VICTORIA COLLEGE

PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Policy	Counter-Bullying Policy		
Reviewer	Emily-Rose Le Cuirot		
Reviewed **Changes**	February 2026	**Next review**	February 2028
Relevant CYPES policies		Behaviour Counter-bullying policy Safeguarding	

Introduction:

All members of VCP staff have a duty of care to protect their pupils and staff members from physical, social and emotional harm. All reports of bullying from pupils, parents and adults in school must be taken seriously and managed appropriately in a timely manner. Any form of bullying must be acted upon accordingly. Effective counter-bullying environments are those who engage staff, pupils and parents together in creating a bully free environment and a respectful learning environment. VCP will promote positive relationships, developing a culture in which individuals are listened to and their concerns taken seriously.

Scope:
This document describes the school's approach to dealing with both a bullying situation and developing a whole school perspective on promoting a counter-bullying culture and effective practices.

This document should read in conjunction with the relevant policies listed above.

Aims:
This policy aims to:

- Increase staff and parents understanding and awareness of the main issues around bullying
- Guide staff in dealing with bullying situations appropriately
- Understand how to deal with reporting and recording of bullying accusations
- Ensure all parties involved in the bullying event are supported appropriately.

Definition of bullying:
VCP defines bullying as:
"Bullying is a subjective experience and could take many forms. To be classed as a bullying act the perpetrator needs to have a social and pre-meditated awareness that the act is malicious and will cause physical and/or emotional harm."

- Bullying may include behaviour that is:
- Emotionally and/or physically harmful, carried out by an individual or a group
- Deliberate and wilful with a premeditated intent to harm
- Occurs more than once
- An imbalance of power, leaving the person being bullied feeling threatened.

Children and young people or adults can instigate bullying and each can be bullied, in any combination. Research shows that two thirds of children who bully others do so because they themselves are being bullied. Bullying generally tends to the take the form of emotionally or physical harmful behaviour. It can include any of the following: name calling, taunting, threats, mocking, making offensive comments, kicking, hitting, pushing, taking and/or damaging belongings, gossiping, excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and untrue rumours. These activities can take place face to face, via third parties, or by other means such as social media. The nature of bullying is changing and evolving as technology develops.

There are two forms of bullying:

Direct

Direct bullying is classed as the process of carrying out an act of bullying as described above. A person can be accused of direct bullying if they proactively engage in acts that involve harm of another person emotionally, socially and/or physically.

Indirect

Indirect bullying is by means of incitement and other forms of the encouraging and supporting of others to harm or bully another person. This includes facilitating any acts of aggression or harm, or even being bystanders to acts of bullying without taking action.

Types

Different types of bullying include:

- Physical
- Verbal
- Emotional/psychological
- Racist
- Homophobic
- Electronic/cyber
- Encouraging (Indirect only)
- Sexual

Creating a culture of Counter-Bullying:

It is the responsibility of every member of the school community, regardless of role, status or age, to facilitate and actively promote a culture of positive welfare and counter-bullying.

We are committed to cultivate a counter-bullying environment at VCP where we will show equal measures of support and challenge to those who bully others, and those who are bullied.

Mechanisms for developing a Counter-Bullying culture may include:

- Focusing on VCP School Core Values to create a safe and respectful learning environment for all
- Delivery of the PSHE curriculum with a particular focus on bullying

- Regular school and class assemblies, as well as the involvement of the School Council
- Participating in national awareness campaigns such as 'Anti-bulling week' in order to promote pupil awareness
- Raising parent awareness and understanding of counter-bullying Developing staff CPD through regular training opportunities and sharing of good practice
- Educating pupils on their Rights through the Rights Respecting School Award – see Appendix 2.
- Reporting to, and being held account to, by the Governing body and CYPES.

Reporting and recording

Not all acts of aggression can be classed as bullying therefore the school needs to investigate all incidences thoroughly to determine whether it can be recorded as 'bullying' or whether it needs to be recorded under another behaviour category.

All staff must record and report any accusation of bullying according to the procedures outlined in Appendix 1 and the flow chart in Appendix 3. The guidance outlined in Appendix 4 should be used when investigating an allegation of bullying.

Working together as a school community is integral to combating bullying. Communication is an important part of this. If parents have a concern regarding bullying, they are encouraged to speak directly with their son's class teacher or another relevant member of staff.

All incidents of bullying, both alleged and confirmed, will be recorded and discussed with either the Deputy Headteacher or Headteacher and the next steps to be taken will be agreed and actioned accordingly.

Parents will be informed if their son has been a victim of bullying, or has been found to have bullied. Due to the variety of bullying forms and types of bullying, the consequences for a child who bullies will vary depending on the context. Parents will be supported through this process through a variety of means.

In line with Government of Jersey advice, consequences should be in line with the School's behaviour policy and be used to teach – it has been proven that consequences that involve learning or building empathy can help prevent future bullying.

