



International College

Anti-Bullying Policy

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Anti-Bullying Policy

1. Statement of intent

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly, supportive and safe environment for all of our students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. The College mission is 'to promote international education and understanding' and this ethos encourages a safe environment where fairness and respect are valued and prejudice challenged. Every learner at St. Clare's, Oxford should feel safe to learn and socialise. Each should be safe from victimisation and discrimination in class or outside, in the residences and on activities and excursions.

Bullying, including cyberbullying, is anti-social behaviour that affects everyone. It is unacceptable at St. Clare's and will not be tolerated. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to report incidents and know that their concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively.

2. Objectives of this policy

- 2.1. All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff should have an understanding of what bullying is, should know what the College policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- 2.2. All students and parents should know what the College policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- 2.3. As a College, we take bullying seriously. We seek to create a culture of openness where students and parents feel reassured that they can raise concerns with any member of staff at the College. Students and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- 2.4. The entire St Clare's community should recognise that bullying will not be tolerated.
- 2.5. It should be noted that this policy refers to bullying between students only. The College policy in relation to student-staff relationships is found in the staff Code of Conduct.

3. What is bullying?

Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online.¹

3.1. Bullying can be:

<i>Emotional</i>	being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding/damaging possessions, commenting on someone's appearance or intelligence), using threatening gestures, sending anonymous hate mail (e.g. by mobile phone text messaging or e-mail)
<i>Physical</i>	pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
<i>Verbal</i>	name-calling, sarcasm, inappropriate banter, spreading rumours, teasing, insults, threats and ridicules
<i>Online / Cyber</i>	by misuse of social websites, mobile telephones, text messages, photographs and email (see Appendix C which is specific to cyberbullying)
<i>Sexual</i>	unwanted physical contact or sexually suggestive and/or abusive comments
<i>Homophobic</i>	because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
<i>Ableist</i>	because of, or focussing on a person's disability, learning difficulty or special educational need
<i>Racist</i>	because of, or focussing on a person's race, religion or culture
<i>Gender-based</i>	because of, or focusing on a person's gender

4. Why is it important to respond to bullying?

- 4.1. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying; everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Bullying can be very serious, on occasion causing psychological damage or even leading to suicide. Students who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. We have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

¹ Source: The Anti Bullying Alliance <https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>



5. Our response to bullying

- 5.1. Responding to an instance of bullying with immediate recourse to sanctions may not reduce the number of bullying incidents in the long term and may in fact reinforce bullying behaviours. An immediate sanction may relieve the victim for a short period of time, but it may increase anger and resentment towards the victim.
- 5.2. Our first response to an incident of bullying takes into account our ethos of non-confrontation and attempts to ease tension between the victim and the bully through a process of mediation. The Induction programme and welfare talks and Personal Tutor meetings build on this ethos. During induction, the issue of bullying is raised while the welfare talks and PT sessions place an emphasis on building positive relationships in order to build a happy, harmonious and healthy community.
- 5.3. We try to build tolerance and understanding into everything we do.
- 5.4. Where attempts at mediation do not work and bullies refuse to co-operate with this process and/or continue with bullying, then it may be necessary to adopt a sanction-based approach to ensure that victims of bullying are protected.

6. Procedures

- 6.1. When staff observe or are informed of incidents of bullying, they will take immediate action to stop any incident in progress. A clear written account of the incident will be made by the member of staff involved and passed to the Personal Tutor(s) of the student(s). The Personal Tutor(s) will advise appropriate subject teachers or boarding staff and will inform the Accommodation and Welfare Officer and the appropriate Director of Studies. A clear written account of the incident will be made by staff involved (including statements from the bullied student and bully) via email.
- 6.2. If the problem persists, Personal Tutors will again be informed and will advise appropriate subject teachers or boarding staff and will inform the Accommodation and Welfare Officer and the appropriate Director of Studies.
- 6.3. In cases of serious bullying, the incident will be dealt with by the Director of the International College.
- 6.4. Any new information or statement must be added to CPOMS promptly.
- 6.5. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly. The victim must be given time to discuss what happened and their response, and to state their preferences with regards to proposed actions to be taken.
- 6.6. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour. The member of staff involved will speak with the bully. This will probably be more effective if some time has elapsed since the incident. While the facts must be established, it is more important to focus on the impact the bullying behaviour has had on the student who was bullied rather than the emphasis being only on blame. The reasons behind the need of the bully to intimidate others must also be investigated. Agreement must be reached on how the bully will behave in relation to the victim and to others generally.
- 6.7. If the bullying involves a group, they may be spoken to as a whole, concentrating on the impact of the bullying on the victim. The meeting should not include the victim unless it is clear that the bullies genuinely feel remorse and that the anger and fear of the victim has subsided. The meeting should conclude with agreement being reached on how the bullies will behave in relation to the victim and to others generally.
- 6.8. The bully (bullies) may be asked to make a sincere apology, verbally or in writing.
- 6.9. In serious cases, parents of those bullied and bullying will be informed, where appropriate and be asked for a meeting to discuss the problem.
- 6.10. In serious instances e.g. violence and theft and/or when criminal acts have been committed, the police and/or Children's Social Care may be consulted.
- 6.10.1. See also Appendix C: Student Support

