



# St George's

WEYBRIDGE

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

### INTRODUCTION

This policy is designed to reduce the small incidence of bullying at St George's College. It takes into consideration the following government publications and guidance:

Preventing and Tackling Bullying (July 2017)

Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2019)

Behaviour and discipline in Schools (Jan 2016)

This Policy is also written in consultation with the ISI regulations and The Equality Act 2010.

**Every child has the right to be healthy, feel safe and enjoy school** and we seek to achieve this at the College as part of our own ethos. It is also a legal responsibility.

### What is 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)

Reviewed: August 2019

Next review: August 2020

Related policies – Safeguarding Policy, Behaviour Management Policy, Whistle-blowing Policy, Acceptable Use of ICT Policy.

Author – Deputy Head Pastoral

Policy number – 10a

## **Intervention and other strategies for preventing bullying**

Effective supervision of pupils and frequent communication of an anti-bullying message are key factors in establishing a non-bullying ethos. But it is also recognised that pupils who are purposefully occupied and thereby develop self-esteem seldom bully others or feel the need to do so; and rarely are they bullied by others or perceived to be a target for bullying.

Teaching staff should have a firm and fair discipline structure within and outside the classroom. It is their responsibility to take positive, affirmative action in support of the College's anti-bullying policy and when bullying is suspected of having occurred.

In addition to the common law duty of a teacher to take such care of the children in his/her charge as a careful parent would take of his/her own children, there is a statutory duty imposed on teachers to promote the general progress and well-being of individual pupils or groups or classes assigned to them, to maintain good order and discipline among the pupils and to safeguard their health and safety.

This duty includes ensuring as far as possible that pupils are free from bullying and harassment as in line with KCSIE.

### **In order to minimise bullying the College will ensure that**

- i. Governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents have an accepted and agreed understanding of what bullying is (a list of relevant staff INSET may be obtained from the Deputy Head Staffing), including an understanding of the safe use of electronic communication, so that all are alert to E safety and the dangers of internet, smart phone and other such tools for abuse;
- ii. Governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents are given access to the College's Policy on Anti-Bullying, and are thereby able to recognise instances of bullying and know how they can and should respond;
- iii. An open climate prevails in which pupils have the confidence to report instances of bullying;
- iv. Teaching staff are aware of their legal obligation to act on indications of bullying;
- v. Every pupil is encouraged to develop his/her self-esteem through challenging and stimulating activity at which competence and attainment are continually sought and encouraged, and — if possible and where appropriate — assessed;
- vi. Pastoral care of the highest standard is provided within all tutor groups led by the Head of Year and throughout the College;
- vii. Due consideration is given, when developments in the College are planned and carried out, to creating an environment in which bullying becomes less likely to occur — by bearing in mind, for example, boredom, overcrowding, marginalisation and isolation; regular exchanges of information can take place between members of staff on aspects of school life in which a culture of bullying might inadvertently be allowed to develop, and on particular pupils regarded as being at risk.
- viii. Parents are given information regarding e-safety and cyberbullying, for example trends in social media.
- ix. A report bullying function is available on Firefly for anyone within the school community to report bullying directly to the Deputy Head Pastoral.

At Chapel assemblies senior members of staff and others with pastoral responsibilities frequently reinforce key points in the College's Anti-Bullying Policy, through reference to our Josephite values.

Events and activities are managed in such a way that opportunities for bullying are kept to a minimum. By, for example, increasing supervision at occasions when large numbers of pupils are expected to gather.

The PSHE curriculum addresses and allows for discussion on bullying issues whilst identifying anti-bullying strategies.

Prefects are used (within the Sixth Form) to carry out their duties and responsibilities without resorting to inappropriate and unacceptable means of establishing authority whilst maintaining discipline

Pupils also have a key role to play in helping to establish and uphold an ethos in which bullying is rejected.

