



Policy No: 11a(1)

OUR LADY'S ABINGDON (OLA) ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

This policy, which applies to the whole school, is publicly available on the OLA website and upon request a copy (which can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required) may be obtained from the School Office.

Please also refer to the Positive Behaviour Code and the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Document Details

Information Sharing Category	Public Domain
Version	2
Date Published	September 2022
Authorised by (if required)	Head and the Governing Board
Responsible Area	Leadership Team and Governing Board

We comply with the Government guidance and regulations, currently in force, regarding COVID.

In writing this policy, the following legal status documents and related documents have been taken into consideration

Legal Status:

Complies with The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations currently in force.

Prepared with reference to: [Preventing and Tackling Bullying \(July 2017\)](#), [Approaches to preventing and tackling bullying \(June 2018\)](#), [Cyberbullying: Advice for Principals and school staff \(DfE- November 2014\)](#), [Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying \(DfE- November 2014\)](#) and [School support for children and young people who are bullied \(DfE- March 2014\)](#), [Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006](#), [Equality Act 2010](#) and the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#)

There are 2 paragraphs in the ISS that expressly require independent schools to encourage respect for the protected characteristics:

- Paragraph 2(2)(d)(ii) requires proprietors to provide a: 'personal, social, health and economic education which... encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 [Equality] Act.'
- Paragraph 5(b)(vi) requires proprietors to 'ensure that principles are actively promoted which... encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 [Equality] Act'

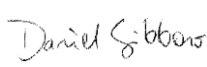


Monitoring and Review: This document will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Head.

This document was reviewed and agreed by the Governing Board in September 2022 and if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require, prior to September 2023, the policy will be reviewed accordingly.

Date Reviewed: September 2022

Next Review: September 2023

Signed:

Head	DSL	Chair of Governors
Mr Daniel Gibbons	Chrissi Sharkey	Freddy El Turk
Signed: 	Signed: 	Signed: 

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1. Aims and Objectives

Every child has the right to be themselves and thrive at school. We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at OLA and can have a devastating effect on children, young people and their families. OLA strives to create a safe and inclusive place for young people both at school and online. We create an environment where our children and young people know how to treat one another with respect and celebrate one another's differences, so that each child can reach their potential. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell someone and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. **We are a TELLING school.** This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

Any member of the OLA community, pupil, employee or volunteer has the right to learn and work without fear of being bullied. Through this policy, OLA aims to prevent bullying. Its objectives are to ensure that all members of the community:

- Feel safe from bullying
- Recognise bullying behaviour
- Understand and support OLA's stance against bullying
- Know how to report incidents of bullying
- Contribute to informing and, where possible, evaluating this policy.

When a child suffers harm as a result of bullying, OLA will consider whether this becomes a safeguarding issue. Please refer to our *Safeguarding – Child Protection Policy, Community Cohesion Policy* and our *Peer on Peer abuse Policy* for more details.

2. Principles

As in any community, there is always a possibility that some form of bullying may occur. OLA does its utmost to encourage an ethos where bullying is acknowledged as totally wrong and the reporting of bullying is viewed as the correct and responsible action to take. No individual should have to suffer any form of intimidation, and bullying has no place at OLA. OLA acknowledges its responsibility to protect all individuals at OLA and to act promptly if any cases of bullying are discovered.

3. Definition of bullying

There is no legal definition of bullying. However, it's usually defined as behaviour that is:

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation

It takes many forms and can include:

- physical assault
- teasing
- making threats
- name calling
- cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (for example email, social networks and instant messenger)

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. We recognise the seriousness of bullying in causing psychological damage and even suicide (although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour).

OLA views bullying as an act of unkindness by one or more pupils against other individuals or group of pupils and as deliberately hurtful behaviour involving unequal power relationships, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. Bullying may be sexual, about race, a disability, religious affiliation or practice, culture or sexual orientation. It can take many forms, but includes harassment, physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft), verbal (e.g. racist remarks, homophobic language), indirect (e.g. spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups) or cyber bullying (e.g. use of internet sites, internet messaging, sending of photographs, email or text).

