St Dunstan's College
SENIOR

PART OF
ST DUNSTAN'S EDUCATION GROUP

ANTI-BULLYING

Policy Owner:	Head of School
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Version Control Information

Reason for Amendment	Role	Date	Main Changes
Annual review	Deputy Head Pastoral	Lent 2025	New template Converted to a Senior School only policy No material amendments necessary
Annual review	Deputy Head Pastoral	Lent 2026	Added related documents to appendix

1. Aims

This policy is applicable to staff, students and parent/carers of St Dunstan's College Senior School ('the school') and aims to ensure all parties are clear on how to try and prevent bullying of any sort, in so far as reasonably practicable, and help staff, students and parents / carers deal with bullying when it occurs.

Our school community is based on an ethos of mutual respect and consideration. To this end, we are committed to providing a safe and happy learning environment for all.

We do not tolerate bullying, harassment, victimisation or discrimination of any sort and work hard to prevent these or tackle them should they arise.

Any member of our community could be impacted by bullying. We consider all instances of bullying equally serious and in turn expect all students, parents / carers and staff to play their part in preventing and tackling bullying.

All members of the school community, including governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, students and parents /carers should understand what bullying is and be familiar with the school policy on bullying. Bullying is an anti-social behaviour which affects everyone; it is unacceptable, and it will not be tolerated.

Everyone in the community has a responsibility to report any incident of bullying that comes to their attention and these reports will always be taken seriously. We encourage all members to speak out if they have a concern about their own or someone else's safety and happiness.

2. Legislation

This policy is based on expectations set out by the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI), and informed by the following legislation:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sep 2024).
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for School Leaders, Staff and Governing Bodies (July 2017)
- Cyber-bullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff (2014)

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 St Dunstan's Education Group

The governing body has ultimate responsibility for pastoral care but will delegate day-to-day responsibility to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), who delegates responsibility to the Head of the Senior School, who line manages the Deputy Head Pastoral.

The governing body has a duty to:

- Review this policy annually
- Ensure the school follows what is articulated within this policy.

3.2 The Head of Senior School

The Head of the Senior School and Deputy Head Pastoral for the Senior School are responsible for managing the expectations of student behaviour. This involves:

- Ensuring all staff in the school follow what is articulated within this framework
- Staff receive sufficient training on how to implement the principles outlined in the policy

3.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for the provision of anti-bullying in the school. Staff will:

- Implement the framework outlined in this policy, including specific roles for tutors and teachers

3.4 Students and parents/carers

Students and parents/carers are responsible for communicating effectively with the school regarding any support that may be required.

4. Definition of Bullying

In line with the guidance from the Department for Education and the Anti-Bullying Alliance, St Dunstan's College defines bullying as the *repetitive*, *intentional* hurting of one person or group by another person or group. Bullying, including cyber-bullying, is a form of child-on-child abuse and will be treated as such. It can involve an imbalance of

power between the individuals concerned. It can happen face to face or online and can lead to psychological damage if unresolved.

Examples of bullying include but are not limited to:

- Physically hurting, harming or humiliating another person or damaging, hiding or taking their property, including money.
- Verbal/written abuse such as name-calling, persistent teasing, insulting, spreading malicious rumours, threats of violence. This includes interactions online.
- Emotional manipulation such as excluding someone or spreading malicious rumours about them, building negative alliances based on gossip, ignoring, tormenting, abusive looks or gestures, deliberate exclusion of an individual.
- Harassment, unpleasant remarks or actions relating to race, religious or cultural differences, gender, sexual orientation (e.g. homophobia), intellectual or other abilities, being adopted or a carer, disabilities or other physical attributes, any derogatory reference to Special Educational Needs or any other protected characteristic.
- Sexual harassment: unwanted or unwelcome physical contact, abusive comments, abusive behaviour and sexist graffiti.
- Cyber-bullying: the use of ICT (for example social media, mobile phones, text messaging, photographs, video and email) in a way that is intended to upset or humiliate others. Cyber-bullying can happen on or off school premises and is dealt with in the same way no matter the location if it involves school students.
- Passive involvement: being a bystander, not informing a teacher, not getting help, not telling. It is important to realise that passive bullying reinforces the power of the bully and makes the bystander partly responsible and thus complicit.
- Indirect involvement: manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone.