Respect for other pupils, be they younger, older or of the same age, and tolerance of their differences are of fundamental importance. All pupils should be prepared and willing to accept encouragement, advice and direction from all teachers and prefects.

House Families afford an opportunity for pupils of different ages to meet and this facilitates peer support.

### **All pupils must recognise that**

- i. Prevention of bullying is a collective concern which has to involve all pupils as well as teachers;
- ii. Thoughtlessness and insensitivity can so easily lead to bullying: impertinence and rudeness shown by youngsters to older pupils and others in authority can provoke an unwanted response;
- iii. Participation in purposeful group activity reduces the likelihood of individual separation and marginalization, with which bullying is habitually associated; their own conduct can attract untoward attention that leads to bullying; outdated and manifestly illegal practices such as demanding money, food, mobile phone access, personal tasks, etc. from another pupil are forms of bullying and will be treated accordingly.

With bullying, there is no such person as the innocent bystander. A pupil who witnesses an incidence of bullying can act in one of several ways. Every pupil should take time to consider which of the following responses would most nearly coincide with his/her own; to what extent misplaced loyalty to friends would prevail over making and acting on a clear distinction between right and wrong.

A pupil who witnesses an incidence of bullying might

- i. help the bully by joining in;
- ii. support the bully by watching, laughing and shouting encouragement;
- iii. take out a phone and record an image of the incident to pass to a senior member of staff;
- iv. remain, but decidedly uninvolved;
- v. walk away, and do and say nothing;
- vi. walk away but offer assistance later to those trying to investigate the incident;
- vii. offer immediate and direct support to the victim by telling the bullies to stop and/or fetching an adult.

Those who turn a blind eye effectively condone the activity and encourage the bully, albeit unintentionally, to carry on. They become 'accessories'. With cyber bullying in particular, bystanders can easily become perpetrators by passing on messages or images that humiliate others.

Some types of harassing or threatening behaviour or communications may constitute criminal offences, and the College will refer matters to the Police when necessary. Similarly, if the bullying also constitutes a serious safeguarding issue, the College will report the incident to Children's Services (see Safeguarding Policy).

Bullying at the College would all but disappear if the friends and family members of each bully (or potential bully) continually rounded on him/her to make clear their strong and explicit disapproval of the bullying activity.

Any pupil can be bullied. Those who show prowess in or enthusiasm for academic work are sometimes singled out by others, perhaps through envy of success or frustration at becoming conscious of their own lack of ambition or effort: not everybody thinks it is 'cool to be clever'.

Pupils who excel at music and other reflective and intellectual pursuits can face the same problem. (In contrast, those who excel at sport are rarely bullied by their less able and/or successful peers.)

Certain other factors have been found to make bullying more likely to occur. Examples, none of which should ever be used as justification for bullying and will never be regarded as such, include

- i. a lack or apparent lack of close friends;
- ii. an over-protective family upbringing;
- iii. nervousness or lack of confidence;
- iv. belonging to a different racial, religious or ethnic group to the majority;
- v. some other obvious difference;
- vi. ostentatious ownership of expensive or unusual items of equipment or clothing.

The College makes clear in its Equal Opportunity Policy and in line with its Catholic ethos that it welcomes diversity amongst its pupils and staff. It is this very diversity, however, that some regard as a pretext for bullying. All members of the College community must guard against using and tolerating language and other forms of behaviour that can create an atmosphere in which bullying of this kind can more readily exist.

In bullying around **race, religion or belief**, a pupil is targeted for representing a group, and attacking or insulting the individual is very often designed to send a message to other members of that group. Every pupil deserves respect and a safe learning environment whatever their racial or religious background. This reflects the value modern British society places on diversity and the mutual respect its citizens are expected to show for each other. Racism exists in wider society especially amongst adults, and racist incidents that occur in schools may be direct consequences of this. Not all racist incidents amount to racist bullying, which the DfE defined as "a range of hurtful behaviour, both physical and psychological, that makes a person feel unwelcome, marginalised, excluded, powerless or worthless because of their colour, ethnicity, culture, faith community, national origin or national status".

