



Saint Ambrose College

Anti-Bullying Policy

Revised	To be reviewed
January 2025	January 2026

Objectives of this Policy:

This policy is based on the Department for Education's guidance, "Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for Headteachers, Staff, and Governing Bodies" (July 2017), and outlines the measures St. Ambrose College will take to prevent and address bullying. It has been developed with input from the entire school community, and we are dedicated to fostering an anti-bullying culture where bullying is not tolerated.

Every member of the school community has a responsibility to identify bullying when it occurs and take appropriate action in line with the school policy. This will be carried out 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 understand 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.

Definitions:

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 can be defined as:

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.

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 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 must not use racist language towards one another).

Sexual orientation/homophobic: because of/or focusing on the issue of sexuality. Sex: Sexist and misogynistic comments.

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.

Bullying which occurs outside school premises:

School staff members have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises. Sections 90 and 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 say that a school's disciplinary powers can be used to address pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff, but only if it would be reasonable for the school to regulate pupils' behaviour in those circumstances. This may include bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport and online.

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. It is an important part of children's development to learn how to deal with the breakdown of friendships and develop social skills to repair relationships.

To prevent bullying, we will:

- Create and support an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration and care for others.
- Follow the learning expectations as set out in the behaviour policy.
- Proactively gather student's views on the extent and nature of bullying through surveys and student voice.
- Follow the PSHE programme of study, delivered by teachers in timetabled lessons.
- Encourage students in each year group to become anti-bullying ambassadors.
- Involve students in anti-bullying week campaigns.
- Encourage students to be upstanders and not bystanders and to report bullying to a trusted adult through House and Year assemblies.
- Use peer-mentoring run by senior students (Sixth Form).
- Provide termly information in the school newsletter to raise awareness and engage with parents.
- Use restorative practice to resolve friendship issues and develop students' social and emotional skills.
- Train all staff to identify all forms of bullying, follow the school policy and procedures.
- Celebrate successes and achievements to promote and build a positive school.
- Publicise the details of help lines and websites.

If bullying is reported or suspected, we will:

- Deal with the incident quickly.
- Talk to all the students involved separately to find out what has been happening and why.
- Ensure a robust plan of support is made available to the victim.

- Explain to the student who is bullying why their behaviour is wrong and try to help them to see this for themselves. Be clear that bullying is not tolerated at school.
- Expect the student who is bullying to engage in a restorative process to enable them to take responsibility for their actions and to agree to stop their behaviour. A restorative meeting may take place, depending on the circumstances.
- Tell the parents/carers involved and keep them informed of how the incident is being dealt with and whether the bullying has stopped.
- Address with other young people who may have been bystanders, observing or supporting the bullying behaviour, how they could intervene to stop bullying behaviour in future.
- Continue to monitor the situation and intervene if the bullying appears to be carrying on or to have started again.
- Record all incidents of bullying and prejudice-based language.

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).
- Complete a self-improvement report.
- Be removed from class and work in isolation.
- Report to the Principal, Vice Principal or Head of Year.
- Be withdrawn from participation in school visits and events not essential to the curriculum.
- Fixed term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion
- **Students that are not co-operative or withhold vital information from staff during an investigation will receive a more serious sanction and consequence.**

Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

A student 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 schoolwork
- 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.

How to report bullying:

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

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 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.

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 report such issues to the appropriate staff.

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 bullied. Prefects will pass on the details on any bullying issues to the appropriate staff.

Anti-bullying ambassadors

We offer all students the opportunity to be Anti-bullying ambassadors. These student leaders meet twice a month to receive training and feedback on relevant issues. Anti-Bullying ambassadors can be identified by their badge and their profile is raised through posters around the school and through assemblies to ensure students know who they are and so can approach them for help and support.

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. Parents or guardians should not hesitate to contact the Form Tutor who will liaise with the Head of Year to 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?

In our school community, we encourage all students to be **upstanders** rather than **bystanders** when it comes to bullying. An upstander is someone who takes action to stop bullying, whether by supporting the person being bullied, standing up to the person bullying, or reporting the situation to a trusted adult. Upstanders help create a safer, more respectful environment for everyone.

A bystander, on the other hand, is someone who witnesses bullying but does not take action. By choosing to remain silent, a bystander may unintentionally allow the bullying to continue. We believe that by standing up against bullying, we can work together to prevent harm and promote kindness and respect for all students.

Students 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.

Advice for Parents

If your child is bullied:

- Take time to listen to your child and stay calm.
- Explain to them that bullying is unacceptable and that no one should have to put up with it.
- Write down what your child has said. If it involves cyberbullying, keep any evidence of emails and texts.
- Encourage your child to talk to their teacher or someone at the School.
- Never intervene with other children or children's parents, but let the School know.
- Contact the School as soon as possible to let us know your concerns. The School will take any incident of bullying extremely seriously and will deal with it quickly to find out why it has happened and to prevent it happening again.

Monitoring and Evaluation

To ensure this policy is effective, it will be regularly monitored and evaluated. Questionnaires completed by the whole school community, together with surveys and focus groups. 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.

Support

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Childline: www.childline.org.uk
- Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk
- Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
- Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk

Cyber Bullying

- Childnet International: www.childnet.com
- Digizen: www.digizen.org
- Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk
- Think U Know: www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk
- CEOP: <https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>