Certain vulnerable students are more likely to be the target of bullying because of the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves. For example, those with special educational needs or disabilities, those who are adopted, those who are suffering from a health problem or those with caring responsibilities as well as children with a protected characteristic who are bullied due to prejudice. Any child with a perceived difference could potentially be at risk from bullying.

Bullying is recognised by the school as being a form of child-on-child abuse. It can be emotionally abusive and can cause severe and adverse effects on children's wellbeing, emotional development, and learning.

When there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm' a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern under the Children Act 1989. Where this is the case, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will follow procedures as outlined in our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 and liaise with our local safeguarding partners as necessary.

5. Relational Conflict and friendship issues

Sometimes students can feel hurt or upset because they have fallen out with a friend. This is not the same as bullying. On other occasions students can be affected by a one-off incident of unkind behaviour. This is also not the same as bullying. In both of these cases, similar strategies may be employed to tackle the situation in order to resolve conflict and prevent the situation escalating to bullying.

6. Preventing Bullying

The school will use a variety of educational approaches to promote anti-bullying. Examples include, but are not limited, to the use of:

- Restorative circle practices to build empathy and fellowship between students
- Exploration and celebration of the College values, especially Compassion
- The Stuart curriculum and other forms of PSHEE
- Assemblies
- Presentations/workshops by external agencies, for both students and parents
- From Tutor led discussions e.g. the differences between people and avoiding prejudice-based language
- Peer mentoring

The school will seek to involve parents if they have reported bullying and make sure that students are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders. Parents /carers should feel confident that the school will take any allegation of bullying seriously.

The school will ensure staff receive training on the contents of this policy, on e-safety and cyber-bullying, on child-on-child abuse more widely, on restorative practice, on legal

responsibilities and on supporting students with individual needs that could make them vulnerable to bullying.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Governors annually. The Governors should consider whether the procedures are satisfactory and being properly enacted. The implementation of the policy will be checked, monitored, reviewed and evaluated.

7. Dealing with Bullying Incidents and Record Keeping

The school adopts a restorative approach to tackling bullying in the first instance. Bullies may have complex reasons for their behaviour and the initial stages of this approach are focused on restorative justice, rather than sanction-based. The school will offer support for both the target and the bully to ensure all students can move on from the incident in a positive way. Where appropriate, bullies will be offered support in managing their behaviour.

Where this approach does not improve the outcomes for the target(s) of bullying behaviour, disciplinary sanctions will be implemented which reflect the seriousness of the incident and convey a deterrent effect. These may extend to permanent exclusion in the most severe cases.

The school has a responsibility to support children who are bullied and make appropriate provision for a child's needs. The nature and level of support will depend on the individual circumstances and the level of need. Examples can include:

- Ongoing support from the Form Teacher/Tutor or another teacher who knows them well
- Seeking support from a Youth Mental Health First Aider
- Asking the appropriate Pastoral Leadership Team to provide support
- Providing listening support or formal counselling through the Wellness Centre
- Engaging with parents
- Referring to the Local Authority Children's Services or the Police
- Completing a Common Assessment Framework
- Referring to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)

Staff should be particularly alert to the effect any form of bullying can have on vulnerable students. There is evidence to suggest that students who are badly bullied in school are more likely to be bullied outside of school (either on their way to/from school or online, including through direct contact, via social media or through online gaming messaging services).

Suspected bullying incidents should be logged on CPOMS. Any bullying incidents will also be recorded on the school's anti-bullying log. This allows senior staff to remain alert to any patterns or trends in bullying behaviour.

8. Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed by the Deputy Head Pastoral annually.

At every review, the policy will be approved by the Local board.

7. Links with other policies

This Anti-Bullying policy links to the following policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Expected Student Behaviour including College Rules
- ICT Policy including Student Acceptable Use Policy

Appendix 1 - Cyberbullying

- St Dunstan's College recognises the particularly detrimental effects of cyberbullying on children and will deal with all allegations of cyberbullying quickly and seriously in accordance with the school's Anti-bullying policy.
- All staff receive training in e-Safety in order to model best-practice and to support student e-Safety education.
- E-Safety is taught to all students through Stuart and Computing lessons, special assemblies, external speakers and throughout the entire curriculum.
- Support is provided to parents / carers on how to help their children engage safely and responsibly with social media, through information evenings, advice in the school newsletter and signposting to other sources of support and advice.
- The school recognises the possible criminal nature of cyberbullying, and the DSL and other Pastoral Leaders within the school attend regular training to keep up-to-date on legal responsibilities.

What to look for

Students who are being cyberbullied may find it difficult to talk about their experiences. Research suggests that many children who are being cyberbullied don't tell their parents / carers or teachers, so it's important to recognise the signs. They can be hard to spot, but some things to look out for are:

- Sudden or unexpected cessation in using their computer, mobile phone or tablet
- Appearing nervous or jumpy when an instant message, text message or email appears
- Avoiding school or socialising in general
- Being angry, depressed or frustrated after using their phone, computer or tablet
- Becoming withdrawn from friends and family members

What to do

If you are the victim:

- Don't retaliate or reply to nasty messages.
- Save the evidence – text messages, online conversations, social media posts, etc. Sometimes, taking a 'screenshot' is the easiest way of preserving evidence of cyberbullying.
- Use 'block sender' features on your phone or social media sites to prevent further bullying.
- Tell someone about the incident: ideally, you should tell your Form Teacher, Tutor or Head of Year, but any staff member (including the Counsellors and the Chaplain), friend, parent / carer, or trusted adult should be able to help you or find someone who can.
- If you don't want to talk to a member of staff about the incident, ask a friend, family member or trusted adult to talk to a member of staff on your behalf.

If a student witnesses cyberbullying:

- Do not be enticed into sending retaliatory messages or posts.
- Do not do nothing – if you see any messages or posts which are hurtful or intending to cause harm, you MUST report this to the school. You can be sanctioned as complicit in a cyberbullying offence later on if it is discovered that you were a 'passive bystander' (e.g. party to an online conversation, even you weren't contributing to it) and did not report the bullying. You are a bystander if you read it, see it, or hear about it.
- Accompany the victim to a trusted adult, or suggest that you see their Tutor or Head of Year on their behalf.
- If possible, save the evidence of the bullying via screenshots for example.
- Remember to report the post if it's on a social networking website. Anyone who has an account on Facebook or Instagram has the ability to report offensive and unacceptable content (see below for more tips on how to protect and report offensive posts on Social Media Platforms).

If a member of staff witnesses an incident of cyberbullying or has it reported to them:

- Reassure and support the students involved.
- If the student has evidence of the cyberbullying, with the student's permission take their phone or device on which the evidence is stored directly to the DSL for further advice.
- Advise them that you are required to pass the details on to the relevant member of the pastoral team (DSL).
- Report the incident on CPOMS or if CPOMS is not available report the incident directly to the DSL.

What will happen?

Cyberbullying incidents will be dealt with as outlined in the College Anti-bullying policy. There is an increased likelihood of a cyberbullying incident to involve criminal offence than in-person bullying.

- Any incident involving images or videos generated by or of children under the age of 18 that are of a sexual nature will be dealt with according to the school policy *Sending Nudes and Semi Nudes* and the law.
- Under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety or to send an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false

by the sender. In addition to school-level sanctions, incidents of this nature will be reported to the Police.

