



## Anti-Bullying Policy

### Statement of intent

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly, supportive and safe environment for all of our students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. The College mission is 'to promote international education and understanding' and this ethos encourages a safe environment where fairness and respect are valued and prejudice challenged. Every learner at St. Clare's, Oxford should feel safe to learn and socialise. Each should be safe from victimisation and discrimination in class or outside, in the residences and on activities and excursions.

Bullying, this includes cyber-bullying too, is anti-social behaviour that affects everyone. It is unacceptable at St. Clare's and will not be tolerated. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to report incidents and know that they will be dealt with sensitively and effectively.

### Objectives of this policy

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff should have an understanding of what bullying is, should know what the College policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All students and parents should know what the College policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a College we take bullying seriously. We seek to create a culture of openness where students and parents feel reassured that they can raise concerns with any member of staff at the College. Students and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.
- This policy refers to inter-student bullying only. Student-staff relationships are covered in the staff Code of Conduct.

### What is bullying?

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying, as opposed to conflict, involves repeated orchestrated power over someone weaker either by an individual or more typically by a group through physical intimidation, verbal insults and threats, extortion and exclusion. Typically, this manifests itself in schools where an individual orchestrates a group to intimidate and exclude an individual in order to build their own status, self-esteem and sense of power over an extended period of time.

Bullying can be:

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|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Emotional</i></li> </ul> | being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding/damaging possessions, commenting on someone's appearance or intelligence), using threatening gestures, sending anonymous hate mail (e.g. by mobile phone text messaging or e-mail) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Physical</i></li> </ul>  | pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence  |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Verbal</i></li> </ul>     | name-calling, sarcasm, banter, spreading rumours, teasing, insults, threats and ridicules  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Cyber</i></li> </ul>      | by mis-use of social websites, mobile telephones, text messages, photographs and email (see Appendix C which is specific to cyberbullying) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Sexual</i></li> </ul>     | unwanted physical contact or sexually suggestive and/or abusive comments   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Homophobic</i></li> </ul> | because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Disability</i></li> </ul> | because of, or focussing on a person's disability, learning difficulty or special educational need   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Racial</i></li> </ul>     | because of, or focussing on a person's race, religion or culture   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Gender</i></li> </ul>     | because of, or focusing on a person's gender   |

### Why is it important to respond to bullying?

No one deserves to be a victim of bullying; everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Bullying can be very serious, on occasion causing psychological damage and even suicide. Students who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

We have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

### Our response to bullying

It can be argued that an overly punitive reaction to bullying will not reduce the number of bullying incidents in the long term and may in fact reinforce bullying as an approach to life. An immediate sanction may relieve the victim for a short period of time, though it may increase anger and resentment towards the victim. If bullying is based on power and intimidation then a bully may see sanctions as being overpowering and intimidating (albeit by those in authority and for the right motive).

Our first response to an incident of bullying takes into account our ethos of non-confrontation and attempts to ease tension between the victim and the bully through a process of mediation. The PSHE programme, Personal Tutor hour, House Meetings, 'Healthy World, Healthy College, Healthy You' programme and Tuesday year group meetings build on this ethos. During PSHE sessions, the issue of bullying is discussed and awareness is raised while 'Healthy World, Healthy College, Healthy You' programme, PT hour, housemeetings and Tuesday year group meetings put emphasis on building positive relationships in order to build a happy, harmonious and healthy community .

We try to build tolerance and understanding into everything that we do.

Where attempts at mediation do not work and bullies refuse to co-operate with this process and/or continue with bullying, then it may be necessary to adopt a punitive approach to ensure that victims of bullying are protected.

