



Saint Ambrose College

Anti-Bullying Policy

Revised	To be reviewed
February 2024	February 2025



BULLYING IS UNACCEPTABLE AT SAINT AMBROSE COLLEGE

Bullying is any deliberate, hurtful, upsetting, frightening, humiliating or threatening behaviour by an individual or a group towards other people where there is an imbalance of power. It is repeated over a period of time and it is very difficult for the victims to defend themselves (remember STOP – it happens Several Times On Purpose). Bullying is an act of injustice, it is mean and results in worry, fear, pain and distress to the victim/s. It is contrary to the ethos and values of St Ambrose College which include compassion and concern for all

Statement of Intent: We believe

- Every person in our school is born in God's image and likeness
- Every person in our school should grow and learn and flourish without fear
- Every person is part of our community and has the right to be respected
- Every person in our school has the responsibility to ensure that human rights are respected
- Bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated
- Bullying has two victims the person being bullied and the person bullying and both are worthy of compassion and assistance
- If someone has been a victim or has seen someone being bullied then find a person at school and TELL them so SPEAK OUT and STAND UP against this injustice.





SAINT AMBROSE COLLEGE ANTI-BULLYING POLICY **Statement of Intent**

At St Ambrose College we are committed to providing a warm, caring and safe environment for all our staff and students so that they can learn, work, develop and grow as human beings made in God's image and likeness in a relaxed, secure and motivating environment. The cornerstone of our mission as an Edmund Rice school is the promotion of the 8 Essentials which retain at their core notions of concern, compassion and justice .

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in our school. We take all incidents of bullying seriously. Bullying hurts. No-one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect and pupils who are bullying others need to learn different ways of behaving. Bullying can never be classed as 'Banter'. 'Banter' is what we term child-on-child abuse and directly contradicts Learning Expectation 5 '**We are kind, polite and respectful to everyone and everything within the St.Ambrose College community**'.

At St Ambrose, we acknowledge that bullying does happen from time to time – indeed, it would unrealistic to claim that it does not. When bullying does occur, everyone should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively in accordance with our anti-bullying policy. We are a **TELLING** school. This means that **anyone** who knows that bullying is happening has a duty to tell the staff. Language such as 'I don't want to grass/snitch' is not language in line with our Mission Statement:

“...compassionate and empowered young men who strive for excellence and justice in all they do.”

Or the Eight Essentials:

“Compassion for those in need.”

- **Students that are not co-operative or withhold vital information from staff during an investigation will be dealt a more serious sanction and consequence.**
- Staff time cannot be wasted and the truth always prevails.



Aims and Objectives of this Policy

To ensure that all pupils can learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without the fear of being bullied; to be proactive in minimising bullying behaviours; to investigate all bullying incidents reported to the school; to contribute to the school ethos of an Edmund Rice School and its Eight Essentials which include compassion for the weak, concern for the whole person and the promotion of Justice. All members of the school have a responsibility to recognise bullying when it occurs and take appropriate action in accordance with the school policy. This will happen in the following ways:

- The school will meet the legal requirement for all schools to have an anti-bullying policy in place.
- The school will work closely with other professional agencies to ensure that children stay safe as stated in The Children Act 1989, Equality Act (2010) The Government Green Paper 'Every Child Matters' 2003 (outcome 2) and The Children Act 2004.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents/guardians will have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff will know what the school policy is on bullying and will consistently and swiftly follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents/guardians will know what the school policy is on bullying and what they can do if bullying occurs.
- Pupils and parents/guardians will be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Whole school initiatives (staff training, liturgies, assemblies etc) and proactive teaching strategies (PHSE [Personal, Health & Social Education] lessons,) will be used throughout the school to reduce the opportunities for bullying to occur.
- The caring, compassionate and Catholic ethos of the school and the pastoral care it offers will help create a school environment where everyone can work, play and express themselves, free from the fear of being bullied.



SECTION1: RAISING AWARENESS AND CONSULTATION

A. Establishing a Working Party

It is important that any policy must and should involve a variety of interested parties. To this end in the formation of this policy student and staff voices were elicited and listened to. Students were represented through the inclusion of members of the student voice and staff through to the SLT and pastoral team were also involved in the process.

B. Gathering Information

The Pupil Questionnaire

Pupil surveys take place each year to gather information using a template of questions provided by the anti-bullying alliance.

Confide

Student can report concerns from any desktop computer within the College using the Confide system.

PSHE Resources

The PSHE scheme of work, delivered by teachers in timetabled lessons, includes lessons on the issue of bullying as well as this being a regular topic in House or Year Assemblies. The focus of these resources includes the what, where, who, where, why and how of issues surrounding bullying. National Anti-bullying week in November each year, is also highlighted as a reminder about this issue.

