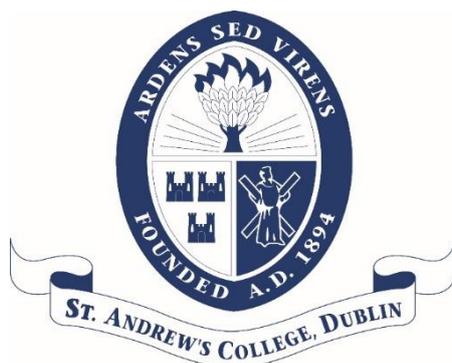


# ST ANDREW'S COLLEGE



## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

**MAY 2023**

# Anti-Bullying

- 1** In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the code of behaviour guidelines issued by the NEWB, the Board of Management of St Andrew's College (the "**College**") has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the College's overall Code of Behaviour. As the College is deeply concerned with ensuring that bullying is dealt with effectively, students should be aware that it is important to come forward and pass on information in relation to incidents of bullying. It is clearly outlined in this policy that one should "tell" when bullying is suspected.

This policy fully complies with the requirements of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* which were published by the Department of Education & Skills in September 2013.

- 2** The College is committed to the promotion of a learning environment which upholds the dignity and respect of all in the College community. We support every individual's right to learn in an environment that is free from any form of bullying, intimidation, or harassment. The entire College community is responsible for ensuring that bullying, either collectively or individually does not occur. This means that the College community must take responsibility for reporting any such incident to the appropriate person or team.

- 3** The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of students and is therefore fully committed to the following key principles with a view to preventing and tackling bullying behaviour:

- 3.1** A positive school culture and climate which:

- 3.1.1** is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity.

- 3.1.2** encourages students to disclose and discuss incidents of alleged bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment.

- 3.1.3** promotes respectful relationships across the College community.

- 3.2** Effective leadership

- 3.3** A school-wide approach

- 3.4** A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact.

- 3.5** Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness-raising measures) that:

- 3.5.1** build empathy, respect and resilience in students

- 3.5.2** explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including homophobic and transphobic bullying

- 3.6** Effective supervision and monitoring of students

- 3.7** Supports for staff

- 3.8 Recording, investigation, and follow-up of alleged bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies)
- 3.9 On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy

## 4 Scope of the Policy

- 4.1 This policy applies to the behaviour of College students both at the College and at College-related events. The College reserves the right to investigate incidents which have taken place off campus of which they have been informed. The College reserves the right to intervene if such incidents are deemed to have affected a student's well-being while at the College or their attendance at the College.

## 5 Definition

- 5.1 In accordance with the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* bullying is defined as follows:

*Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted, by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.*

- 5.2 The following types of bullying behaviour are included in the definition of bullying:
  - 5.2.1 deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip, and other forms of relational bullying
  - 5.2.2 cyber- bullying, and
  - 5.2.3 identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveler community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs
- 5.3 Isolated or one-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a one-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging, do not fall within the definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the College's Code of Behaviour.
- 5.4 However, in the context of this policy, placing a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour.
- 5.5 Negative behaviour that does not meet this definition of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the College's Code of Behaviour.
- 5.6 Additional information on different types of bullying is set out in Section 2 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

## **6 Relevant Teachers**

**6.1** The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with alleged bullying are as follows:

**6.1.1** The Form Teacher

**6.1.2** The Year Head

**6.2** If there is a concern about alleged bullying, this may be brought to any teacher in the College. Individual teachers will then report this to the relevant teacher and Year Team, who will investigate and deal with the matter in accordance with the College's anti-bullying policy.

