



# ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

*Reviewed and updated autumn 2024 | Next review autumn 2025*

## Introduction

St Nicholas' School places a strong emphasis on creating an environment where children can enjoy School and be happy. We are committed to maintaining and promoting the acceptance of the individual with all their talents and imperfections. Good behaviour and mutual respect underpin this.

This policy was written in response to and with regard for the Department for Education's guidance 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (DfE Guidance 2017) and will be reviewed considering any new government guidance issued.

At St Nicholas' School, we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so that they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our School. If bullying does occur, all pupils should feel able to tell someone and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively, in accordance with this policy.

Bullying may be a criminal offence. For example, harassment, intimidatory, threatening behaviour and damage to another's property may be a criminal offence which has repercussions outside of the School. Malicious electronic communications (such as a text or email) which intends to cause distress or conveys an indecent message is also an offence. The School will consider whether it is appropriate to notify external agencies, such as the police, where they have suspicions or concerns that a criminal offence has or will be committed, or bullying behaviour poses a serious threat to members of the school community or the public.

This policy also covers bullying on school trips and bullying by a St Nicholas' School pupil of another St Nicholas' School pupil outside of School, including cyber bullying, as far as it is reasonable and practicable for the school to investigate and intervene.

## Aims

The aims of this policy are:

- to prevent bullying and maintain and promote a positive environment where all pupils can thrive and be happy
- to support the bully and the victim with the aim of deterring bullying behaviour
- comply with the School's equality duties, under the Equality Act 2010.

## Objectives

- to ensure that all pupils receive an education free from humiliation, oppression and abuse
- to create a secure and safe environment for all pupils in our care so that parents may send their children to School in the confident knowledge that they will be protected from bullies
- to give all staff, governors, pupils and parents a greater understanding of bullying and how to deal with it
- to provide clear procedures for reporting and dealing with bullying
- to encourage a culture and ethos within which bullying is seen to be totally unacceptable
- to resolve bullying issues quickly in a way that protects the pupils involved and reinforces the values of good behaviour in and out of school
- to foster positive attitudes towards individuals who are disabled and towards religious, cultural or ethnic groups in and outside the school community
- to eliminate unlawful discrimination and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.

## Definition

Bullying refers to behaviour, which is designed to make another feel hurt, undermined and humiliated. It may be repeated over time with the intention of hurting others. It may be motivated by prejudice against race, religion, culture, sex or on the grounds of someone's disability of special educational needs, transgender, sex and sexual orientation, health or appearance.

Bullying behaviour can include (but is not limited to):

- PHYSICAL – pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching etc.
- VERBAL – name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, insulting/offensive remarks.
- EMOTIONAL – including tormenting (i.e., hiding books, threatening gestures), being unfriendly, using silent treatment, unfriendly body language to upset others and unwanted overfriendly behaviour.
- CYBER BULLYING – using the internet, social networking sites, mobile phones or other electronic devices to deliberately upset others. More information can be found in the ICT and Internet Safety Policy.

Physical assault to varying degrees of severity is distressing but verbal and emotional abuse can be equally painful.

Peer on peer abuse will never be tolerated or excused as 'banter' or 'part of growing up' and is covered in more detail in our Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy.

Bullying will always be dealt with severely. If misbehaviour could be criminal and/or poses a threat to the members of the school community (including the general public), the School will inform the police and social services as appropriate.

## People who bully

People who bully do so for a variety of reasons; sometimes bullying occurs temporarily after a traumatic family event or after experiencing bullying themselves.

Some people become chronic bullies for more long-term reasons; they may enjoy the feeling of power, they may feel insecure or humiliated, they may have been abused, they may feel they don't 'fit in', or they may never have experienced success.

When dealing with incidents of bullying the lead member of staff will consider the reasons why the bullying may have occurred and look to support the student to overcome any challenges they may be facing.

## Preventative Measures

### Whole School

The School aims to create a caring, supportive ethos through its pastoral structure, teaching methods, assemblies, projects, drama, stories, literature, historical events, current affairs and inter-personal relationships. Personal, Social and Health Education and tutor time provide pupils with opportunities to discuss bullying in role-play situations and help them to develop their social skills. Group work and pairing can be used to improve relationships and resolve conflict. Discussions also take place about differences between people and the importance of avoiding prejudiced based language.

The School provides adequate supervision of classrooms, corridors, toilets and external areas of the School accessible to pupils, at break and lunch times. School staff are trained in the identification of bullying and how to deal with it. Prefects are available every day to listen to the concerns of younger pupils.

Discussions with parents may include planning to focus on finding something they can do well, and which gains support and approval from the whole school community.

### Staff

All school staff have a responsibility to understand the principles and purpose of this policy. The School will provide training for teaching staff and those involved with the pastoral care of pupils, so they are aware of the risk and indications of child abuse and bullying and how to deal with cases. All staff, teaching and non-teaching receive training on peer-on-peer abuse as part of their Safeguarding training, which is updated at least annually.

### Intervention

Bullying will always be dealt with severely and in accordance with the School's policy on Pupil Behaviour. Any disciplinary sanctions imposed will reflect the seriousness of the bullying incident. If bullying behaviour persists and/or is particularly severe, the bully may be excluded or suspended from School in accordance with the School's Exclusions, Suspensions and Required Removal Policy.

Where disciplinary measures are applied, they will be applied fairly, consistently and reasonably considering any disabilities or special educational needs a pupil may have or the needs of vulnerable pupils.

Staff should always consider the motive behind bullying behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator. If staff have any reasonable cause to suspect that a pupil is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm the School's Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy should be followed and should, if necessary or appropriate, refer to the School's whistleblowing policy. Even where safeguarding is not

considered to be an issue, the School will consider whether external services need to be informed to support the pupil and help tackle underlying issues, for example, which may have contributed to bullying behaviour.