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Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour for example becoming shy or nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be changes to work patterns, a lack of concentration or truancy. This is not an exhaustive list and pupils, staff and parents should be alert to any signs that might indicate that bullying is taking place.

4. The Law

Some forms of bullying are illegal and should be reported to the police. These include:

- violence or assault
- theft
- repeated harassment or intimidation, for example name calling, threats and abusive phone calls, emails or text messages
- hate crimes

OLA staff must act to prevent discrimination, harassment and victimisation within OLA. It is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of:

- age
- gender reassignment
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or on maternity leave
- disability
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

These are called 'protected characteristics'.

5. Features of bullying

a) *Nature*: this can be physical and/or psychological. Verbal bullying is the most common form of bullying and can escalate into violence. This can be a defensive or retaliatory reaction by the victim. It can, of course, result if the name-calling is seen to have little or no effect on the part of the aggressor. Types of bullying include:

- Verbal bullying can be directed at the victim personally or can be directed at their relations or the group whom they may be regarded as representing (this is often more provoking and injurious). Racist, religious and sexual taunts, (particularly homophobic in the case of younger boys) all come under this category.
- Physical violence and/or threatening behaviour. Often the threat of violence, which may never materialise, is more intimidating because it is less tangible and overt. It is also less difficult to attribute.
- Isolation / Rejection: deliberately being ostracised from various groups is designed to cause distress and demoralise the victim.
- Indirect or Insidious behaviour: this covers a wide variety of methods, many in themselves ingenious, such as malicious rumour, the taking, destroying or hiding of possessions. More serious and extreme examples of this type of bullying include anonymous telephone calls, hate mail, and the like.

b) *Intensity*: this can range from "play-fighting" on the playground to vicious assault in physical terms and from the calling of nicknames to repeated nuisance telephone calls in psychological terms. It is the intent of the bully and the effect on the victim, which in all cases determines what, constitutes bullying.

c) *Duration*: bullying can be a once only incident where there is an obvious discrepancy between the ages, power, strength of the parties concerned, occasional, intermittent, short-lived, or it can be regular, repeated and long-standing.

d) *Intention*: bullying is premeditated and calculated to injure (whether psychologically or physically) rather than thoughtless or accidental. Many bullies will attempt to excuse their actions by denying that this was the intention. In the minority of cases this lack of understanding of the outcome of their actions and therefore what constitutes bullying remains an excuse. Bullying may be carried out by one pupil or by a group.

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e) *Motivation*: with bullies the motive is mainly to achieve power over another individual in an attempt to promote their own personal image. It may also be to secure affiliation to a group regarded as having more profile within a year group than all others have. A victim may also be a scapegoat as part of preserving group solidarity.

f) *Location*: given its nature bullying can take place in a variety of locations, hence the need to be vigilant at all times. In any school, there are times and places which increase the potential of bullies to operate.

6.Types of bullying

a) *Racist* - In the 1999 MacPherson Report, racist bullying was defined as 'any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person'. More recently the law on racial discrimination defines it as 'Unwanted conduct with the purpose of violating dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment'. Such behaviour is characterised by:

- Verbal abuse by name-calling, racist jokes and offensive mimicry
- Physical threats or attacks
- Inciting others to behave in a racist way
- Refusing to cooperate in work or in play

b) *Sexual* - Sexual bullying involves both genders. Such behaviour is characterised by:

- Abusive name-calling
- Looks and comments about appearance, attractiveness, emerging puberty

c) *Sexist* - This is the targeting of an individual for being perceived as a member of a particular gender. Such behaviour is characterised by:

- Abusive name calling
- Offensive mimicry
- Physical violence or threatening behaviour
- Inciting others to behave in a sexist manner
- Mockery of a person's demeanor or manner of speaking

d) *Homophobic* - Homophobic bullying is the result of the use of language, gesture or media to describe someone who is lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered in all to injure them. Such behaviour is characterised by:

- Abusive name calling
- Social exclusion
- Inciting others to act in a homophobic manner
- Refusing to cooperate in work or in recreation

e) *Cyber Bullying* - Cyber bullying is an aggressive intentional act carried out by an individual or group, using electronic media, repeatedly over time against a victim who cannot defend him or herself. Seven categories of cyber bullying have been identified:

