



Vita et Pax
PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Vita et Pax Preparatory School
Established 1936

Anti-Bullying Policy

Policy Originator	Head Teacher
Approved by	Governing Body
Date Approved	1 March 2026
Status	Statutory
Review Period	Annually (next: March 2027)

This policy is reviewed annually by the Head Teacher and ratified by the Governing Body. All staff read and agree to this policy at the start of each academic year. Families are encouraged to be familiar with this policy and its associated documents via the school website or via hardcopies available from the school office.

1. Aims

Vita et Pax Preparatory School is a co-educational environment for children from the age of two to the end of their primary education. Our school delivers a child-centred and co-ordinated approach to nurturing character for the future. We aim for our children to be creative and caring learners who are happy to be in our dedicated learning environment.

Our school works in strong partnership with our parents to ensure students are demonstrably safe, academically confident and well cared for physically, socially and emotionally. The school will always take actions that are in the best interest of the child and will provide positive outcomes for their development.

Vita et Pax Preparatory School is committed to creating and sustaining a learning environment that maintains respect and dignity for all. We value the diversity of our staff and students and work to provide a supportive environment in which the unique character of every individual is valued and celebrated.

The aim of this policy is to outline the procedures that create and maintain a culture of exceptionally good behaviour that develops positive relationships across the school and underpins our children's strong learning attitudes.

This policy operates in conjunction with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 (KCSIE), and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy has regard to the following legislation and guidance:

- Education Act 2002 (Section 175)
- Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Sections 89–91)
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- DfE guidance: Preventing and Tackling Bullying (July 2017)
- DfE: Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)
- DfE: Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- DfE: Searching, Screening and Confiscation (2022)
- DfE: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (2025)
- Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019 (upskirting)
- Online Safety Act 2023

3. Definition of Bullying

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyberbullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. (DfE, Preventing and Tackling Bullying, 2017)

Bullying can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone, or actions that fall short of direct participation. It can also be overt and intimidating, and often involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator(s) and the victim(s).

Bullying can sometimes amount to child-on-child abuse, which is defined as abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil. It can be standalone or part of wider abuse and can happen both inside and outside of school, and online.

Vita et Pax Preparatory School works to ensure that children know the difference between unkind behaviour and bullying. Bullying can be any of the following occurring consistently over a period of time:

- Physical: hitting, pushing, or any act that invades personal space
- Verbal: name calling, teasing, threats, taunting, racial and sexual harassment
- Social: exclusion by groups or individuals; discrimination on grounds of religion, culture, race, gender, disability or sexuality
- Cyber/Online: intimidation and abuse via electronic means (text, email, social networking sites, gaming platforms, AI-generated content)

4. Code of Conduct

The school's community of governors, staff, parents and pupils adhere to an established routine and code of conduct. The school sees education as a partnership. Our staff are committed to excellence, aiming to achieve a spirit of trust and co-operation.

Everyone has a right to feel secure and to be treated with dignity and respect at the school, particularly the vulnerable. Harassment, bullying and physical threats or abuse in any form will not be tolerated, including online, or outside of school.

The school is strongly committed to promoting equal opportunities for all, regardless of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs, disability or learning difficulty, marital status, pregnancy and maternity, or the fact that a pupil is adopted, looked after or is a carer. The school takes its duties under the Equality Act 2010 seriously and makes appropriate reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND or certain health conditions.

The basic expectations for all students are:

1. We listen, speak and act with consideration for others to show our respect
2. We maintain discipline in our behaviours inside and outside of school
3. We use our trusted adults when we need support
4. We are resilient learners and always aim to do our best
5. We follow instructions to keep us and others safe
6. We look after our school and everything in it
7. We use technology responsibly
8. We celebrate success together

5. Signs of Bullying

Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is being bullied include:

- Unwillingness to return to school
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually poor work
- Books, bags, money and other belongings suddenly go missing or are damaged
- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary)
- Diminished levels of self-confidence
- Frequent visits to the school nurse with symptoms related to stress or anxiety
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Choosing the company of adults rather than peers
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact
- Difficulty sleeping or experiencing nightmares
- Talking of suicide or running away from home or school

Although there may be other causes, a repetition or combination of these possible signs should be investigated by parents and teachers and reported/recorded in accordance with this policy.