## **7 Education and Prevention Strategies**

**7.1** The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the College are as follows:

**7.1.1** The College will have an appropriate system in place to ensure that all members of the College community have a shared understanding of what constitutes bullying behaviour

**7.1.2** Prevention and awareness will be ensured both within and outside the curriculum

**7.2** The explicit encouragement by the anti-bullying committee of all teachers to influence their students in awareness and intolerance of any kind of bullying behaviour and the desirability of respect for diversity and inclusiveness. Of particular value are SPHE classes which play a vital role in this area. Explicitly, throughout SPHE classes the need is reinforced for a school environment in which:

**7.2.1** People feel valued

**7.2.2** Self-esteem is fostered

**7.2.3** Fairness and tolerance are evident

**7.2.4** Those in difficulty are supported

**7.2.5** Communication is open

**7.2.6** Difference is valued

**7.2.7** Conflict is handled constructively

**7.2.8** Empathy, respect, and resilience is encouraged

**7.2.9** Upstanding is encouraged

### 7.3 The College encourages an anti-bullying environment through the following:

- 7.3.1 An active anti-bullying Committee on the staff
- 7.3.2 Anti-bullying volunteers among the student body at all levels
- 7.3.3 An annual St Andrew's House Cup Day during Wellbeing Week highlighting any issues
- 7.3.4 Poster campaigns
- 7.3.5 Discussions regarding LGBT issues
- 7.3.6 Specific, one-off events (e.g., ~~Cycle Against Suicide~~, Upstanding/Bullying Awareness Days)
- 7.3.7 Talks and workshops on bullying for students, teachers, and parents
- 7.3.8 Constant monitoring and updating of the College's technology to prevent its misuse
- 7.3.9 Active involvement of the Support for Learning Department in the anti-bullying committee and its decisions
- 7.3.10 Conscious efforts to improve the inclusion of Learning Support students in the community and in the improvement of social skills where necessary
- 7.3.11 Surveys of students and the school community (anonymous) to collect information about attitudes and behaviour
- 7.3.12 Targeted monitoring of all students at the key transitional period from primary to secondary school with special emphasis on mentoring by senior students
- 7.3.13 Appropriate and adequate monitoring of students to prevent any opportunities for bullying and to deal with any swiftly should they occur. This includes the vital contribution of non-teaching staff and ongoing contact between teachers and parents
- 7.3.14 Constant efforts to ensure that all staff (including temporary/substitute staff) are aware of the College's policy and of how to implement it
- 7.3.15 An annual review of the College's policy to determine its effectiveness and to identify any potential improvements to be made
- 7.3.16 Regular raising of the issue of bullying at assemblies and staff meetings in order to maintain awareness
- 7.3.17 A promotion of the culture of **Upstanding** whereby students are encouraged and taught how to "stand up" to bullying behaviour

## 8 Procedures

### 8.1 Procedures for investigation and follow-up of alleged bullying behaviour

The College's procedures for investigating and follow-up of alleged bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies used by the College for dealing with cases of alleged bullying behaviour are as follows:

- 8.1.1** We adopt a **shared concern** approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying. The primary aim is to resolve any issues and to restore as far as is possible, the relationship of the parties rather than to apportion blame or punishment
- 8.1.2** An alleged bullying complaint may be brought to any teacher in the College by a student or parent, if the teacher is not the Relevant Teacher, s/he will inform the Relevant Teacher. All students and parents should be aware of the Relevant Teacher concerned (as above)
- 8.1.3** All such complaints will be investigated and acted upon in order to encourage confidence in "telling"
- 8.1.4** The Relevant Teacher will exercise their professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved
- 8.1.5** All reports, including anonymous reports of alleged bullying will be investigated and dealt with by the Relevant teacher. In that way students will gain confidence in 'telling'. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should be made clear to all students that when they report incidents of alleged bullying, they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly
- 8.1.6** Non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts, caretakers, cleaners are encouraged to report any incidents of alleged bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher
- 8.1.7** Parents, staff, and students are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the College in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible
- 8.1.8** It is very important that all involved (including each set of students and parents) understand the above approach from the outset
- 8.1.9** Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by students, staff, or parents
- 8.1.10** Incidents are generally best investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved

- 8.1.11** All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all students concerned. Students who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way
- 8.1.12** When analysing incidents of alleged bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher should seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner
- 8.1.13** Investigations will normally begin with a conversation with the complainant
- 8.1.14** If a group is involved, each member should be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved may be met as a group. At a group meeting, each member should be asked for their account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements
- 8.1.15** Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that they may face them from the other members of the group after interview by the teacher
- 8.1.16** It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s)
- 8.1.17** In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken (by reference to the College's Code of Behaviour). The College will give parents an opportunity to discuss ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the College and the supports for their students
- 8.1.18** Where the relevant teacher has determined that a student has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to them how they are in breach of the College's anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get them to see the situation from the perspective of the student being bullied
- 8.1.19** It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of students and parents) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the student being disciplined, his or her parents and the College
- 8.1.20** Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved should be arranged separately with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date if the student who has been bullied is ready and agreeable. This can have a therapeutic effect
- 8.1.21** In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher must, as part of their professional judgement, take the following factors into account:

**8.1.21.1** Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased

- 8.1.21.2** Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable
- 8.1.21.3** Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable
- 8.1.21.4** Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents or the Principal or Deputy Principal, and
- 8.1.21.5** At all times, the privacy of the matter and the need for discretion must be made clear to all. The relevant teacher should keep records of all dealings with any reported case of bullying
- 8.1.21.6** If, despite discussions, the unacceptable behaviour continues, other measures may be required including:
  - 8.1.21.7** The involvement of a team approach including Form Teacher, Year Head/IB Coordinator, Deputy Principal and Principal
  - 8.1.21.8** Clear, graduated warnings to the individual responsible
  - 8.1.21.9** Reflective response sheets (individual answers questions, either orally or in writing, in reference to their behaviour towards others)
  - 8.1.21.10** Sanctions, such as detention, in-school suspension, time-out, denial of privileges, reparation work, suspension, or expulsion
  - 8.1.21.11** College guidance counsellors will be available to support/counsel both bullies and bullied individuals, and
  - 8.1.21.12** Steps should be taken (follow-up meetings, requesting feedback) to ensure that the behaviour has stopped, and that the situation has improved. The chief measure of this is the improvement in relations between the individuals concerned
- 8.1.22** If the relevant teacher concerned deems that it is necessary or is not satisfied that their intervention has been successful within twenty days, they must record the matter officially. The recording template is available from the Department of Education website (Anti-Bullying section) and attached Appendix 3
- 8.1.23** This record should be retained by the teacher and a copy should be given to the Principal. It is important to note that the inclusion of the Principal, Deputy Principals, Form Teachers, or Year Heads/IB Coordinator is an option at any stage of any reported incident
- 8.1.24** In cases where bullying has escalated to a very serious stage, the Principal and/or DLP should contact the National Education Psychological Service and/or the Gardaí and/or Tusla
- 8.1.25** Where a parent is not satisfied that the College has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with this policy and/or the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary*

*and Post-Primary Schools*, they must be referred to the College's complaints procedures

- 8.1.26** In the event that a parent has exhausted the College's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the College must advise the parents of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children

## **8.2 Procedures for recording bullying behaviour**

The College's procedures for recording of bullying behaviour are as follows:

- 8.2.1** The relevant teacher will use their professional judgement in relation to the records to be kept of reports of alleged bullying, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same
- 8.2.2** If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher must keep appropriate written records, which will assist their efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved
- 8.2.3** The relevant teacher must use the recording template at Appendix 3 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:
- 8.2.3.1** In cases where they consider that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after they have determined that bullying behaviour occurred; and
- 8.2.3.2** In cases of assault, violence or where the emotional or physical wellbeing of the student has been severely impacted, the bullying behaviour will be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal or the relevant Deputy Principal
- 8.2.3.3** The non-consensual threatening to share / distribution/possession of sexually explicit content always warrants a report, regardless of whether the issue is resolved within 20 days and whether the teacher thinks the incident warrants a report. It may also constitute a criminal offence
- 8.2.4** In each of the circumstances at 8.2.3.1 - 8.2.3.3 above, the recording template at Appendix 3 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* must be completed in full and retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy provided to the Principal. It should also be noted that the timeline for recording bullying behaviour in the recording template at Appendix 3 does not in any way preclude the relevant teacher from consulting the Principal at an earlier stage in relation to a case

## **8.3 Programme of support for working with students affected by bullying**

- 8.4** The College's approach to dealing with bullying is one that emphasises learning rather than punishment. Individuals who engage in bullying behaviour should be made aware of their actions, of the effects on others and to ask themselves why they behave in such a way with a view to amending their behaviour.