- Under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, it is an offence to send a 'credible threat' of violence, harassing communications targeting specific individuals or 'cyberstalking' communications targeting specific individuals. In addition to school-level sanctions, incidents of this nature will be reported to the Police.
- Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, it is an offence to send any race- or religion-based threats or aggravated communications targeting specific individuals. In addition to school-level sanctions, incidents of this nature will be reported to the Police.
- Under the Criminal Justice Act 2003, it is an offence to send any disability- or sexual orientation or transgender identity-based threats or aggravated communications targeting specific individuals. In addition to school-level sanctions, incidents of this nature will be reported to the Police.

How can I keep my content secure?

- It is good practice to ensure your privacy and security settings allow you to control who can see the content you share. Please be aware however, that content can still be easily screenshotted and shared more publicly.
- Ensure your devices are protected with a pin or passcode to protect your personal data, images, videos and accounts.
- Make sure you have strong passwords on all your accounts and you update these passwords on a regular basis. Remember not to share your password with anyone.
- Remember to log out of accounts when using public WiFi connections.
- Discuss these same issues with your friends and family as you could become a target if their privacy settings are not up to date.
- Always be sure who you're befriending or talking to online. Never give out your personal details, including your mobile number and social networking sites if you don't know the person you're talking to.
- Use your school email address for school business and personal email for your private life; do not mix the two accounts. This includes file sharing websites e.g. YouTube.

Social Media Privacy Settings

Instagram

- If you see evidence of unacceptable or offensive material on *Instagram*, remember to take a screenshot and show this evidence to a parent/guardian/staff member.
- Blocking - When you use the blocking feature, the person you block will not longer view your posts or be able to search for your Instagram account.

- Report It - You can report inappropriate posts, comments or people by using the built-in reporting features in the app.
- Delete or Reporting comments - You can flag or delete a comment as abuse or spam by swiping left on it.
- Privacy Settings - You can adjust your privacy settings to make your account private. This means that anyone who wants to see your photos or videos, followers, or following lists will have to send you a follow request for you to approve or ignore.
- Location Settings - Users choose when they share location on each post.

WhatsApp

- If you see evidence of unacceptable or offensive material on WhatsApp, remember to take a screenshot and show this evidence to a parent/guardian/staff member.
- Blocking - If you block someone, they can no longer send you a message, however you will need to delete someone as a contact in your phone book if you don't want them to see your profile on WhatsApp.
- Report It - It's important to screenshot the offending text/picture/video and to provide as much information as possible to WhatsApp as they won't be able to see the message otherwise.
- SPAM - If you receive a message from an unknown number, you will immediately be asked if you know this contact or if you would like to report it as spam. You should never accept or respond to find out who the message is from.
- Privacy Settings - To control who can find your profile picture and your status, or when you were last online, there are privacy settings that can be adjusted so either 'everyone' on WhatsApp can see your profile picture, just 'your contacts' which are the contacts in your phone book, or nobody.

TikTok

- Privacy settings - If you have a private account, your friends will need to follow you and you will need to approve them in order for them to see your videos. Please check your privacy settings on TikTok.
- Blocking - If someone is bothering you on TikTok, you can block them.
    - Find the user's profile. The user can be found in your following/fans list.
    - Tap on the triple dots at the top right corner. This will open a menu of options.
    - Choose "Block" and confirm.
- Deleting - If a fan is bothering you, you can swipe left to delete them.
- Reporting - If you see inappropriate content on TikTok, you should report it by clicking on the button with three dots and then click 'report abuse'. Should you violate the community guidelines, your account may be removed without warning.

Facebook

- To block messages from someone on Facebook:
    - Click at the top right of the page
    - Open the conversation with the person you'd like to block
    - Click in the top right of the chat box
    - Click Block > Block Messages and Calls

- To change who can add you as a friend:
    - Click the top right of any Facebook page and click Settings.
    - Click Privacy in the left column.
    - Click Edit next to Who can send you friend requests?
    - From the dropdown menu, click Everyone or Friends of Friends.