The law recognises the seriousness of abuse and attacks that are motivated by racism. All schools have a duty to promote race equality, and creating an ethos in which racist bullying rarely happens, and is dealt with convincingly when it does, is one way in which the College can fulfil that duty. In order to maintain that ethos, relevant and suitable themes form the basis of most Chapel services and some other formal gatherings of the school community. Regularly covered are ideas of a shared humanity (similarities and universality), diversity (differences and contrasting faiths and interpretations) and interdependence (borrowing, mingling and mutual influence).

**Sexual** bullying affects both genders. Boys can be victims — of girls and other boys. Sexual bullying is characterized by name calling, comments about appearance and attractiveness, sexual innuendoes, graffiti with sexual content and insensitive use of pornographic material. Teaching staff must be able to recognise and willing to challenge sexual content within verbal exchanges between pupils. Inappropriate and uninvited touching may constitute indecent assault, and should be considered first under child protection procedures.

Sexual bullying includes homophobic biphobic and transphobic bullying, which occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against another's **sexual orientation**. It can be experienced by pupils and others, including members of the teaching staff, who are (or are thought to be) lesbian, gay or bisexual, transsexual or perhaps have gay friends or family members. The harassment of boys whose behaviour is regarded by others as effeminate is a form of homophobic bullying.

People who believe that being gay is 'wrong' — that 'boys should act like boys' and 'girls should act like girls' — are more likely to bully in this way. As with all other forms of bullying, homophobic bullying can have a long-lasting negative impact on young people.

Homophobic and other sexual orientation bullying is particularly hard to identify because it may take place covertly. Pupils' reluctance to report it (not wanting teachers or other adults to assume or know that they are gay) is a distinctive aspect of homophobic bullying. It nearly always involves verbal abuse — spreading rumours that someone is gay, suggesting that something or someone is inferior and so the person concerned must be "gay", with use of invective such as "you're such a gay boy!" or "your clothes are so gay!". Casual homophobic language is common in schools, but if it is not challenged pupils may think that homophobic bullying is acceptable.

It is therefore important that teaching staff do challenge homophobic language when it is heard. Pupils who use it must be informed that homophobic language is offensive and will not be tolerated. Staff responses should be, according to Ofsted guidelines, "swift, proportionate, discreet, influential and effective". Staff should feel able to respond effectively to incidents of homophobic bullying, and instil confidence in pupils and parents that issues will be dealt with.

Pupils with **Special Educational Needs or disabilities** may not be able to articulate experiences as well as other pupils. However, they may be at greater risk of being bullied precisely because of their specific difficulties. Teaching staff need to be aware that their own actions, such as drawing undue attention to differences between SEN pupils and others, can unintentionally lead to bullying.

## Cyberbullying

This is the use of information and communications technology by bullies as an indirect means by which they can harass their victims. It is a *means* of bullying, rather than a *type* of bullying — the technology is used to bully for any of the reasons stated above. A bully uses a phone, tablet or other hand held device, or the internet to send or post messages and images that taunt, intimidate, insult, abuse, stalk, embarrass or otherwise harm or cause distress to the victim. Cyberbullies can make use of e-mail, mobile 'phone and text messaging, digital photography, instant messaging, personal websites, chat rooms, blogs and social networking sites. It is the impersonal nature of ICT that leads those who might otherwise lack good communication skills to misuse it and gives them the confidence to victimise others.

It is recognised that members of staff and other adults can be victims of cyberbullying as when ridiculed, threatened or otherwise abused online by pupils.