Other considerations

It is important to note that research shows that the majority of bullying goes unreported in school. Staff should not underestimate the effects of bullying on the individual from emotional distress to poor concentration and disruptive behaviours. Warning signs, like an unwillingness to participate, social isolation and over-sensitivity to comments and praise, can all be possible indicators of bullying.

At VCP, we have a holistic approach to working with children. It is important to use the term 'children who bully' rather than 'bullies' as it allows us to look at the whole child rather than pre-judging their behaviours and motives.

We recognise that children who bully are often doing so as a 'social problem-solving tool'. It is therefore of vital importance to change a child's need to bully. At VCP we are committed to working with all our pupils to support their individual needs – for both the child who has been bullied, and the child who has bullied.

Appendix 1 - VCP Counter-Bullying – Procedures for reporting and recording bullying

All accusations of bullying are taken very seriously and will be thoroughly investigated.

Pupils

If you are being bullied, tell your teacher or an adult, you trust straight away. We will work together to help and support you through this difficult time.

If you know someone is being bullied, tell your teacher or an adult you trust straight away.

If you have been bullying someone, you may need help to stop the bullying. The best way to do this is to speak with an adult you trust. Remember, bullying does not take away problems, it often makes things worse. We will work together to help you address the reasons for why you have decided to bully.

Parents: It is important that regular communication with parents and school occurs to ensure that any incident of bullying can be dealt with swiftly and effectively.

If your child is being bullied it is really important you come into school and speak with either your son's class teacher, Mrs Kynicos or Mrs Le Cuirot. All accusations of bullying will be investigated thoroughly, and appropriate steps and actions will be taken on a case-by-case basis to ensure your son is well supported. We will also be working with the child who has bullied to ensure that the reasons for why they had been bullying are addressed, to help stop this behaviour continuing.

If your child is bullying, we will invite you into school and explain the next steps and actions that will be taken. We believe that children bully when they are trying to 'problem solve' something in their life that they are not happy with. It is important therefore, to support and help your child work through this and to remove their 'need' to bully. Our ELSA programme in school will help to do this. Appropriate sanctions, in line with the school behaviour policy, will also be discussed with you.

Staff: If a pupil or parent reports bullying to you, record the details and speak to Mr Pateman, Mrs Le Cuirot, or Mrs Kynicos straight away. The next actions taken will be agreed together and will depend upon the case – these will be logged on the Bullying Enquires log together. An investigation into the accusation will be started.

If you think a pupil is being bullied, record the details, and speak with Mr Pateman, Mrs Le Cuirot or Miss Finch. Further actions will be agreed and logged together, and an investigation will be started.

Depending on the outcome of an investigation into bullying, in discussion with ELC/DP/CK/ teacher the incident will be logged on our school 'bullying log' accordingly – either as bullying, or another behaviour type incident. The next steps and consequences will then be agreed, actioned, and recorded. The bullying log will also be updated.

Governors: Our Safeguarding Sub-Committee of the Board of Governors maintain an overview of how the school is managing and dealing with bullying incidents. Half termly data is reported to the sub-committee and any trends or patterns are thoroughly investigated. Regular 'Governor Visits' occur in which our Counter bullying policy and procedures are scrutinized and discussed. Each half term, the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher triangulate all bullying data with other welfare measures such as attendance, lates, behaviour and achievement records, to identify and address any patters or trends.

Appendix 2:

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child Adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly Resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989. Entry into force 2 September 1990, in accordance with article 49.

The Convention is built around the following four general principles:

1. Non-discrimination

2. The best interests of the child

3. Optimal development

4. The voice of the child

Article 14

1 States Parties shall respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

2 States Parties shall respect the rights and duties of the parents and, when applicable, legal guardians, to provide direction to the child in the exercise of his or her right in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child.

3 Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs may be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health or morals, or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.