7. Outcomes

- 7.1. If the mediation process fails and/or the incidents of bullying are repeated or severe, the following disciplinary steps can be taken:
- 7.2. Other disciplinary measures e.g. banning students from areas of College (residence of the student bullied) and/or gating may be imposed, for under 18s.
- 7.3. In serious and/or persistent cases, suspension, exclusion and/or police involvement will be considered.

8. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

- 8.1. The College will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. Action will be taken, as appropriate, to address any problems identified as a result of this monitoring process. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.
- 8.2. It is noted that the provisions of Section 175 of the Education Act place a general duty on schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in our care and, as such, staff will adhere to other related school policies, i.e. Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy, e-Policy, Health and Safety, Equal Opportunities & Dignity at Work etc.



Appendix A: Cyberbullying

Online bullying (often referred to as cyberbullying) is any form of bullying that is carried out through the use of electronic media devices, such as computers, laptops, smartphones, tablets, or gaming consoles.

There are strong links between online bullying and face-to-face bullying, with around 80% of reported online bullying victims also reporting being bullied face-to-face. However, there are some things that make online bullying different to 'traditional' bullying:

- 24-7 nature - the nature of online activity means bullies can be in contact at any time.
- There is the potential for a wider audience and bullying incidents can stay online, for example: a photo that the victim can't remove
- Evidence - a lot of online bullying incidents allow those experiencing it to keep evidence - for example, take a screen shot - to show to school staff or police if needed.
- Potential to hide identity - it is possible for bullies to hide their identity online which can make online bullying incidents very scary
- Degree of separation - people who cyberbully often don't see the reaction of those experiencing it so it can sometimes be harder for them to see the impact of their actions

Other students, who may not normally become involved in bullying behaviour, may be drawn in unwittingly by, for example, forwarding or circulating an image or message. Of course, everyone is entitled to their private life and to freedom of expression but students must consider whether the material they are sending, or forwarding, may cause upset.

Categories of cyberbullying²

Cyberbullying can include:

- sending threatening or abusive text messages
- creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos
- trolling – the sending of menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games
- excluding children from online games, activities or friendship groups
- shaming someone online
- setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child
- encouraging young people to self-harm
- voting for or against someone in an abusive poll
- creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name
- sending explicit messages, also known as sexting
- pressuring children into sending sexual images or engaging in sexual conversations

Child-on-child sexual abuse and harassment

Pupils may also use the internet and technology as a vehicle for sexual abuse and harassment. Staff will understand that this abuse can occur both in and outside of school, off and online, and will remain aware that pupils are less likely to report concerning online sexual behaviours, particularly if they are using websites that they know adults will consider to be inappropriate for their age.

The following are examples of online harmful sexual behaviour of which staff will be expected to be aware:

- Threatening, facilitating or encouraging sexual violence
- Upskirting, i.e. taking a picture underneath a person's clothing without consent and with the intention of viewing their genitals, breasts or buttocks
- Sexualised online bullying, e.g. sexual jokes or taunts
- Unwanted and unsolicited sexual comments and messages
- Consensual or non-consensual sharing of sexualised imagery
- Abuse between young people in intimate relationships online, i.e. teenage relationship abuse

All staff will be aware of and promote a zero-tolerance approach to sexually harassing or abusive behaviour, and any attempts to pass such behaviour off as trivial or harmless. Staff will be aware that allowing such behaviour could lead to a school culture that normalises abuse and leads to pupils becoming less likely to report such conduct.

² Source: [nspcc.org.uk](https://www.nspcc.org.uk)



Staff will be aware that creating, possessing, and distributing indecent imagery of other children, i.e. individuals under the age of 18, is a criminal offence, even where the imagery is created, possessed, and distributed with the permission of the child depicted, or by the child themselves.

The school will be aware that interactions between the victim of online harmful sexual behaviour and the alleged perpetrator(s) are likely to occur over social media following the initial report, as well as interactions with other pupils taking “sides”, often leading to repeat harassment. The school will respond to these incidents in line with the Child-on-child Abuse Policy and the Social Media Policy.

The school will respond to all concerns regarding online child-on-child sexual abuse and harassment, regardless of whether the incident took place on the school premises or using school-owned equipment. Concerns regarding online child-on-child abuse will be reported to the DSL, who will investigate the matter in line with the Child-on-child Abuse Policy and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

1. Responding to cyberbullying

Cases of cyberbullying will be dealt with through the procedures outlined in the Anti-bullying policy.