- Text messaging
- Sending pictures or video clips
- Phone calling
- Email messaging
- Chat room messaging
- Instant messaging
- Website bullying including the use of defamatory blogs, personal websites, personal space and on-line personal polling sites
- Taking photos of an individual without consent

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f) *Special Educational Needs and Disability* - Pupils with special educational needs or disabilities may not be able to articulate experiences as well as other children. However, they are often at greater risk of being bullied, both directly and indirectly, and usually about their specific difficulties or disability.

g) *Religious* - the term religious bullying refers to a range of hurtful behaviour, both physical and psychological, that makes a person feel unwelcome, marginalised, excluded, powerless or worthless because of their faith community. Such behaviour is characterised by:

- when people are stereotyped by their religion
- when a person is rejected or excluded from a group because of their religion

h) *Cultural bullying* is something someone does or says that offends someone else in connection with their culture. Such behaviour is characterised by:

- when a person is verbally abused because of their culture or the colour of their skin, their religion, the country they come from, their language and the way they talk, the food they eat, clothes they wear or their background
- when people make fun of a person's family
- when a person is treated unfairly because of their way of life.

Advice and guidance to counter such bullying and to respond to it is updated in the Students' Handbook and Planner each year. These forms of bullying, regardless of whether or not they take place within school time, have a direct impact on the health and happiness of the intended victim. In the event that such bullying emanates from an individual or group within OLA, the perpetrators will be subject to disciplinary action.

7.Raising awareness of bullying

OLA's action on bullying does not start at the point at which a child has been bullied, rather OLA staff proactively gather information about issues between pupils which might provoke conflict and develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place. This might involve talking to pupils about issues of difference, perhaps in lessons, through dedicated events or projects, or through assemblies. Staff themselves determine what will work best for their pupils, depending on the particular issues they need to address.

OLA makes pupils aware that bullying is not an inevitable part of school life. This is achieved by:

- Educating pupils to an awareness of what bullying is in its range and depth through, the opportunities which arise in the curriculum, the PSHE Programme, through assemblies, and the general ethos of OLA etc.
- Indicating how they as pupils are to respond to it as victims and as members of a community which stands against bullying.
- Providing them with the support system to which they can turn in cases of bullying;
- Supporting any pupil who is the victim of bullying.
- Allowing pupils to feel confident that the bullying will be acted upon swiftly to curtail the problem.
- Raising staff awareness of the nature, range and response to be made to bullying and its victims.
- Raising the awareness of parents to the serious commitment of OLA to act on bullying issues and thus gain their confidence in dealing with the issues when they materialise.
- Encouraging pupils to talk to a trusted adviser early if they are comfortable

RSE Curriculum and protected characteristics: It is important for their personal development that all children gain an understanding of the world they are growing up in, and learn how to live alongside, and show respect for, a diverse range of people. Teaching pupils about the protected characteristics and respecting diversity is important in this regard. OLA demonstrates that no form of discrimination is tolerated and that pupils show respect for those who share the protected characteristics. We have a culture of respect for all people. The [government guidance](#) (Sep 2021) has helpful ideas about teaching about the protected characteristics. The relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) curriculum has been designed to reflect a diverse range of views and backgrounds, whilst fostering respect for others and the understanding of healthy relationships. Subjects include teaching about bullying, healthy friendships, equality and the risks of stereotyping.

We also raise awareness of staff through training, so that the principles of the anti-bullying policy are understood, legal

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responsibilities are known, action is defined to resolve and prevent problems and sources of support are available. The [Government's RSE teacher training module on respectful relationships](#) (Mar 2021) has helpful advice for staff. Where appropriate we can invest in specialised skills to understand the needs of the students, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGB&T) students. All staff are also trained on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children.