### **Procedures**

1. When staff observe or are informed of incidents of bullying, they will take immediate action to stop any incident in progress. A clear written account of the incident will be made by the member of staff involved and passed to the Personal Tutor(s) of the student(s). The Personal Tutor(s) will advise appropriate subject teachers or boarding staff and will inform the Assistant Principal, Pastoral. A clear written account of the incident will be made by staff involved (including statements from the bullied student and bully) on CPOMS. VPP and APP will get a notification about this record.
2. If the problem persists, Personal Tutors will again be informed and will advise appropriate subject teachers or boarding staff and will inform the Assistant Principal, Pastoral.
3. In cases of serious bullying, the incident will be dealt with by the Assistant Principal, Pastoral or Vice Principal, Pastoral.
4. Any new information or statement must be added to CPOMS promptly.
5. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly. The victim must be given time to discuss what happened and their response.
6. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change his/her behaviour. The member of staff involved will speak with the bully. This will probably be more effective if some time has elapsed since the incident. While the facts must be established, it is more important to focus on the impact the bullying behaviour has had on the student who was bullied rather than the emphasis being only on blame. The reasons behind the need of the bully to intimidate others must also be investigated. Agreement must be reached on how the bully will behave in relation to the victim and to others generally.
7. If the bullying involves a group, they may be spoken to as a whole, concentrating on the impact of the bullying on the victim. The meeting should not include the victim unless it is clear that the bullies genuinely feel remorse and that the anger and fear of the victim has subsided. The meeting should conclude with agreement being reached on how the bullies will behave in relation to the victim and to others generally.
8. The bully (bullies) may be asked to make a sincere apology, verbally or in writing.
9. In serious cases, parents of those bullied and bullying will be informed and may be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.
10. In serious instances e.g. violence and theft and/or when criminal acts have been committed, police and/or Children's Social Care may be consulted.

See also Appendix C: Student Support

### **Outcomes**

If the mediation process fails and/or the incidents of bullying are repeated or severe, the following disciplinary steps can be taken:

1. Other disciplinary measures e.g. banning students from areas of College (residence of the student bullied) and/or gating may be imposed.
2. In serious and/or persistent cases, suspension, exclusion and/or police involvement will be considered.

### **Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

College will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. Action will be taken, as appropriate, to address any problems identified as a result of this monitoring process. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school. Student feedback will be sought at regular intervals through the PSHE programme and as part of the survey on student life.

It is noted that the provisions of Section 175 of the Education Act place a general duty on schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in our care and, as such, staff will adhere to other related school policies, i.e. Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy, e-Policy, Health and Safety, Equal Opportunities & Dignity at Work etc.

**Most recent review and/or amendment****VPP September 2022****Seen & approved by Governors October 2021****Appendix A: Cyberbullying**

This is sending or posting harmful or cruel text or images using the Internet or other digital communication devices. It is the use of ICT, commonly a mobile 'phone or the internet, deliberately to upset someone else.

- It can be used to carry out all the different types of bullying; an extension of face-to-face bullying
- It can also go further in that it can invade home/personal space and can involve a greater number of people
- It can take place across age groups and school staff and other adults can be targeted
- It can draw bystanders into being accessories
- It includes: threats and intimidation; harassment or 'cyber-stalking'; vilification/defamation; exclusion or peer rejection; impersonation; unauthorised publication of private information or images ('happy-slapping'); upskirting, and manipulation

Cyberbullying differs from "ordinary" bullying and can have a far greater impact because of a number of factors including:

- Invasion of personal space – the victim can never escape it
- The potential anonymity of the bully
- The ability to broadcast upsetting messages and images rapidly to a potentially huge audience and to continue to do so repeatedly over a long period of time
- Other students, who may not normally become involved in bullying behaviour, may be drawn in unwittingly by, for example, forwarding or circulating an image or message. Of course, everyone is entitled to their private life and to freedom of expression but students must consider whether the material they are sending, or forwarding, may cause upset.

**Categories of cyberbullying**

1. Text message bullying involves sending unwelcome texts that are threatening or cause discomfort.
2. 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.
3. 'Sexting' is defined as the production and/or sharing of sexual photos and videos of and by young people who are under the age of 18. It includes nude or nearly nude images and/or sexual acts. It is also referred to as 'youth produced sexual imagery'. 'Sexting' does not include the sharing of sexual photos and videos of under-18 year olds with or by adults; that would be a form of child sexual abuse and must be referred to the police.
4. Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm.
5. 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.
6. 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.
7. Chat room bullying involves sending menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in a web-based chat room.
8. Bullying through instant messaging (IM) is an Internet-based form of bullying where children and young people are sent unpleasant messages as they conduct real-time conversations online (i.e. Facebook, MSN, Bebo etc.).
9. Bullying via websites includes the use of defamatory blogs (web logs), personal websites and online personal polling sites. Students who set up website pages and invite others to post derogatory comments about a student.

There has also been a significant increase in social networking sites for young people, which can provide new opportunities for cyberbullying. Students posting fake and/or offensive photographs of the victim via a social networking site, email or mobile phone. Students hacking into social networking sites and removing and circulating material which may be embarrassing or personal.

### **What can you do?**

If you are being bullied, remember bullying is never your fault. It can be stopped and it can usually be traced.

