the welfare of other pupils or the culture or reputation of the school are placed at risk. Cases of cyber-bullying are treated very seriously and appropriate sanctions will always be taken.

Misuse of ICT is subject to the school's disciplinary regime. Sanctions may include confiscation of mobile phones or restrictions on the use of the internet. In serious cases the Headmaster may consider suspension or indeed permanent exclusion. Where there are concerns that a criminal act has been committed or that a pupil has been subject to child abuse, the matter may need to be referred to the police and / or children's social services. Records of all incidents involving ICT are logged through the Deputy Head (Safeguarding) and Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Head (Operations and Behaviour).

7. Cyber-bullying and the law

Some forms of cyberbullying may constitute safeguarding concerns, child-on-child abuse or criminal offences.

Examples may include:

- sexual harassment;
- sharing intimate images;
- image-based sexual abuse;
- online exploitation;
- coercive or controlling behaviour;
- hate incidents and hate crime;
- stalking or harassment;
- encouraging self-harm;
- threatening communications.

Where there are safeguarding concerns, staff will act in accordance with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and may involve external agencies, including Children's Social Care and the Police where appropriate.

Although cyber-bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws that can apply in terms of harassment as well as threatening and menacing communications. The police will be contacted if there is evidence to suggest the law has been broken. Pupils are entitled to their freedom of expression and respect for their private lives but they must not infringe the rights of others.

Infringement includes, among other things,

- libel and slander
- bullying

- harassment and victimisation
- inciting hatred on racial, religious and homophobic grounds
- breach of confidentiality
- breach of copyright.

The following pieces of legislation may have a bearing in any of the above examples:

- Obscene Publications Act 1959
- Protection of Children Act 1978
- Public Order Act 1986
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Computer Misuse Act 1990
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Communications Act 2003
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Online Safety Act 2023

8. Recording, Monitoring and Evaluation

All cyberbullying concerns and incidents will be recorded and monitored appropriately.

The School will:

- maintain appropriate records;
- identify patterns and trends;
- monitor vulnerable groups;
- review the effectiveness of interventions;
- report significant concerns through safeguarding and pastoral channels as appropriate.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Evaluation from pupils through Prefect meetings
- Evaluation from pupils via HsM meetings
- Termly evaluation at SMT level
- Revised policy on a yearly cycle

9. Further Guidance for help, support and resources on cyber-bullying (also see main policy)

Department for Education (DfE) Preventing Bullying:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-bullying>

Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA)

<https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk>

Coram Kidscape

<https://coramkidscape.org.uk/help-with-bullying>

Childline

<https://www.childline.org.uk>

NSPCC Bullying and Cyberbullying:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/types-of-abuse/bullying-and-cyberbullying/>

YoungMinds Bullying Support and Advice:

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/young-person/coping-with-life/bullying/>

Family Lives Bullying Support for Families:

<https://www.familylives.org.uk/advice/bullying>

Annex B – Anti-Bullying Code

The Repton community is wholeheartedly committed to providing a safe, caring, welcoming and friendly atmosphere in which individuality will flourish. Our ethos is one of acceptance, respect, integrity, honesty and courage, and it is clear that, in this context, *bullying will not be tolerated*.

Bullying is any behaviour carried out by an individual or a group, usually repeated over a period of time, which thoughtlessly or deliberately causes pain, suffering, unhappiness or humiliation in another who may find it difficult to defend himself or herself.

Bullying takes many direct and indirect forms, including verbal, psychological, emotional, physical, sexual, relational and online behaviour. Bullying may be motivated by prejudice, discrimination or bias and can be directed towards an individual or group because of actual or perceived characteristics, including race, ethnicity, nationality, religion or belief, sex, disability, special educational needs, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, appearance, family circumstances, socio-economic background, caring responsibilities, or any other aspect of a person's identity.

The School recognises that some bullying behaviour may also constitute child-on-child abuse and may therefore require a safeguarding response. This can include sexual harassment, sexual violence, coercive or controlling behaviour, harmful sexual behaviour, prejudice-based incidents, exploitation, online abuse and other forms of behaviour that place a child at risk of harm.