8. Pupils response to bullying

- A pupil who is being bullied should always tell someone. Pupils are advised that bullying will rarely go away of its own accord; they are reassured that the situation will not be made worse by reporting it and are commended for taking positive action in telling a teacher.
- The guidelines given to pupils are as follows:
 - be proud of who you are; it is good to be individual
 - tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied, bullying is wrong
 - try not to show that you are upset; it is hard, but a bully often thrives on someone's fear
 - be assertive; walk away confidently and go straight to a member of staff
 - do not fight back - this may make things worse.
- If a pupil is feeling worried, OLA has several avenues the pupil can use:
 - Speak to a trusted member of staff (pastoral team, Form tutor etc.)
 - Use the Classcharts wellbeing tracker to indicate your level of worries – this will be followed up by the pastoral team
- If a pupil knows that someone else is being bullied, they are expected to take some action. Doing nothing may be interpreted as being on the side of the bully and could make the victim feel even more unhappy and isolated. Appropriate action might include some of the following:
 - speaking out at the time
 - speaking sympathetically to the victim at a suitable moment and offering support
 - telling a teacher what has been seen or heard.

9. Guidance to staff

OLA staff will deal with bullying in different ways, depending on how serious the bullying is. They might deal with it in school, for example by disciplining bullies, or they might report it to the police or social services. Any discipline must take account of special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils involved may have.

Procedures

- In the first instance the incident should be reported by the pupil to a trusted adult and they will deal with the matter appropriately, deciding whether it is a natural 'childhood falling out' or a case of bullying. (see Positive Behaviour Code). The Form tutor (or Form teacher in Lower School) can handle the matter if it is the former. However, if it is a case of bullying, the Form tutor/teacher will be part of the process of collating any knowledge of the matter, but this should be referred to the Head of Section or the Assistant Heads for immediate follow-up (or the Deputy Head if these staff are not available). Members of the pastoral team have undertaken 'Girls On Board' training to support young people in conflict resolution.
- If the behaviour has been acknowledged as bullying the pastoral staff member investigating should:
 - Collect any information from the Form Tutor/teacher or class teacher
 - Talk with the pupils involved and any other witnesses
 - Collect pupil statements
 - Record the incident on Classcharts and apply appropriate behaviour sanctions (see Positive Behaviour Code)
 - Attach any paperwork as electronic documents on Classcharts
 - Inform Head and/ or Deputy Head
 - If the Head of Section is handling the investigation, they must Inform the Designated Safeguarding Leads for Child Protection – Mrs Chrissi Sharkey (DSL), Dr Beth Reynaert (DDSL) and Mr Luke Allen (DDSL).
 - The child should be told that their parents will be informed and that the member of staff will be monitoring the situation.
 - The investigating staff member makes phone calls home to inform parents of the children involved

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- If the incident has some important learning points for pupils, PSHEE time may be used to discuss wider issues the incident has raised. The incident will also be raised at both the weekly Heads of Section and whole staff Pastoral meetings, so that staff are aware of any potential fallout amongst the year group.
- The investigating staff member should review the situation within a fortnight and half termly, if the incident was serious.
- If there is another similar incident of bullying (either involving the same pupils or an identical 'copycat' incident involving different pupils) LT should be informed immediately, who will contact parents.
- If the bullying persists parents will be invited to have a meeting with the Head (and the investigating staff member, where required). If appropriate the children involved will also be present at the meetings. The outcome of these meetings will be documented and dated on Classcharts. Further sanctions and review dates will be established.
- Throughout the process staff should:
 - Make the individual (pupil/parent) feel at ease and supported.
 - Give them time to explain the situation. Listen carefully.
 - Make notes on the nature of the incident. Be sure to repeat detail or question specifics in order to gain a full knowledge of the incident. Dates, times and nature of the incidents are significant details to be ascertained.
 - Establish whether there are other pupils who can corroborate the account given and who may be able to act as witnesses. Establish if there may have been any provocation on the part of the victim.
 - Do not make any immediate judgement. Do not offer an opinion on either the detail or the individuals who may be named as being the bullies.
 - The professional response must come only after impartial investigation of the incident.
 - Make it clear that the problem will be treated seriously, reassure the individual that you will investigate the incident as a matter of urgency.
 - Pastoral team will gather witness statements

10. Parent/Guardian response to bullying

It is incumbent on OLA to have clear policies which are communicated to parents, students and staff, along with creating an environment of good behaviour and respect, with helpful examples set by staff and older students. Integral to our policy is involving parents and making sure students are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders.