## Anti-bullying Procedures

This procedure applies in relation to all instances of bullying, including cyber-bullying and bullying outside School of which the School is aware.

Where the victim asks to remain anonymous or does not wish to directly name the bully, it can be difficult to follow up a complaint effectively. All members of the school community have a right to reply and it can be difficult to obtain all points of view without disclosing the full facts. In such cases, staff members will have discussions with all parties involved; however, it may not be possible to get the full picture and impose any sanctions. It is also possible that the victim is identifiable by the alleged bully even if their name is not directly stated, although we will always do our best to keep things confidential if we are requested to do so.

## Pupils

All pupils have a responsibility to report any bullying they experience or see as soon as possible. Being a bystander and turning a blind eye makes you complicit in the bullying.

An anonymous platform is available via the tutor TEAMS page to report concerns. However, without names it can be difficult to effectively follow up and make the bullying stop.

## Parents

If you know or suspect that your son/daughter or another pupil at St Nicholas' School is being bullied, you should contact the School without delay – the class teacher or the Head. No one should have to put up with being bullied and **together** we can put a stop to it. All concerns about bullying will be taken seriously.

If the pupil being bullied or their parents are not satisfied with the action taken by the School under this procedure, they can make a formal complaint by following the School's Complaints Procedure.

## Teachers

Teachers should be aware of the signs of bullying, for example, distress in pupils, deterioration of work, spurious illnesses, unwillingness to come to school, dirty or damaged clothing/property, isolation, possessions "missing", money "lost", the desire to remain with adults, erratic attendance.

If a pupil or parent reports a case of bullying to you, or you suspect bullying is taking place:

- treat it seriously, listen carefully and record the details in writing as soon as possible in order to enable patterns to be identified
- pass the information on to the Head and Deputy Head Pastoral Care as soon as possible
- offer the victim immediate support and help by putting the School's procedure into action

## The Role of the Deputy Head Pastoral Care

The Deputy Head Pastoral Care should take action as soon as possible on receipt of information concerning bullying.

The Deputy Head Pastoral Care will:

- consider the teacher's/pupil's account of the incident and interview all pupils (victims and perpetrators) involved in the alleged bullying and ask them for written accounts
- consider the reason why the bully chose to behave in this way and any support that may be required
- discuss the matter with the Head and agree strategies
- provide the victim(s) with support and reassurance and inform her parents of the situation, ensure that the bully offers an apology and any other appropriate recompense
- strategies agreed with the Head should take into account the previous history of the pupil and whether he/she has ever bullied anyone before, and whenever possible, attempt to reconcile the pupils
- keep a full written record of the incident in order to enable patterns to be identified and also investigation and outcome, incidence of bullying which are based on protected characteristics or involve initiation of individuals into a group or club are highlighted in the records
- inform other staff at weekly briefing, monitor the situation two weeks later, and the next half term, continuing as necessary
- inform the victim, the bully(ies) and parents of all pupils involved how the situation will be monitored, making clear that they should contact the Deputy Head Pastoral Care immediately, if they have any concerns about the matter
- colleagues will be informed if the incident arose in a situation where everyone should be vigilant, for example, recreation areas or the dining hall

## **The Head**

The Head will:

- monitor all cases of bullying to ensure that the correct procedures are being followed
- will deal with serious cases of persistent bullying where suspension or even exclusion is being considered
- consider whether the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) should be informed, and the School's Safeguarding procedures instigated
- inform and involve the police, if appropriate (whilst bullying is not a criminal offence, harassment or threatening behaviour may be deemed to be)
- monitor bullying behaviour and keep a log of all incidents in order to enable patterns to be identified
- review procedures annually, making changes as necessary

- inform the parents of the bully and the bullied to explain the measures taken.

## Sanctions

Bullying of any kind will not be tolerated.

The School uses a range of disciplinary sanctions for bullying behaviour. These include:

- informing parents of the bullying behaviour and inviting the parents and the pupil to attend a meeting with the Head.
- a written and verbal apology to the victim
- Detention
- Internal suspension
- disciplinary action in accordance with the School's Policy on Pupil Behaviour.

Where relevant, the matter may be reported to the police and/or the social services. Bullying based on protected characteristics is taken particularly seriously.

Sanctions will be aimed at: impressing upon the bully that what they have done is unacceptable and deterring them from repeating such behaviour. Therefore, indicating to other pupils that such behaviour is unacceptable. Further support for the bully may be deemed appropriate to help them understand their feelings and correct their behaviour. This could include, but is not limited to, ELSA, counselling or peer mentoring.

## Promotion and review

This policy is reviewed and updated annually by the Head and published on the school website. Every complaint or report of bullying will be recorded on CPOMS which is monitored and reviewed by the Deputy Head Pastoral on a termly basis to identify any patterns in bullying behaviour so that appropriate steps can be taken to address such behaviour.

The policy is promoted and supported through assemblies, PSHE, form time, the pupil planner, drama, literature, stories, historical events, current affairs. Whole staff training has been undertaken. Further training will be explored on a regular basis.

## Help Organisations

Anti-bullying alliance [www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)

Advisory Centre for Education: [ace-ed.org.uk](http://ace-ed.org.uk)

General advice line: 0300 0115 142 Mon to Wed 10am to 1pm term time only

Childline: 0800 1111, [childline.org.uk](http://childline.org.uk)

Children's Legal Centre: 0345 3454345 Mon – Fri: 9am to 8pm, Sat 9am to 12.30pm [childrenlegalcentre.com](http://childrenlegalcentre.com)

KIDSCAPE: 0207 730 3300, [kidscape.org.uk](http://kidscape.org.uk)