Don't ignore the bullying - tell someone you trust, such as your parent, friend, Personal Tutor, House Parent or a teacher.

Try to keep calm. If you are frightened, try to show it as little as possible. Don't get angry, it will only make the person bullying you more likely to continue.

There is plenty of online advice on how to react to cyberbullying. For example, [www.kidscape.org](http://www.kidscape.org) and [www.wiredsafety.org](http://www.wiredsafety.org) have some useful tips:

### **Text/Video Messaging**

You can turn off incoming messages for a couple of days.

If bullying persists you can change your phone number (ask your Mobile service provider).

Do not reply to abusive or worrying text or video messages - your Mobile service provider will have a number for you to ring or text to report phone bullying. Visit their website for details.

### **Email**

Never reply to unpleasant or unwanted emails.

Don't accept emails or open files from people you do not know.

Ask the school to contact the sender's ISP by writing `abuse@` and then the host, eg. `abuse@hotmail.com`.

### **Web**

If the bullying is on St. Clare's intranet, tell your Personal Tutor, boarding staff/House Parent or a teacher, just as you would if the bullying was face-to-face.

### **Chat Room & Instant Messaging**

Never give out your name, address, phone number, school name or password online. It's a good idea to use a nickname. Do not give out photos of yourself either.

Do not accept emails or open files from people you do not know.

Remember it might not just be people your own age in a chat room. Stick to public areas in chat rooms and get out if you feel uncomfortable.

Think carefully about what you write - don't leave yourself open to bullying.

### **Responding to cyberbullying**

Most cases of cyberbullying will be dealt with through the procedures outlined in the Anti-bullying policy.

- Staff and students should preserve evidence and a record of abuse; save phone messages, record or save-and-print instant messenger conversations, print or produce a screen-grab of social network pages, print, save and forward to staff whole email messages.

- Advise the person being bullied not to retaliate or reply.
- Advise the person to consider what information they have in the public domain.
- Unless the victim sees it as a punishment, they may be advised to change e.g. mobile phone number.
- If hurtful or embarrassing content is being distributed, try to get it removed from the web. If the person who posted it is known, ensure they understand why it is wrong and ask them to remove it. Alternatively, contact the host provider and make a report to get the content taken down.
- Confiscate mobile phone, ask student to delete the offending content and say who they have sent it on to.
- In some cases, the person being bullied may be able to block the person bullying from their sites and services.
- In addition to the disciplinary measures listed above, the bully may have their access to St. Clare's network restricted and/or their laptop or other devices confiscated.

## **Appendix B: Signs and Symptoms**

A student may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a student:

- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to College (school phobic)
- begins truanting
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, nervous or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- feels ill in the morning / feigns illness
- begins to do poorly in school work / inability to concentrate in class
- has possessions go "missing"
- starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has money continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- has started to bully other students
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

## **Appendix C: Student Support**

### **Students who have been bullied will be supported by:**

1. Offering the immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their Personal Tutor, College Nurse, boarding staff, Counsellor or member of staff of their choice.
2. Reassuring the student of continuous College support.

### **Students who have bullied will be helped by:**

1. Discussing what has happened with their Personal Tutor, College Nurse, boarding staff, Counsellor or member of staff of their choice.
2. Discovering why the student became involved.
3. Establishing the wrong doing and need to change.
4. Informing the parents to help change the attitude of the student (in cases of serious bullying).

If possible, the students involved in bullying incidents will be reconciled and supported in identifying coping strategies.



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|-------------------|--|
| Student concerned |  |
| Other Student     |  |
| Parent            |  |
| Teacher           |  |
| Other             |  |
|                   |  |

**4. Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern**

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**5. Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box(es)) \***

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|--|--|-------------------|--|
| <i>Emotional</i>                       |  | <i>Sexual</i>     |  |
| <i>Physical</i>                        |  | <i>Homophobic</i> |  |
| <i>Verbal</i>                          |  | <i>Disability</i> |  |
| <i>Cyber</i>                           |  | <i>Racial</i>     |  |
| <i>Other<br/>(please<br/>specify):</i> |  |                   |  |

**6. Brief Description of the incident**

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**7. Details of actions taken at the time**

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ (of person completing this form)

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

This form should now be submitted to the Personal Tutor(s), House Parent, and/or Assistant Principal, Pastoral or Vice Principal, Pastoral.

**Most recent review and/or amendment**

**VPP September 2022**

**Latest review by the Governors Education Committee October 2021**