Parents/guardians can help by:

- Regularly encouraging their child to talk about their day and asking questions as appropriate.
- Being sensitive to any unusual behaviour in their child such as a reluctance to attend school, feeling ill regularly, or not completing work to their normal standard.
- Informing their child's Form Tutor (or form teacher if Lower School) or Section Head immediately if they feel their son/daughter may be a victim of bullying. We want to know as soon as possible, even if it does turn out to be a false alarm.
- Giving reassurance to their child if they are being bullied e.g. by telling them that they are not in the wrong and encouraging them to ask for help.
- Reminding their child of OLA's policy concerning bullying and the support they will receive from staff.

11. OLA's curriculum response to bullying

OLA addresses education around the issue of bullying mainly via PSHEE/RSE, but also in RS and sometimes other lessons, form time and occasionally in assemblies, collective worship and/or circle time

In PSHEE/RSE, it will:

- Discuss aspects of bullying and the appropriate ways to deal with threatening behaviour.
- Encourage pupils to discuss how they relate to other people and how they can form positive attitudes towards others.
- Review the nature of friendship.

If bullying is suspected a member of staff will talk with some or all of the following:

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- the suspected victim
- the suspected bully
- any witnesses.

The victim is supported in one or more of the following ways; by:

- Offering them an immediate opportunity to talk further about the experience with an appropriate person.
- Informing their parents/guardians and involving them fully in the resolution of the situation.
- Helping to rebuild confidence, by giving reassurance and praising the courage shown.
- Arranging for support to be given in situations where they feel it is needed.
- Taking one or more of the disciplinary procedures described in 10.0 to prevent further bullying.
- The wider staff body will be alerted and asked to keep an eye on the pupil and offer support

The bully is supported in one or more of the following ways; by:

- Listening and talking to them to discover the reason(s) for the incident(s).
- Informing their parents/guardians and involving them fully in the resolution of the situation.
- Offering counselling to the bully if appropriate and continuing to support them as necessary to prevent further bullying.

OLA will keep on checking with the affected parties to see if the bullying has continued or stopped. If it has not stopped, further investigation and intervention will take place.

Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a pupil is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm or abuse, the perpetrator(s) and victim(s) will be considered to be 'at risk' and as such, OLA's DSL will seek advice from, and refer them to, local agencies as appropriate.

12. Sanctions

OLA's anti-bullying policy is dove-tailed with the Positive Behaviour Code (with support for the victim and the bully) and makes it clear what the sanctions are for bullying. We implement disciplinary sanctions which reflect the seriousness of an incident and convey a deterrent effect. If necessary strong sanctions, such as exclusion, would be used in cases of severe and persistent bullying.

- The bully may be warned officially to stop offending with more serious sanctions to follow any recurrence of bullying.
- Normal 'Behaviour Code' sanctions will apply.
- Parents of both parties informed.
- If deemed appropriate and beneficial to the process, a letter of apology should be written by the bully and a copy attached in classcharts.
- Exclusion from outside play areas can be considered at break and lunch times.
- In severe cases they should be removed from the premises at these times and/or the bully may be temporarily excluded from OLA for a period of time at the discretion of the Head.
- If the bully persists in such behaviour, or bullying is a recurring offence, he/she may be recommended for permanent exclusion (expulsion).

ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS:

- Student Planner and B.A.S.I.C.S pupil expectations
- Positive Behaviour Code
- Community Cohesion Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

HELP ORGANISATIONS:

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)

0808 800 5793

Children's Legal Centre

0845 345 4345

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KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline (Mon-Fri, 10-4)	0845 1 205 204
Parentline Plus	0808 800 2222
Youth Access	020 8772 9900
Bullying Online	www.bullying.co.uk
Beatbullying	0845 338 5060 or www.beatbullying.org
Bullying online	www.bullying.co.uk

Kidscape www.kidscape.org.uk for further support, links and advice.