6. Prevention

Vita et Pax Preparatory School has the following measures in place to prevent bullying:

- Established behavioural expectations within the school
- Explicit teaching around unkindness and bullying within the curriculum, PSHE and assemblies
- Dedicated time for pastoral care — tutor time, circle time, family dining
- Active supervision — staff demonstrate professional curiosity around situations where problems may arise
- Student leaders offer peer support and supervision in the playground
- Modelling of positive behaviours by staff
- Non-verbal communication systems — worry boxes, playground bus stop
- Strong parent partnership — open communication regarding children's disagreements
- Clear structure of sanctions for bullying, known to the school community
- Participation in awareness events (Anti-Bullying Week, Safer Internet Day, Autism awareness)
- Online safety education embedded in the curriculum, including awareness of misinformation, disinformation, deepfakes and AI-generated content (in line with KCSIE 2025)

7. Cyberbullying and Online Safety

Cyberbullying is the intentional misuse of technology to harass, intimidate, threaten or defame the character of a person. It may occur by text, social media, online gaming, emails, or through the misuse of AI tools and image generation. The continual nature of cyberbullying can have serious emotional consequences.

In line with KCSIE 2025 and the Online Safety Act 2023, the school recognises that online risks now extend to misinformation, disinformation, conspiracy theories, and AI-generated harmful content. Children are explicitly taught about the dangers of online and social media platforms as part of their PSHE learning.

Vita et Pax Preparatory School teaches children to:

- Never reveal personal details online
- Inform parents or school when online messages or activity are worrying them
- Never reply to anonymous texts or chatroom messages
- Show any anonymous or concerning messages to parents or a trusted adult
- Understand that AI-generated images or deepfakes can be used to bully and that creating or sharing such content is unacceptable

Further advice for staff and parents can be found at <https://www.childnet.com/> and <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

8. Behaviour Management

8.1 During Lessons ('Good to be Green')

- Stage 1: Verbal warning (two times only)
- Stage 2: Yellow card issued

- Stage 3: Time out — student is sent to an isolated space within the classroom for a maximum of 10 minutes
- Stage 4: Red card — a Senior Leader is called to speak with the student and determine whether further sanction is required
- Stage 5: Internal isolation — frequent red cards or serious breaches result in removal from the classroom and loss of playground privileges

When a child reaches Stage 3 to 5, parents will be informed on the same day by the class teacher.

8.2 During Unstructured Times

- Stage 1: Verbal warning (two times only)
- Stage 2: Time out — student asked to sit on the bench for up to 10 minutes
- Stage 3: Senior Leader called to determine further sanction
- Stage 4: Removal from the playground for an escalating period

9. High-Level Negative Behaviour

All instances of high-level negative behaviour are reported directly to the class teacher, who will inform the Senior Leadership Team. This includes and is not limited to:

- Multi-discriminatory behaviour, including racist, sexist, homophobic and anti-disability remarks or behaviour (always report to Head Teacher and SLT)
- Fighting, violent or threatening behaviour or physical attacks on children or staff
- Vandalism or damage to property
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment
- Stealing
- Disrespect of adults
- Swearing or verbal abuse
- Overt or covert bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Child-on-child abuse (including online)
- Persistent disruptive behaviour

The school may exclude a pupil, either temporarily or permanently, in the event that other disciplinary measures prove ineffective. A serious one-off incident may justify exclusion even where a pupil has not been previously suspended.

10. Procedures for Dealing with Reported Bullying

The school ensures that all instances of, or concerns about, bullying and cyberbullying — both on and away from school premises — are easy to report and recorded properly.

1. The member of staff who first discovers the situation will control the situation, reassure and support the pupils involved without promising absolute confidentiality. They will make detailed and dated records. All bullying incidents, no matter how low level they may appear, should be recorded in writing.

2. The member of staff will inform a member of the Senior Leadership Team as soon as possible and a Case Handler will be assigned.
3. Where an issue of pupil behaviour or bullying gives reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, staff should follow the procedures in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy rather than the procedure below.
4. The victim(s) and the alleged perpetrator(s) will each be interviewed individually by the Case Handler. All children will be offered the option of having someone to accompany them (e.g. teaching assistant, parent).
5. Where the Case Handler considers that the reported behaviour may be criminal, or that there may be a risk of harm, the Case Handler will discuss with the Head Teacher and report to the police without delay if considered necessary.
6. The incident(s) should be recorded in full, signed and dated by the Case Handler, then given to the Head Teacher for secure storage.
7. The victim(s) will be interviewed again at a later stage by a member of the SLT, separately from the alleged perpetrator(s). They will be offered support to develop a strategy to help. It will be made clear why revenge or retaliation is inappropriate.
8. The perpetrator(s) will be interviewed again separately by a member of the SLT. It will be made clear why their behaviour was inappropriate and caused distress. They will be offered guidance on modifying their behaviour.
9. The parents/guardians of all parties will be informed and may be invited into school to discuss the matter and appropriate sanctions. The parents' support will be sought for preventative measures.
10. A way forward, including appropriate disciplinary sanctions and support, should be determined and, where possible, agreed with all parties.
11. A monitoring and review strategy will be put in place and recorded.
12. In very serious cases, and only after the Head Teacher has been involved, it may be necessary to make a report to the police, the DSL or to Children's Services.