C. Defining Bullying

The collaborative definition of bullying which is our shared understanding of what bullying is:

Bullying is any deliberate, hurtful, upsetting, frightening, humiliating or threatening behaviour by an individual or a group towards other people where there is a clear imbalance of power. It is repeated over a period of time and it is very difficult for the victims to defend themselves (remember STOP – it happens Several Times On Purpose). Bullying is an act of injustice; it is mean and results in worry, fear, pain and distress to the victim/s. It is contrary to the ethos and values of St Ambrose College.



Bullying can be defined to include:

- **Emotional:** being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures), ridicule, humiliation.
- **Verbal:** name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, making personalised rude remarks, making fun of someone
- **Physical:** pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, spitting, punching or any other forms of violence, taking or hiding someone's belongings.
- **Online:** setting up 'hate websites', sending offensive text messages, emails, social media, and the use of mobile phones to cause fear or distress to another person. Circulating or sharing videos, images or chats that cause fear or humiliation.
- **Sexual:** unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- **Any** unfavourable or negative comments, gestures or actions made towards another person that is related to a disability or special educational need that another person may have.
- **Banter:** continuing '**banter**' that is happening several times on purpose is not 'banter' if it causes upset. There is a fine line and therefore it is not something that we as Ambrosians should accept within our community.
- **Prejudice Related Incidents**
(Anything related to a person's protected characteristics such as):
- **Racist:** Racially motivated taunts, graffiti, gestures, making fun of culture and religion and heritage. (Students of the same heritage still **can not** use racist language towards one another).
- **Sexual orientation/homophobic:** because of/or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- **Sex:** Sexist and misogynistic comments about either gender
- **Disability:** Comments and insults about a person's disability or special educational need
- **Religious:** Comments and/or insults remarks about another person's beliefs of religion.
- **Gender:** Comments and insults related to a person's preferred gender identity or preferred pronoun

As a College we aim to prevent bullying related to the protected characteristics in the following ways:

- A thorough PSHE curriculum looking at the Equality Act 2010 and Anti-bullying
- Cultural Calendar to celebrate, educate and raise awareness of important events such as Ramadan and Stephen Lawrence Day to name but two.
- Trained anti-bullying ambassadors
- Restorative practices when bullying takes place
- Clear Behaviour Policy with appropriate sanctions for prejudice related comments and/or abuse



Bullying is not:

It is important to understand that bullying is not the *odd occasion* of falling out with friends, name-calling, arguments or when the occasional trick or joke is played between friends. It is bullying if it is done several times on purpose (STOP). Children sometimes fall out or say things when they are upset. Occasional problems of this kind arise it is not generally classed as bullying. It is an important part of children's development to learn how to deal with the breakdown of friendships, the odd name calling or childish prank. We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships.

D. Where does bullying happen?

It can happen anywhere – in the classroom, in the corridor, in the toilets, in the dining areas, in the playground or online. Bullying may also happen on the way to and from school for example on the school bus. In such cases, the Principal is empowered by law to deal with such incidents. At St Ambrose, we are concerned with our pupils' conduct and welfare outside as well as inside school and we will do what we can to address any bullying issues that occur off the school premises. The following steps may be taken:

- Talk to the local Community Police Officer about problems on the streets
- Talk to the transport companies about bullying on school buses
- Talk to the Head Teachers of other schools whose children may be involved in bullying off the premises
 - Map out safe routes to school for children, linking them to the School Travel Plan
 - Discuss coping strategies with parents
 - Talk to the pupils in lessons and during school assemblies about how to handle or avoid bullying outside of the school premises.

E. Signs and Symptoms

A pupil may indicate, by different signs or behaviour, that he is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and investigate further when a child exhibits any of the following signs:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go on the school
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine/route to school
- begins truanting
- becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning



- begins to underperform in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions go "missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money/snack/sandwiches have been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- starts swearing or using aggressive language for no apparent reason
- is bullying other children or siblings
- 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 as a possibility and should be taken seriously and investigated as soon as possible.