Appendix 1 – Cyber Bullying

See our *Online Safety Policy* for further guidance

[DfE Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying](#)

[DfE Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff](#)

[Cyberbullying Guidance for Schools](#)

[DfE Teaching Online Safety in Schools](#)

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.*

The NSPCC has identified that cyberbullying can include:

- Sending threatening or abusive text messages
- Creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos
- Trolling – the sending of menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games
- Excluding children from online games, activities or friendship groups
- Shaming someone online
- Setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child
- Encouraging young people to self-harm
- Voting for or against someone in an abusive poll
- Creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a person or cause trouble using their name
- Sending explicit messages, also known as sexting
- Pressuring children into sending sexual images or engaging in sexual conversations

Cyberbullying:

- is often linked to discrimination, including on the basis of gender, race, faith, sexual orientation, gender identity or special educational needs and disabilities.
- affects self-esteem and self-confidence and can affect mental health and wellbeing, in the worst cases leading to self-harm and suicide. Addressing all forms of bullying and discrimination is vital to support the health and wellbeing of all members of the school community.
- takes different forms: threats and intimidation; harassment or stalking (e.g. repeatedly sending unwanted texts or instant messages); vilification and defamation; ostracism and peer rejection; impersonation; and forwarding or publicly posting private information or images.
- can be characterised in several specific ways that differ from face-to-face bullying. These include the profile of the person carrying out the bullying; the location of online bullying; the potential audience; the perceived anonymity of the person cyberbullying; motivation of the person cyberbullying; and the digital evidence of cyberbullying.
- can affect and involve all members of the OLA community – pupils, staff, parents and carers.

Cyberbullying (along with all forms of bullying) will not be tolerated and incidents of cyberbullying should be reported and will be dealt with in accordance with OLA's Anti-Bullying Policy. Use of electronic devices of any kind to bully, harass or intimidate others will not be tolerated and will constitute a serious breach of discipline. If there is a suggestion that a child is at risk of abuse or significant harm, the matter will be dealt with under OLA's child protection procedures (see our Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy). At OLA, we also do not condone pupils taking photos of their peers without consent at any time.

OLA's Governing Board ensures children at OLA are taught about online safety through teaching and learning opportunities. There is not a criminal offence called cyberbullying. However, there are criminal laws that apply to a range of behaviours linked to cyberbullying including stalking, threats, accessing computer systems without permission, and circulating sexual images.

Preventing cyberbullying

The whole OLA community will need to be involved in prevention activities, as safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. All OLA staff are required to undertake regularly updated safeguarding and child protection training, which includes understanding, preventing and responding to cyberbullying. The key elements of an

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effective approach are:

- understanding and talking about cyberbullying;
- integrating cyberbullying prevention into relevant policies and practices;
- ensuring reporting routes are accessible and visible; promoting the positive use of technology;
- Awareness-raising and promoting understanding about cyberbullying to ensure members of the community are not unknowingly facilitating cyberbullying because of a lack of understanding.
- Prevention activities include staff development and events such as special assemblies with parents and carers.
- Cyberbullying can be addressed within the curriculum, for example through citizenship and PSHE, and in relation to Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development (SMSC). Other curriculum areas, including drama and computing, can also help bring cyberbullying issues to life.
- Make reporting incidents as easy as possible. Provide and publicise a range of reporting routes, including anonymous routes. Bystanders should be encouraged to take an active role in prevention by reporting any incident they witness.
- Digital literacy and e-safety are important for both pupils and staff. Staff should be confident to model the responsible and positive use of technology, and to respond to incidents of cyberbullying appropriately, including incidents linked to discrimination.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of cyberbullying prevention activities. Keep cyberbullying a live issue and celebrate your successes. Share effective practice with other schools and learning communities.