Article 28

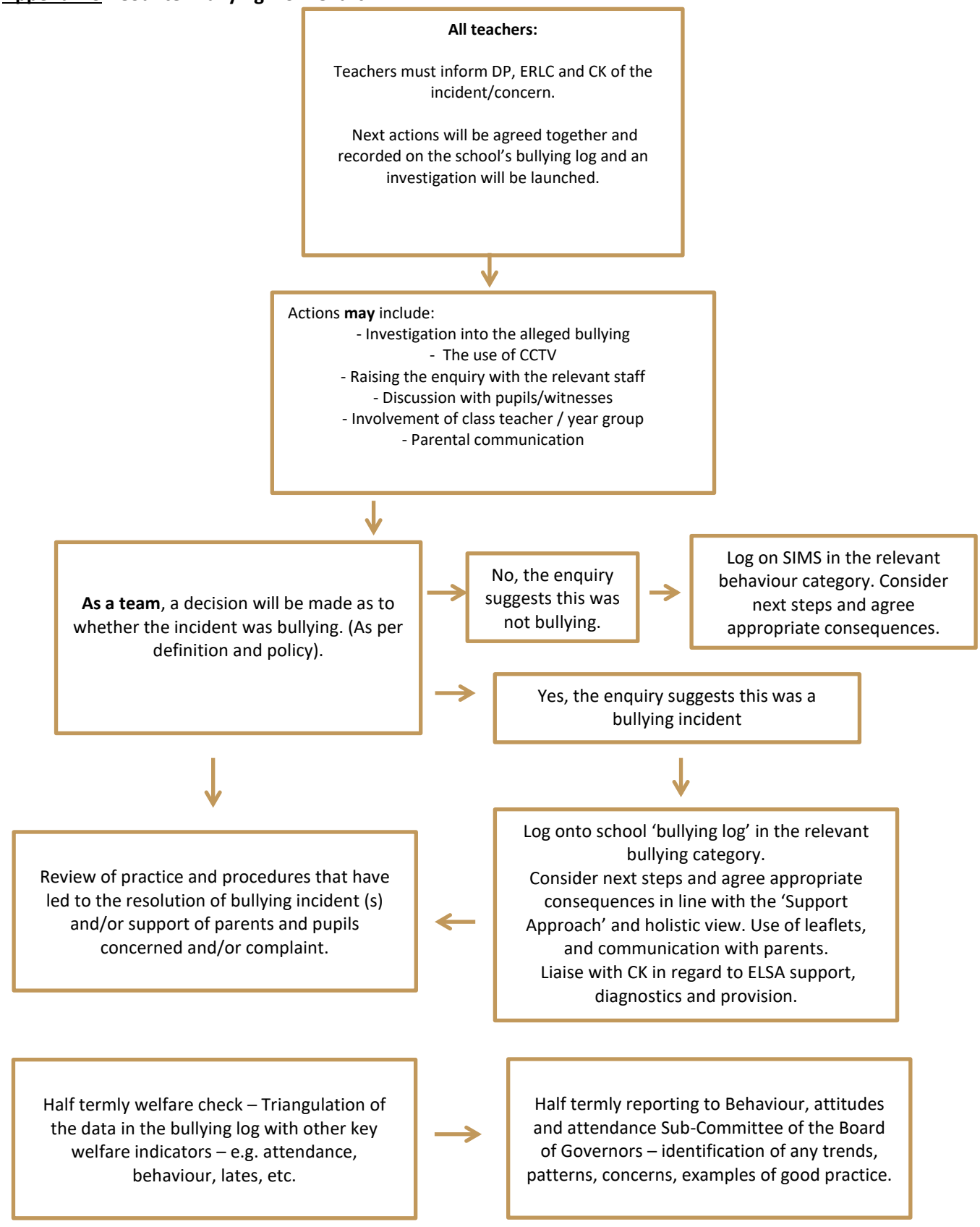
1. States Parties recognise the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity, they shall, in particular:

a) Make primary education compulsory and available free to all;
b) Encourage the development of different forms of secondary education, including general and vocational education, make them available and accessible to every child, and take appropriate measures such as the introduction of free education and offering financial assistance in case of need;
c) Make higher education accessible to all on the basis of capacity by every appropriate means;
d) Make educational and vocational information and guidance available and accessible to all children;
e) Take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop-out rates.

2. States parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity and in conformity with the present Convention.

3. States parties shall promote and encourage international cooperation in matters relating to education, in particular with a view to contributing to the elimination of ignorance and illiteracy throughout the world and facilitating access to scientific and technical knowledge and modern teaching methods. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.

Appendix 3 - Counter Bullying Flow Chart



<u>Appendix 4</u> - Gathering information:

In order to deal with a bullying incident effectively it is important that key information about the event is gathered.

Key information to gather:

- Bullying incident
- Who was involved?
- Location
- Time of day
- What was seen?
- Length of incident
- Were there any witnesses?
- What was seen?
- What was said?
- Full names and class (if known)

Style of questioning:

Ask 'what', 'where' and 'when' type questions.

It is important to avoid 'why' questions at all times. – These refer to opinions and emotional viewpoints which can be unhelpful at this stage of the exploration. It is more informative to ask the victim, *'What were you doing just before you were hurt?'* rather than '*Why do you think they hurt you?'.*

Use the language the child used in writing up your findings.

Use a room that is quiet and discrete. Talk to children individually when gathering information rather than as a group.

Establish whether there were any witnesses and talk to these witnesses before speaking to the child accused of bullying. Establish key facts about the incident.

- Has this happened before? – You will need to find this out in order to know whether this was a bullying incident.

Reassure the victim that they will be supported in feeling safer in school and the child who is doing the bullying will also be supported to stop.

Speaking to the child who has been accused of bullying:

Establish from them key facts about the incident 'from their perspective'. Start by asking them to corroborate times, people and location first before establishing any behavioural fact/details about the event. Do not go for an admission of guilt as they are likely to deny it. If they admit it, then this will be helpful in supporting them to change their behaviour. Try to get details about what was said and what was done. The more detail the better.