SECTION 2: IMPLEMENTATION

A. What can you do if you are being bullied?

Wherever you are in school, you have the right to feel safe. Nobody has the right to make you feel unhappy. If someone is bullying you, it is important to remember that it is not your fault and there are people who can help you. Strategies to include are listed below:

- REPORT IT.
- When you tell an adult about the bullying give them as many facts as you can (What? Who? Where? When? Why? How?).
- Try not to let the bully know that he/she is making you feel upset.
- Try to ignore them.
- Be assertive - stand up to them, look at them directly in the eye, tell them to stop! and mean it.
- Stay in a group; bullies usually pick on individuals.
- Get away as quickly as you can.
- Tell someone you can trust – it can be a teacher, a teaching assistant, a midday supervisor, a parent, a friend, a brother, a sister or a relative.
- If you are scared, ask a friend to go with you when you tell someone.
- If you don't feel you can talk to someone about it, write it down
- Keep a diary of what's been happening and refer to it when you tell someone
- Keep on speaking out until someone listens and helps you.
- Never be afraid to do something about it and quick.
- Don't suffer in silence.
- Don't blame yourself for what is happening.

PEOPLE YOU CAN TURN TO IN SCHOOL.

Ideally each student should be able to turn to someone they trust in school to inform them of incidents of bullying.

FORM TUTOR

Form Tutors provide daily guidance to their form group, meeting each morning for tutor time. This time is used to praise achievements, reinforce behaviour expectations and discuss any current issues affecting students. Form tutors stay with their form group from Year 7 to year 11 to ensure all students are well known and to support the development of a trusting relationship.

HEAD OF YEAR

The pastoral care of the College is underpinned by the excellent work of the Head of Year. These staff will address issues of student welfare during assemblies and so enable students to find them approachable. In addition, the Head of Year are the usual line of liaison between the school and parent concerning student welfare and will usually seek to involve the parents at an early stage to establish a positive and proactive relationship with the parent/family.



MEMBER OF SENIOR MANAGEMENT

The SLT are high profile across the school site and during the school day. Staff are on duty at lunchtime and during breaks. The open design of the building means that all behaviour can be seen and monitored easily by staff. In addition the SLT regularly deliver school assemblies where issues of justice; concern for others and the importance of making good choices, are delivered. In short the SLT are visible and approachable for students to come to discuss issues such as bullying. Students can do so under the assurances that all bullying claims will be thoroughly investigated and dealt with under the schools pastoral and discipline procedures

A TEACHER WITHIN THE SCHOOL

Often a student will be able to approach a favourite teacher who may not be their form tutor. If they do so each teacher will deal with this promptly and bring the matter to the appropriate colleague.

OTHER ADULTS WITHIN THE SCHOOL

St Ambrose benefits from the excellent work of colleagues who may not necessarily be employed as teaching staff. These can include the school chaplain, office support staff, site manager and behaviour support staff, cleaning/catering staff. Under some circumstances students may well feel more comfortable approaching these staff; at times it is these colleagues who can witness examples of bullying and feel competent and comfortable to report such issues to those colleagues who are equipped to deal with such issues.

SENIOR STUDENTS/HOUSE PREFECTS

At St Ambrose College senior students act as prefects. Prefects have various roles around the school site and on occasion may be approached by students for help and support. Prefects take their duties seriously and this may involve offering support to students who feel they are being victims of bullying. Prefects are confident enough in allowing students to approach them and will pass on the details on any anti-bullying issues to the appropriate staff.

PEERS/FELLOW STUDENTS

A major aspect of any Edmund Rice school is the building of a community; this community can and should be built on friendship. The Golden Rule: *“treat others as you would want them to treat you.”* (Mt 7:12). Students may want to raise issues of bullying with friends in their class or year; any good friend will support that person through listening, and then by advising them that the issue needs to be raised with an appropriate adult within the College.

PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Often it is a family member who will notice a change in the behaviour of a victim of bullying. Since the school takes great care to develop good relationships with the family the family should not hesitate to contact the House Tutor/Head of Year of the school who will deal with the issues and be the link between the family and the school



What can you do if you see someone else being bullied?

B. The role of the bystander.

Ignoring bullying is cowardly and unfair to the victim. Staying silent means the bully has won and this failure to act gives them more power. There are ways you can help without putting yourself in danger. The pupils should be aware of the following strategies:

- Don't smile or laugh at the situation.
- Don't rush over and take the bully on yourself.
- Don't allow yourself to be drawn into it.
- If safe to do so, encourage the bully to stop bullying.
- If you can, let the bully know you do not like his behaviour.
- Shout for help.
- Let the victim(s) know that you are going to get help.
- Tell a member of staff as soon as you can.
- Try and befriend the person being bullied.
- Encourage the person to talk to someone and get help.
- Ask someone you trust about what to do.

C. Bullying of children with Special Educational Needs

St Ambrose College is an inclusive school. We provide a secure, accepting, safe and stimulating environment where everyone is valued for who they are. In our school we have some pupils who have specific learning disabilities and/or communication difficulties. Everyone involved in the school is very aware that these children can be especially vulnerable to bullying; we are therefore particularly vigilant at all times. High attaining pupils who may have particular gifts or talents can also be affected by bullying. Staff will treat this type of bullying as seriously and in the same way as any other type of bullying.