Seven categories of cyber-bullying have been identified:

- **Text message bullying** involves sending unwelcome texts that are threatening or cause discomfort. This can include excluding people from online conversations or talking behind their back.
- **Picture/video-clip bullying via mobile phone cameras** is used to make the person being bullied feel threatened or embarrassed, with images usually sent to other people. 'Happy slapping' involves filming and sharing physical attacks. But this category can also include posting comments, messages, photos or screenshots that are mean, threatening, untrue, personal, secret or embarrassing or filming/taking photos without the person's consent.
- **Phone call bullying via mobile phone** uses silent calls or abusive messages. Sometimes the bullied person's phone is stolen and used to harass others, who then think the phone owner is responsible. As with all mobile phone bullying, the perpetrators often disguise their numbers, sometimes using someone else's phone to avoid being identified;
- **Email bullying** uses email to send bullying or threatening messages, often using a pseudonym for anonymity or using someone else's name to pin the blame on them. This can include 'indirect' messages when the person does not directly name someone but everyone knows who you are talking about.
- **Chat room bullying and online grooming** involve sending menacing or upsetting responses to students or young people when they are in a web-based chat room;
- **Bullying through instant messaging (IM)** is an Internet-based form of bullying where students and young people are sent unpleasant messages through various messaging applications (for example, WhatsApp, Group Me, Skype, Facebook Messenger, Snapchat, Google Hangouts etc.) as they conduct real-time conversations online;
- **Bullying via websites and social networks (an example of this would be Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.)** includes the use of defamatory blogs, personal websites and online personal polling sites. There has also been a significant increase in social networking sites for young people, which can provide new opportunities for cyber-bullying. This can also be seen as anonymous messages or abuse (on social networks or online gaming) or creating fake accounts or profiles.

Responding to cyberbullying

OLA will act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified. This will include providing appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied; stopping the incident from spreading and assist in removing material from circulation; and working with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.

- The person being bullied may have evidence of the activity and should be encouraged to keep this to assist any investigation. Cyberbullying can also be reported to the provider of the service where it has taken place.
- Provide information to staff and students on steps they can take to protect themselves online – for example, advise those targeted not to retaliate or reply; provide advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists; and ask them to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain.

OLA is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

- Some cyberbullying content and activity is illegal. This includes indecent images of children (under the age of 18, including self-created images); obscene content (for example depictions of rape or torture); hate crimes and incidents, including racist and homophobic material; revenge pornography (sexual images of people over the age of 18 that have been published or forwarded without permission); threats of violence, rape or death threats; and stalking and harassment.
- If OLA believes that the content or activity is illegal, or is not sure, the local police will be able to assist. In addition, the Professionals Online Safety Helpline is a free service which can provide schools with advice and signposting in relation to any cyberbullying concerns they may have – telephone: 0844 318 4772 website: www.saferinternet.org.uk/about/helpline
- OLA will try to contain any incident as quickly as possible. Options here include contacting the service provider (or supporting the young person to contact the service provider), confiscating devices, requesting that students delete locally-held content and content posted online (where these contravene school behavioural policies).
- OLA understands it has specific powers in relation to searching and confiscating digital devices that belong to students, and to deleting digital content. We recognise we should take care when exercising these powers that we do so proportionately and lawfully. Learners, parents and carers should be aware of the school's policies in relation to this.
- If the person who has carried out the cyberbullying is not initially known, steps can be taken to identify the person responsible. These can include looking at the OLA systems and computer logs; identifying and interviewing possible witnesses; and, with police involvement, obtaining user information from the internet service provider.
- Once the person responsible for the cyberbullying has been identified, it is important that, as in other cases of bullying, sanctions are applied. Steps should be taken to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any help that they may need.
- At OLA, we believe that 'liking' cyber-bullying is also not acceptable and will be sanctioned accordingly.

Students should remember the following:

- Always respect others - be careful what you say online and what images you send.
- Think before you send - whatever you send can be made public very quickly and could stay online forever.
- Don't retaliate or reply online.
- Save the evidence - learn how to keep records of offending messages, pictures or online conversations. Ask someone if you are unsure how to do this. This will help to show what is happening and can be used by OLA to investigate the matter.
- Block the bully. Most social media websites and online or mobile services allow you block someone who is behaving badly.
- Don't do nothing - if you see cyberbullying going on, support the victim and report the bullying.
- Snapchat messages should be screen-shotted before they disappear