**8.5** All students must respect one another and one another's right to be happy and to learn within the College. The College recognises the need to support students who have been affected by bullying and the College's programme of support for working with students affected by bullying is as follows:

- 8.5.1** Guidance counselling is available to encourage self-esteem and resilience
- 8.5.2** Students who witness incidents of alleged bullying are encouraged to report them
- 8.5.3** Teachers of any student who has been bullied should be encouraged (with the permission of parents and the individual themselves) to take any opportunity to develop the individual's sense of self-worth
- 8.5.4** Any student who has been bullied is encouraged to continue to speak out and to seek help where necessary

## **9 Supervision and Monitoring of Students**

**9.1** The Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and practices are in place to both prevent and deal with alleged bullying behaviour and to facilitate early intervention where possible.

## **10 Prevention of Harassment**

**10.1** The Board of Management confirms that the College will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of students or staff or the harassment of students or staff on any of the nine grounds specified i.e. gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller Community.

**10.2** This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2023

**10.3** This policy has been made available to College personnel, published on the College website (or where none exists, is otherwise readily accessible to parents and students on request) and provided to the Parents' Association (where one exists). A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

**10.4** This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to College personnel, published on the College website (or where none exists, be otherwise readily accessible to parents and students on request) and provided to the Parents' Association (where one exists). A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

*To be reviewed May 2024*

## Appendix 3 Template for recording bullying behaviour

**1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Class \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour**

**3. Source of bullying concern/report**

(tick relevant box(es))\*

Pupil concerned	
Other Pupil	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other	

**4. Location of incidents (tick**

relevant box(es))\*

Playground
Classroom
Corridor
Toilets
School Bus
Other

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

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

Physical Aggression		Cyber-bullying	
Damage to Property		Intimidation	
Isolation/Exclusion		Malicious Gossip	
Name Calling		Other (specify)	

**7. Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category:**

Homophobic	Disability/SEN related	Racist	Membership of Traveller community	Other (specify)

**8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact**

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**9. Details of actions taken**

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Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (Relevant Teacher) Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal \_\_\_\_\_

**\* Note:** The categories listed in the tables 3, 4 & 6 are suggested, and schools may add to or amend these to suit their own circumstances.

#### Appendix 4 Checklist for annual review of the anti-bullying policy and its implementation

The Board of Management (the Board) must undertake an annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation. The following checklist must be used for this purpose. The checklist is an aid to conducting this review and is not intended as an exhaustive list. In order to complete the checklist, an examination and review involving both quantitative and qualitative analysis, as appropriate across the various elements of the implementation of the school's anti-bullying policy will be required.

Yes /No Has the Board formally adopted an anti-bullying policy that fully complies with the requirements of the <i>Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools</i> ?	Yes
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to school staff (including new staff)?	Yes
Is the Board satisfied that school staff are sufficiently familiar with the policy and procedures to enable them to effectively and consistently apply the policy and procedures in their day to day work?	Yes
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been adequately communicated to all pupils?	Yes
Has the policy documented the prevention and education strategies that the school applies?	Yes
Have all of the prevention and education strategies been implemented?	Yes
Has the effectiveness of the prevention and education strategies that have been implemented been examined?	Yes
Is the Board satisfied that all teachers are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy?	Yes
Has the Board received and minuted the periodic summary reports of the Principal?	Yes
Has the Board discussed how well the school is handling all reports of bullying including those addressed at an early stage and not therefore included in the Principal's periodic report to the Board?	Yes
Has the Board received any complaints from parents regarding the school's handling of bullying incidents?	No
Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation?	No
Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed?	No
Has the data available from cases reported to the Principal (by the bullying recording template) been analysed to identify any issues, trends or patterns in bullying behaviour?	N/A
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	No
Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?	N/A

**Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the Anti-Bullying Policy**

To: \_\_\_\_\_

The Board of Management of \_\_\_\_\_ wishes to inform you that:

o The Board of Management's annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation was completed at the Board meeting of \_\_\_\_\_ [date].

o This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in **Appendix 4** of the Department's *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Signed  Date 30.05.2023

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed  Date 30.05.2023

Principal