- If someone's bothering you on Facebook, the best way to stop them is to block them. You can also Unfriend them so only your friends can post on your timeline.

Snapchat

- Blocking - When you use the blocking feature, the person you block can't view your snaps or your Snap story and they can't send you snaps either.
- Privacy settings - Only those who you add as friends can view your snaps. If someone who you haven't added sends you a snap, you will get a notification, but you have to add them as a friend to see what they sent you. You can change who can see your snaps by changing your privacy settings.
    - On Your Camera Screen, tap on the Bitmoji (the ghost icon in the top left) to go to your Profile Screen.
    - On your Profile Screen, tap on the "Settings" gear icon in the top right.
    - Scroll down until you come across the "Who Can …" section.
    - Select an option, and tap on the back button to confirm.
- Dealing with the Find Friend feature
    - This feature lets people who have access to your phone number find your Snapchat profile by using your number.
    - Tap on the "Settings" gear icon in the top right of your Profile Screen.
    - Tap on "Mobile Number."
    - Look for "Let others find me using my mobile number."
    - Tap the icon next to it to exclude your number from this feature.
- Reporting - If you experience harassment, or bullying, you can report inappropriate snaps.
    - Press and hold on the Snapchatter's name, tap 'More,' and tap 'Report.'
- Location - Locations in Snapchat are shown in 'Snap Maps', there are three options for who can see your location; only me, select friends and my friends.

To fully secure your social media accounts, you should consider turning on two-factor authentication.

Appendix 2 - The No Blame Approach

The 'facilitator' is a teacher or pastoral lead within the school, guiding the student through the process. A member of staff will not be expected to lead a 'No Blame' meeting unless they feel comfortable doing so. We recommend that a teacher does not lead a meeting themselves until they have witnessed another member of staff with experience of the process leading a meeting beforehand. In most cases, two members of staff will be involved in leading the group and in every instance, the Head of Year and Deputy Head Pastoral will be aware the meeting is taking place and updated as necessary.

Step 1

- The facilitator talks to the victim about his/her feelings and finds out what/who is involved.
- The facilitator should gather as much information as possible, asking open questions to do so.
- Information relating to specific comments or incidents should also be gathered, to build as clear a picture as possible of what has taken place.
- The victim might be asked to write key words/information down, or draw a picture if they are finding it difficult to articulate a situation.
- The remaining steps are explained to the student and they are encouraged to present examples of the upsetting behaviour and his/her feelings as a part of Step 2.

- The facilitator explains that when the group is gathered for the following steps, no one will name the student/s involved and a 'no blame' approach will be applied.
- A list of perpetrators, bystanders (if appropriate) and trusted friends who might be able to help is drawn up and the victim will be expected to attend the meeting in Step 2.

Step 2

- The facilitator meets with the agreed group of people, decided during Step 1 of the process.
- The victim, or the facilitator on their behalf, explains the victim's feelings and the behaviour they have experienced.
- If appropriate, specific incidents can be mentioned, though the names of student will not be used.
- It is made clear to all students that no blame is being applied throughout.
- If the victim feels comfortable talking about their experience, they are able to so do without naming the perpetrator/s or bystanders.

Step 3

- The facilitator explains or elicits from students that the behaviour sounds like it falls into the category of bullying.
- The facilitator reinforces that as a school we do not tolerate bullying and that we therefore need to make some important decisions in the meeting. If the issue can be resolved and the victim is happier, then there is no need for parents to be involved or sanctions imposed.
- It is made clear to the students that the most serious cases of bullying can result in a student being removed from the school. It is explained that the purpose of the meeting is to make things better, not, at this stage, to blame anyone. If we can achieve this outcome, then things will not be pursued further. If, however, the situation is not resolved, then a full investigation would need to be held.