- Staff and students should preserve evidence and a record of abuse; save phone messages, record or save-and-print instant messenger conversations, print or produce a screen-grab of social network pages, print, save and forward to staff whole email messages. (n.b. staff must avoid viewing any instances of youth-produced sexual imagery, and report these to the DSL who will follow local agency guidance when managing this material)
- Staff will advise the person being bullied not to retaliate or reply.
- Staff will advise the person to consider what information they have in the public domain.
- Depending on their preference, the victim may be advised to change their contact details e.g. mobile phone number.
- If hurtful or embarrassing content is being distributed, the victim will be supported to try to get it removed from the web.
- If the identity of the person who posted it is known, the College will ensure they understand why it is wrong and ask them to remove it. This might involve communicating with DSLs at other schools / colleges.
- In accordance with the searching and Confiscation policy, the College may confiscate the perpetrator’s mobile phone, or ask student to delete the offending content and share who they have sent it on to.
- In some cases, the person being bullied may be able to block the person bullying from their sites and services.
- In addition to the disciplinary measures listed above, the bully may have their access to St. Clare’s network restricted and/or their laptop or other devices confiscated.

College Advice for Students: What can you do?

If you are being bullied, remember bullying is never your fault. It can be stopped and it can usually be traced.

- Don't ignore the bullying - tell someone you trust, such as your parent, friend, Personal Tutor, House Parent or a teacher.
- Try to keep calm. It is understandable to be frightened or angry, but it is important not to retaliate.
- There is plenty of online advice on how to react to cyberbullying.
 - For example, www.kidscape.org and www.wiredsafety.org have some useful tips in relation to online bullying:



Appendix B: Signs and Symptoms

A student may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a student:

- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling or refusing to attend College
- begins truanting
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, nervous or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- feels ill in the morning / feigns illness
- begins to do poorly in schoolwork / demonstrates inability to concentrate in class
- has possessions which go "missing"
- starts stealing money
- has money regularly getting "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- has started to bully other students
- 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 a possibility and should be investigated.

Appendix C: Student Support

Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

1. Offering the immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their Personal Tutor, College Nurse, boarding staff, Counsellor or member of staff of their choice.
2. Reassuring the student of continuous College support.

Students who have bullied will be helped by:

1. Discussing what has happened with their Personal Tutor, College Nurse, boarding staff, Counsellor or member of staff of their choice.
2. Discovering why the student became involved.
3. Establishing the wrong doing and need to change.
4. Informing the parents to help change the attitude of the student (in cases of serious bullying).

If possible, the students involved in bullying incidents will be reconciled and supported in identifying coping strategies.

It is essential that the victim and the bully(ies) are met with for a further review to ascertain if the situation has improved. Personal Tutors meet with their students regularly and hence will address this during their meetings. For students aged under 18, House Parents will also monitor the situation after school and during weekends and will have regular conversations with both - the victim and bully to ensure the situation is improving and an agreed plan of actions is effective.

Each case must be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

All incidents must be documented and comments must be included on any actions taken by staff. Reports should be recorded on CPOMS. The Accommodation and Welfare Officer will be notified and will discuss the report with the Director of the International College to enable any patterns to be identified.



Appendix D: How we positively build a tolerant and inclusive community

St. Clare's seeks to advance international education and understanding. We bring together students from as many countries and cultures as possible so they can interact with each other in academic and non-academic settings in a safe and tolerant environment. Students at St. Clare's are expected to behave in a way that shows respect and consideration for themselves, for their fellow students, and for the College community as a whole.

When students arrive at St. Clare's, time is spent on the Student Code of Conduct and Rules for Residence.

Additionally, to prevent bullying from occurring, the College implements the following:

- raising awareness of the 'Anti-bullying policy' during induction.
- if bullying occurs, we will take contextual safeguarding into account, taking action to prevent it continuing by an active focus on the times and places it is most likely to occur.
- staff will receive training in how to prevent and deal with bullying in staff development sessions.

Appendix E: Form for recording details of bullying behaviour

Bullying should be reported using the college's safeguarding procedures, and details must be recorded on CPOMS. If CPOMS cannot be accessed email can be used. The following form may be used, and if it is not used the same information must be provided in an alternative format.

1. Name of student being bullied _____

2. Name(s) of student(s) engaged in bullying behaviour 3. Source of bullying concern/report (tick relevant box (-es))	
Student concerned	
Other Student	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other	

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

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

<i>Emotional</i>		<i>Sexual</i>	
<i>Physical</i>		<i>Homophobic</i>	
<i>Verbal</i>		<i>Disability</i>	
<i>Cyber</i>		<i>Racial</i>	
<i>Other (please specify):</i>			



6. Brief Description of the incident

7. Details of actions taken at the time

Name: _____ (of person completing this form)

Signature _____ Date _____

This form should now be submitted to the Personal Tutor(s), House Parent, and/or Assistant Principal, Pastoral or Vice Principal, Pastoral.