D. Procedures for reporting and responding to bullying incidents

All staff will respond calmly and consistently to all allegations and incidents of bullying at St Ambrose College. They will be taken seriously by all staff and dealt with impartially and promptly. All those involved will have the opportunity to be heard. Staff will protect and support all children involved whilst allegations and incidents are investigated and resolved. The following step-by-step procedure will be used for reporting and responding to bullying allegations or incidents:

- Report all bullying allegations and incidents to staff.
- Staff will make sure the victim(s) is and feels safe.
- Appropriate advice will be given to help the victim(s).
- Staff will listen and speak to all children involved about the incident
 - separately.
- The problem will be identified and possible solutions suggested.
- Staff will attempt to adopt a problem-solving approach which will move
 - pupils on from them having to justify their behaviour.
- Appropriate action will be taken quickly to end the bullying behaviour or
 - threats of bullying.
- Staff will reinforce to the bully that their behaviour is unacceptable.



- The bully/bullies will be made to face their own behaviours and be asked to genuinely apologise.
- If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.
- An attempt will be made, and support given, to help the bully (bullies) understand and change his/their behaviour.
- The incidents will be recorded by staff on SIMS and the standard incident reports sheet and records will be kept on file.
- Parents will be informed and may be invited to come into school for a meeting to discuss the problem.
- After the incident has been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.
- Bullying incidents will be discussed regularly at staff meetings.
- If necessary and appropriate, the Child Protection Officer in school, Social Services or the Police may be consulted.

The following sanctions may be used:

The students within the school have discussed this question in their classes and some of the sanctions they suggested are included in the list below:

- Apologise to the victim(s) verbally or in writing
- Lose privileges such as access to clubs or teams
- Spend break-times and lunchtimes with an adult (to complete a task reflecting on the impact of their actions)
- Go on a self-improvement report
- Be removed from class and work in isolation
- Report to the Principal or Vice Principal
- Be withdrawn from participation in school visits, clubs and events not essential to the curriculum.
- Fixed term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion

E. Strategies for the prevention and reduction of bullying

Whole school initiatives and proactive teaching strategies will be used throughout the College to develop a positive learning environment with the aim of reducing the opportunities for bullying to occur. These include:

- Following the learning expectations as set out in the behaviour policy.
- Training of Anti-bullying Ambassadors.
- Involving the whole school community in writing and reviewing the policy, through the work of the student Council
- Undertaking regular questionnaires and surveys to monitor the extent of bullying in the school and the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy
- Making national anti-bullying week a high profile event each year
- Raising awareness through regular anti-bullying assemblies
- PHSE (Personal, Health & Social Education) scheme of work to support this policy
- Setting up of a circle of friends support network where a small group of pupils volunteer to help and support individual experiencing difficulties
- Using drama activities and role-plays to help pupils to be more assertive



- Establish College peer-mentoring run by senior students (Sixth Form)
- Organising regular anti-bullying training for all staff



SECTION 3: MONITORING /EVALUATING

To ensure this policy is effective, it will be regularly monitored and evaluated. Questionnaires completed by the whole school community, together with surveys, focus groups, student's and parents'/guardians' views. Bullying incident forms will be used to gauge the effectiveness of the policy. Following an annual review any amendments will be made to the policy and everyone informed.

Sources of further information, support and help

There is a vast amount of information and guidance available about bullying that can provide a wide range of support and help. The following list is just a small selection of the support available that teachers, parents and children have found useful.

Name of organisation	Telephone number	Website
Act Against Bullying	0845 230 2560	www.actagainstbullying.com
Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)	0207 704 3370	www.ace-ed.org.uk
Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA)	0207 843 1901	www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
Anti-bullying Network	0131 651 6103	www.antibullying.net
Beatbullying	0845 338 5060	www.beatbullying.org.uk
Bully Free Zone	01204 454 958	www.bullyfreezone.co.uk
Bullying Online	020 7378 1446	www.bullying.co.uk
Childline	0800 1111	www.childline.org.uk
Kidscape	020 7730 3300 (general enquiry number) 08451 205 204 (helpline for adults only)	www.kidscape.org.uk
NSPCC	0207 825 2500	www.nspcc.org.uk
Parentline Plus	0808 800 2222	www.parentlineplus.org.uk
The Children's Legal Centre	0800 783 2187	www.childrenslegalcentre.com
The Office of the Children's Commissioner	0844 800 9113	www.childrenscommissioner.org.uk