We view the following as examples of bullying:

- name-calling, teasing, mocking, taunting or the use of derogatory language;
- initiation ceremonies, hazing or actions designed to humiliate, intimidate or degrade others;
- deliberately excluding or isolating an individual from social groups, activities, conversations or online communities;
- spreading rumours, gossip or misinformation about an individual;
- the deliberate humiliation, embarrassment or undermining of another person;
- pushing, hitting, kicking, threatening, damaging property or any other form of physical intimidation;
- intimidating, coercing or manipulating another person into doing something against their wishes;
- preventing another person from participating in activities or expressing themselves through intimidation or pressure;
- exploiting an imbalance of power, influence, status, age, strength, popularity or social position;
- deliberately invading another person's privacy, personal space or property in a manner that causes distress;
- racist, sexist, misogynistic, misandry, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, disability-related, faith-based or other prejudice-based behaviour;
- sending, posting or sharing malicious, threatening, offensive, humiliating or harmful messages, comments, images, videos or other content online;
- creating, sharing or threatening to share embarrassing, intimate, manipulated or AI-generated images or content designed to cause harm;
- creating fake accounts, impersonating others online, or misusing digital identities;

- encouraging self-harm, social exclusion, harassment or abuse through online platforms, messaging services, gaming communities or social media; and
- any other behaviour which causes physical, emotional or psychological harm and which exploits a real or perceived imbalance of power.

We do not generally consider the following, in isolation, to be bullying:

- a disagreement, difference of opinion or occasional conflict between individuals where there is no intention to cause harm and no imbalance of power;
- a one-off incident of unkindness, although this may still require staff intervention and support;
- age-appropriate responsibilities, leadership roles or supervisory duties undertaken by pupils as part of the normal life of the School, provided these are exercised appropriately, respectfully and in accordance with School expectations.

However, any behaviour that becomes repetitive, targeted, intimidating, coercive, discriminatory, exploitative or harmful may be regarded as bullying, regardless of the relationship between those involved.

Supporting one another is essential if Repton is to remain a safe, inclusive, caring and respectful community in which all pupils can thrive. Every member of the School community has a responsibility to contribute to a culture where bullying is not tolerated and where concerns are taken seriously.

If you experience, witness or become aware of behaviour that may constitute bullying, harassment, discrimination, intimidation or abuse, **you should report it to a trusted adult as soon as possible**. Speaking up helps to protect both yourself and others.

Everyone has a responsibility to support the wellbeing and safety of others. Remaining silent when bullying is taking place can allow harmful behaviour to continue and may prevent those affected from receiving the support they need. Pupils should be reassured that concerns will be listened to, taken seriously and responded to sensitively and appropriately.

When seeking help, there are plenty of people you can speak to, including:

- Your Housemaster/mistress
- A House Tutor or Matron
- A teacher
- An older pupil in the School - perhaps your Head of House or a Prefect
- The Deputy Head (Pastoral)/ Deputy Head (Safeguarding)/ Deputy Head (Operations and Behaviour)
- The School Chaplain or School Doctor
- Your friends
- Your parents
- If you can't say it, then write to us at stopbullying@repton.org.uk

Never suffer in silence. Be assured that anything you say will be dealt with in a sensitive way and be confident that action will be taken to stop the bullying.

Version History/Amendments			
Date	Author	Comment/Amendment	Version No
24.07.24	DLC	Reformatting of policy	1.0
13.08.24	NFP	Minor annual updates	1.1
30.08.24	DLC	Formatting only	1.2
22.08.25	NFP	Annual review – minor amends only	1.3
24.11.25	DLC	To reflect PASC approval	1.4
25.08.26	CMP	Annual review. The policy has been updated to place greater emphasis on restorative approaches in appropriate circumstances. Revisions have also been made to the anti-bullying code and cyberbullying sections to ensure alignment with updated statutory guidance, including <i>Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026</i> , and current terminology. References to monitoring and tracking have been reinforced.	2.0

Links to Other School Policies
Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy
Behaviour Management
Online Safety Policy
Acceptable Use of ICT
The School Rules

Links to External Policies, Legislation or Guidance
It refers to DfE guidance: Approaches to preventing and tackling bullying (publishing.service.gov.uk)
Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
Preventing and Tackling Bullying DfE Advice
Behaviour in Schools - advice for headteachers and school staff 2024
National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2026