Step 4

- The facilitator asks if the group feels they can help improve the situation.
- The facilitator explains that the group has been identified as a group of students who together can make the situation better for the victim.

Step 5

- The facilitator encourages the members of the group to suggest how the victim could be helped to feel happier.
- Students within the group offer ideas and strategies about what can be done to help improve the situation.
- The facilitator positively receives ideas, without passing judgement or correcting what is said.
- All of the ideas should be welcomed and as many students within the group as possible should participate in offering suggestions.

Step 6

- The facilitator should summarise the strategies once all ideas have been received and if appropriate, ask the victim if they feel these ideas would help them to feel better.
- The facilitator suggests that these strategies should all be applied to see whether they have a successful outcome and will assist in making the victim feel happier.
- It is explained by the facilitator that it is important that the meeting is not discussed once the students leave the room. Any instances of "I can't believe you told..." or similar will be dealt with very seriously.

Step 7

- The facilitator decides what an appropriate review time scale should be.
- Another meeting is organised to see how things are progressing.
- Depending on the progress, the facilitator will arrange follow up meetings as deemed necessary to be confident that the issue is resolved.
- The usual timescale would involve the next meeting being the following day, with other meetings taking place the following week.
- The victim will be given the chance to speak individually to the facilitator during this time period to give them the opportunity to discuss if they are feeling better.

Recording

If a child reports that they are being bullied, then the member of staff who is informed should document this on *CPOMS* and the Head of Year or Deputy Head Pastoral should be

told as soon as possible. In some cases, it may become apparent in discussions with the child that it was an isolated incident and would fall under the category of relational conflict or a friendship issue, but perceived as bullying by that child. This information will be recorded on *CPOMS* nonetheless in order that we can monitor the relational conflict or friendship issue (particularly if it had initially been cited as *bullying*) and address it proactively. It is the role of the teacher recording the information to clarify with the child why it should be considered a relational conflict or friendship issue and not bullying. The following information would normally be required:

- Name of the victim;
- Date and time of the disclosure (and to whom, if not the Form Teacher);
- Brief description of the behaviour, including any details of dates, specific locations, times etc;
- Names of perpetrators and bystanders;
- Any short term actions taken.

When gleaning information about an incident, it is important:

- That leading questions are not asked;
- That confidentiality is not promised;
- To state that no blame is attached;
- Not to promise that it will get better immediately.

Sanctions

Once investigated, every effort will be made to resolve the problem through discussions with all parties, which will seek to support the victim(s) and change the behaviour of the perpetrator(s). In serious cases, the parents /carers will be informed and consulted. This process will normally be carried out by a pastoral lead and/or the Deputy Head Pastoral.

When the above procedure is deemed not to have had the desired impact, or it is decided that the incident is serious enough, disciplinary sanctions will normally be applied by the Head of the Senior School. These may include suspension, required removal or, in the gravest cases of severe of persistent bullying, permanent exclusion from the school. Appropriate support may be offered to both parties, even after sanctions have been

applied. Incidents of bullying are dealt with as individual cases. Sanctions that are appropriate for one may not be relevant for another. These are possible examples of sanctions:

- Bullies may be monitored during their free time.
- Bullies may be put on a Behaviour Conduct Report.
- Bullies may be given a formal warning by the Head of the Senior School.

As soon as an incident has been investigated, a plan of action is agreed and put into place. In the earliest stages of dealing with bullying, parents may not necessarily be informed. This is an important aspect of the "No Blame" approach. If it is deemed a significant bullying situation, or the above does not resolve the situation, the parents / carers of all students involved will be kept fully informed by the Deputy Head Pastoral. Parents / carers are asked to let the school know directly if they have cause for concern, either on behalf of their own children or because they have heard rumors involving others. The school always endeavors to handle information discreetly, and while it likes to follow up such matters, it does not do so without careful consultation first. It is much easier to counter problems at an early stage.