Cyber bullying differs in several ways from the more usual forms of bullying:

- i. the potentially vast size of the audience of 'onlookers';
- ii. the incredible speed with which cyber bullies can distribute messages and images to this wide audience;
- iii. the relative ease with which cyber bullying activities can be intensified and repeated;
- iv. the difficulty of monitoring and controlling the activities of cyber bullies, who can operate from home without restriction;
- v. the ease with which bystanders can inadvertently become drawn in to cyber bullying activities — by passing on to others, and thereby extending circulation, malicious messages or images without being aware of the impact their distribution has on the recipient;
- vi. the invasive nature of cyber bullying, which can occur at any time and intrude into victims' own homes and other personal spaces that would otherwise be thought safe;
- vii. the anonymity that cyber bullies are able to maintain (to begin with at least) — the difficulty with which they can be traced and identified; but cyber bullying yields evidence of itself, which if kept can aid investigations.

All those using electronic devices to harass others, or share inappropriate material need to be aware that wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 enable teachers to search for, and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones. Where images are thought to be illegal, rather than deleting these, police will be contacted.

The top eight negative online behaviours identified by young people for the 2015 online abuse and bullying prevention guide are:

- i. threatening
- ii. trolling
- iii. blackmail (including revenge porn)
- iv. cyber bullying,
- v. grooming online (through games as well as other social networking)
- vi. fake profiles
- vii. hacking accounts
- viii. tagging photos with derogatory comments.

All of these can have criminal consequences.

**To ensure safe and proper use of ICT, all pupils are advised “*Think before you post*” and**

- i. to refuse all requests to reveal personal information;
- ii. to avoid putting personal information such as full name, birthday, address, mobile phone number, e-mail address, bank account details, instant messenger ID, and any images of themselves anywhere on the internet;
- iii. to keep passwords safe — they should be hard to guess, changed regularly and never divulged to anyone else;
- iv. not to give mobile phone numbers and personal e-mail and internet addresses to anyone other than trusted offline friends;
- v. to think carefully before communicating via e-mail and especially before posting messages and images on social networking sites — whatever is sent can very quickly be spread widely and could stay online indefinitely;
- vi. To take special care when using camera functions never to share images of themselves or others, which could be considered sexually provocative or indecent. “Sexting” is a growing phenomenon which has hurt a number of otherwise honest and naive youngsters, and may lead to criminal prosecution
- vii. not to forward any defamatory or otherwise offensive message or image that is received;
- viii. to remember that the crimes of “making” and “distributing” illegal images, ie of anyone under 18 considered to be sexual in nature, or bestiality or extreme adult pornography simply means clicking to open and view an image received or found, and forwarding or saving it
- ix. not to respond to text messages, phone calls emails or social networking that could be regarded as bullying in nature — those that are in any way abusive, intimidating or otherwise malicious and unwelcome;
- x. to report receipt of such communication immediately — the content, time, date and any caller identification (or that the number was withheld or made unavailable) should all be noted; if at all possible the whole communication should be kept and saved; most social networking sites now have a facility to report unwanted communication in real time to be wary of opening files that come from people who are not known ‘in the real world’;
- xi. to regard as online friends only those who are already known as friends ‘in the real world’; the Internet allows people to pretend very easily to be somebody they are not.

Anything viewed on a computer screen can be captured by pressing the *Print Screen* key, which places the contents of the screen on the clipboard. From there it can be pasted into a blank *Word* document which should then be saved.

Pupils need to be aware that they are not granted privacy to send obscene or abusive e-mails or post malicious material on the internet from school. The College retains its right to monitor emails and other messages sent from its own network. This is in line with practice elsewhere: most employers warn that emails sent from work can be read.

Responsibility for allowing offensive material to remain on an internet site rests with the person who set up and 'owns' the site as much as with the writer of the material. Pupils must accept the implications of creating an opportunity for others to post comments about a third party.

The ability to insult or otherwise abuse or take advantage of other people by this remote means, in public and with the potential to reach a mass audience, is proving to be one of the most unwelcome downsides of the rapid development of electronic communications. The College will not condone such action, even when it is undertaken from the privacy of a pupil's own home.