11. Sanctions

Sanctions assist the school in enforcing expectations and managing unacceptable behaviour. The Head Teacher undertakes to apply any sanctions fairly, reasonably and proportionately. Sanctions will never involve any form of unlawful or degrading activity. Corporal punishment is illegal and is never used or threatened at our school.

Examples of sanctions include:

- Verbal reprimand from a member of staff
- Contact with parents to advise of the misbehaviour
- Additional schoolwork or repeating unsatisfactory work
- Detention at lunchtime
- Withdrawal of privileges
- Confiscation of property being used inappropriately
- School-based service or imposition of a task under staff supervision
- Regular reporting and behaviour monitoring
- Withdrawal from a lesson, school trip or team event

- Suspension for a specified period, or permanent exclusion

12. Positive Behaviour and Rewards

It is expected that all students maintain the expected standard of excellent behaviour on a daily basis. Exemplary behaviour beyond expectations is publicly recognised weekly via Celebration Assembly and the school newsletter. Additional rewards include:

- House points for individuals
- Table points for groups
- Teacher individual awards — phone call home, sticker, win bin
- Head Teacher's Award — weekly recognition of exemplary behaviours
- Student-managed awards (e.g. Star Diner for best manners)
- Focus area awards (e.g. Teddy Bear for healthy travel options)
- Collective rewards — House treats

13. Pupils with SEND

The school recognises that children with SEND or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges and may be more prone to child-on-child group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children. The school also recognises that certain children may face additional barriers to reporting an incident because of their vulnerability, disability, sex, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation.

We are mindful that not all pupils requiring support with behaviour will have identified SEND. The school will consider whether any disruptive behaviour might be the result of unmet educational needs and will discuss concerns with the pupil's parents accordingly.

14. Bullying of Staff

All forms of bullying, including cyberbullying, are whole-school issues. Measures undertaken to protect students are also applied to staff. Bullying of staff — whether by students, parents or colleagues — is unacceptable and should be reported to a Senior Leader with evidence so that appropriate action can be taken.

15. Parent Responsibilities

Parents are the main contributors to the behaviour their child displays in school. Parents who accept a place for their child undertake to uphold the school's policies and regulations. In particular, parents are expected to support the school's values in matters such as:

- Excellent attendance and punctuality
- Excellent behaviour and conduct
- Tidy, complete uniform and appearance
- High standards of academic work and completion of homework

- Managed use of social networking and online activity
- Understanding appropriate behaviour in different social situations

16. Advice

Advice to Students

If someone has been deliberately unkind, you must tell an adult immediately. This can be any teacher or support staff who you feel comfortable talking to. Even if it may not be bullying, staff will be able to help you. Maintain your high standard of positive behaviour. Do not engage in name calling or gossip. If you see someone being unkind, support them by telling an adult.

Advice to Parents

Maintaining clear lines of communication between school and home enables us to deal with difficult situations as they arise. The first line of contact is the class teacher, who will liaise with Senior Leadership.

Advice to Staff

Be a role model for children. Be clear that you will not tolerate bullying. Be aware of children who display changes in behaviour. Manage discussion within the classroom so a child is not continually stereotyped or isolated. Be vigilant and employ professional curiosity. Pay particular attention to students with SEND who may need additional support.

17. Complaints Procedure

Parents and pupils are encouraged to use our Complaints Procedure (published on our website) if they feel that any concerns about bullying or any other matter are not being addressed properly.

18. Associated Policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy
- Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- Exclusions Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- RSE/PSHE Policy

19. Additional Sources of Advice

- Childline: 0800 1111

- NSPCC: 0808 800 5000 — www.nspcc.org.uk
- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Anti-Bullying from the Diana Award: www.antibullyingpro.com
- Childnet: www.childnet.com
- Kidscape: 020 7730 3300 — www.kidscape.org.uk
- Family Lives: 0808 800 2222 — www.familylives.org.uk
- DfE: www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying
- Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk
- UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk

Approved by: Governing Body of Vita et Pax Preparatory School

Date: 1 March 2026