Pupils and staff should always bear in mind that information concerning themselves and their activities that are available on the internet and social networking sites will be accessed by universities and potential employers, who will take such information into account before considering making any offer.

Always use adequate privacy settings, and think whether you would be happy if an image could be seen by your mother, partner, employer or children in 10 years' time.

Pupils who feel they are experiencing cyber bullying of one kind or another should contact their phone network provider, internet service provider or social networking site. Details of how to do this are published by the Anti-Bullying Network.

Advice is available on firefly relating to removing images online, as well as child sexual exploitation.

### **Awareness of bullying**

A pupil's behaviour or a self-imposed change of habit may provide tell-tale signs that he or she is being bullied. Any sudden change of behaviour may indicate that all is not well, but listed below are particular changes of habit or behaviour that those who maintain a special interest in a pupil's well-being (parents, pastoral staff and friends) should watch out for.

A pupil who is being bullied may

- i. be frightened of walking alone around the school site
- ii. be reluctant to spend time in unsupervised 'public' spaces (such as lockerbases),
- iii. alter his/her usual routine,
- iv. become withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence,
- v. start stammering,
- vi. run away and even attempt or threaten suicide,
- vii. cry him/herself to sleep at night or have nightmares,
- viii. feel ill in the morning,
- ix. become quieter, look paler and less lively,
- x. get laughed at by others,
- xi. begin to do poorly in school work,
- xii. continually 'lose' money or possessions,
- xiii. ask for money or start stealing money (to pay the bully),
- xiv. have possessions become damaged,
- xv. have unexplained cuts or bruises,
- xvi. become hungry (being afraid to go to meals),
- xvii. become aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable,
- xviii. bully other children or siblings,
- xix. be frightened to say what is wrong,
- xx. frequently retreat to the Medical Centre or go 'off-games',
- xxi. offer improbable explanations for any of the above.

- xxii. be unwilling to go to school ('school phobic')
- xxiii. be frightened of walking to or from school or of entering the school campus,
- xxiv. not want to travel with other pupils on a school coach,
- xxv. beg to be driven to school,
- xxvi. begin truanting,
- xxvii. come home with clothes torn or books damaged.

These changes of behaviour could have any number of other causes, but the responsible adult to whose attention they are brought will need to consider the possibility of bullying and conduct further investigations with appropriate discretion.

### **Dealing with bullying**

As a school St George's College takes bullying seriously. Pupils and parents must have the confidence to know that they will be supported when bullying is reported. Only by challenging bullying — demonstrating to all that bullying will not be tolerated and making clear to bullies that their behaviour has been unacceptable — can the College hope to fulfil its commitment to improving steadily the safety and happiness of all its pupils. Watching and doing nothing helps the bully: the College does not support in any way the 'culture of silence' prevalent amongst pupils, which merely protects and encourages the bully.

A pupil who is being bullied should

- i. try to stay calm and appear to be as confident as possible;
- ii. not blame him/herself for what is happening;
- iii. address the bullies and tell them firmly and clearly that he/she would like them to stop;
- iv. Use of a simple statement such as "I have had enough; I want you to stop doing/saying that" is sufficient to make it clear to the bullies that their actions amount to harassment and are not at all welcome. It may not bring about a stop to the bullying, but it will make the process of dealing with it later far more straightforward.
- v. move away from the situation as quickly as possible; report the incident to a teacher as soon as possible; tell parents and trusted friends.

A pupil reporting an incidence of bullying must be clear about

- i. what happened;
- ii. who was involved;
- iii. who else saw what was happening;
- iv. where it happened;
- v. what action, if any, has already been taken;
- vi. how often the same sort of thing has happened before.

Some allegations of bullying may turn out to be false or exaggerated. However, whatever may have occurred before regarding similar incidents, perhaps involving the same pupil(s), all reported cases of bullying will be treated seriously and not dismissed without at least some investigation being carried out.

Parents who contact the College, occasionally in some distress, to report that their child has been bullied must also have their concerns taken seriously. The member of staff with whom contact is made — usually the Tutor or HoY — must recognise that the parent may be angry and upset, and will need to keep an open mind: bullying can be hard to detect, so a lack of staff awareness should never be taken as proof that there has been no bullying.

### **Procedure**



- i. Allegations of bullying would in the first instance normally be brought to the attention of the pupils' Tutor or Head of Year, who will report all but petty and inconsequential differences of opinion to the Deputy Head, Pastoral.
- ii. After conducting preliminary investigations the Deputy Head, Pastoral will refer the allegations and her own findings to the Head.
- iii. A full account of what took place will be obtained through interviews and discussions, normally with Tutor/HOY of the pupils involved in attendance. A written record of all such interviews and discussions will be made.
- iv. Parents of the pupils involved will be kept informed of the progress of investigations and may be invited to attend a meeting with the Deputy Head, Pastoral.
- v. When dealing with serious cases of bullying that could amount to criminal action (usually defined as offences against the person) the College reserves the right to involve the police.
- vi. In serious Safeguarding cases, the school will also inform Children's Services, as appropriate.
- vii. A record of the incident will be kept on the central bullying log (more extensive notes will be kept by the member of staff dealing with the investigation, likely to be the Head of Year.

### **Outcomes**

- i. Support and guidance will be offered to pupils who have been bullied with the aim of restoring confidence and self-esteem, developing assertiveness and preventing any recurrence.
- ii. The bully (bullies) may be asked to offer a genuine apology.
- iii. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour. Appropriate pastoral support will be given. It is important that pupils see themselves as a key part of the solution to the problem.
- iv. Any other children affected by the bullying will also be supported by the Pastoral team.
- v. Appropriate punishments will be meted out, which for serious cases could include temporary or even permanent exclusion.
- vi. If possible and where appropriate, the pupils will be reconciled and action taken to repair damage done.
- vii. Relationships between the pupils will be monitored to ensure that bullying is not repeated.

### **Recording**

The HoYs will keep a log of all incidents that are brought to their attention which is overseen by the Deputy Head, Pastoral and Headmistress. In line with the College's Safeguarding Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy the Deputy Head, Pastoral will meet with Mrs Karen Patterson to ensure effective practice of these Policies.

### **Outside organisations that offer advice on bullying**

Parents and pupils may find useful some of the following links to outside organizations that deal with bullying issues, but should note that the College cannot accept responsibility for the content or availability of any of these sites. They are offered without any particular recommendations, though some carry more governmental authority than others.

ChildLine **0800 1111** [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)  
 Kidscape [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)  
 The Anti-Bullying Alliance  
[www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.net](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.net)  
 Beatbullying [www.beatbullying.org](http://www.beatbullying.org)  
 Parentline Plus [www.parentlineplus.org.uk](http://www.parentlineplus.org.uk)

Cyberbullying  
 Childnet International  
 Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre [www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk)  
 CEOP for young people [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)  
 Digizen  
 Internet Watch Foundation (report child sexual abuse online) [www.iwf.org.uk](http://www.iwf.org.uk)  
 Stonewall  
 Show Racism the Red card  
 Kick it Out  
 Anne Frank Trust

Most of these organizations will offer advice over the telephone but have different contact numbers for children, parents and others. With the obvious exception of an emergency call to ChildLine, the website of each one is the best place to start. It should also be noted that there are many people within school that pupils or parents can talk to if they wish.

### **Evaluation**

This policy and its practical workings will be evaluated annually, and changes made as appropriate, based on experience. Changes may be based during the school year, if appropriate.

Student feedback is also sought through questionnaires and in PSHE sessions, and parental feedback through questionnaires at Parents' Evenings.

### **This policy should be displayed in:**

S:\ SGW Policy_and_Procedure_Index	College website
Firefly	