Anti-Bullying Policy
St James' School

1. Introduction

It is a Government requirement that all schools have an anti-bullying policy. Our policy reflects the DfE guidance, in particular 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (DfE, 2017) and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (DfE, 2023).

This policy should be read in conjunction with the policies listed below:

- Admissions and Exclusions
- Behaviour and Discipline
- Non-Discrimination and Inclusion
- PSHCE
- Safeguarding and Child Protection

2. Policy Aims

The aim of this policy is to prevent and deal with bullying, so pupils can enjoy an environment to safely learn, work and play in. Bullying is incredibly serious, with both potential physical and emotional effects, which may cause psychological damage.

Official and community-decided definitions of bullying, descriptions of the School's procedures, and outlining the support offered to victims will assist in reaching this aim.

3. What is Bullying?

The DfE guidance defines bullying as actions that are meant to be hurtful, and which happen on a regular basis. Bullying can be direct (either physical or verbal) or indirect (e.g. being ignored or not spoken to).

The NSPCC's definition of bullying is 'when individuals or groups seek to harm, intimidate or coerce someone who is perceived to be vulnerable (Oxford English Dictionary, 2018). It can involve people of any age, and can happen anywhere – at home, school or using digital technologies (cyberbullying). This means it can happen at any time. Bullying encompasses a range of behaviours which are often combined. Bullying also can overlap and may also mean child-on-child abuse is occurring. For more information on this, please read the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.

Our pupils were asked the question 'What is bullying?' and the School has adopted the following collaborative definition of bullying which is our shared understanding of what bullying is:

"Bullying is any deliberate, hurtful, upsetting, frightening, or threatening behaviour by an individual or a group towards other people. It is repeated over a period of time, and it is very difficult for victims to defend themselves. Bullying is mean and results in worry, fear, pain and distress to the victim/s".

Bullying can happen anywhere in the classroom, in the corridor, in the toilets, in the dining hall, in the playground; it can happen outside school (e.g. offsite visits, cyberbullying).

Methods of bullying:

- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, throwing stones, biting, spitting, punching, or any other forms of violence, taking or hiding someone's things;
- Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, threats, teasing, making rude remarks, making fun of someone, also includes writing down hurtful material;
- Gestures: Offensive hand gestures, malicious imitation, or any bodily action intended to communicate a spiteful message;
- Indirect /emotional: excluding an individual from social groups, spreading nasty stories about a person, nasty rumours, tormenting, ridicule, humiliation;
- Online/cyber: setting up 'hate websites', sending offensive text messages, emails and abusing the victims via their mobile phones, 'trolling', creating, and sharing embarrassing or malicious images or videos, excluding from online group, hijacking identities.
- Initiation/'Ceremonies': practice of rituals, challenges and other activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group. The initiation rites can range from relatively benign pranks to protracted patterns of behaviour that can rise to the level of abuse or criminal misconduct. It may include physical or psychological abuse. It may include nudity or sexual assault and are aware this could look different at different ages in our school.

Direction of bullying (including Prejudiced-based bullying due to a protected characteristic):

- Cultural: Focusing on and/or playing off perceived cultural differences or similarities;
- Homophobic: focussing on the issue of sexuality directed towards people who are or are perceived as gay or bisexual;
- Racist: Targeting individuals for their race or ethnicity;
- Religious: Attacking faith, belief, religious practice or custom;
- Sexual: Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments;
- Sexist: Use of sexual language, negative stereotyping, or disrespectful actions on the basis of gender;
- SEND: Remarking upon, drawing attention to, or discriminating against persons with physical disabilities or learning difficulties or other identified special educational needs;
- Transphobic: bullying based on the topic of someone's gender identity;
- Personal: Bullying can be targeted at individuals for their recent actions, or their personal relationships/identity, outside of a wider group such as the categories above. Repeatedly targeting individuals for non-categorizable reasons or a combination of multiple factors still counts as bullying and will not be tolerated.

Pupils sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise, it is not classed as bullying. The school has pastoral systems in place to support with friendship and behaviour issues. This includes recording all incidents, so that any patterns can be identified and one-off incidents can be discounted as being the start of bullying.

4. Training

Through our online training portal Educare, INSETs, and other appropriate mediums, the School will provide training on the following areas:

- ensuring the principles of the School policy are understood;
- reporting and recording arrangements;
- ensuring legal responsibilities are known;
- ensuring action is defined to resolve and prevent problems, including in relation to on-line bullying;

- understanding that sources of support are available, particularly to understand the needs of and support pupils with protected characteristics (SEND, LGBT, etc).

5. School systems for reporting and monitoring bullying

When it is reported that a pupil is being bullied (either by themselves or by someone else) then action will be taken promptly and firmly, usually within a day. The allegation will be thoroughly investigated by the Head/ Assistant Heads (or nominated senior member of staff). Both victim and the alleged bully will be interviewed separately, and a record of the incident will be kept by the Senior Leadership Team. The bully will be informed that such behaviour is unacceptable and be made aware of the consequences of their actions (in line with our Behaviour and Discipline policy). Whenever an accusation is made, staff will gather as much information as possible to ascertain the facts before any action is taken, unless of course there appears to be a health and safety risk. The Head will monitor patterns of behaviour by protected characteristics so that action can be taken.

Procedures

Procedures should be followed by staff as closely as possible when a complaint of bullying is brought to their attention. In the first instance, care should be taken to reassure and comfort the victim and deal with the situation as quickly as is reasonably possible.

i.   Listen to the complaint carefully, make notes if necessary. Do not make judgments at this stage. Make a record using the Behaviour & Conduct Incident Log, copy to the Head who will place in the pupil files (instigator and victim). This enables staff to see if there is a pattern of bullying emerging and to decide whether parents should be informed.
ii.   Gather evidence to support the claim from other adults or pupils who may have witnessed the incident. (seek advice from senior colleagues if necessary). Hear what the victim and perpetrator have to say, really listening and allowing them to express their feelings at length.
iii. Convene a meeting of those involved in the bullying, including the instigators and some observers (the victim can be absent if they prefer)
iv.   Explain that there is a problem for the victim and recount their story in a clear way so that the feelings of distress are described.
v.   State that you know members of the group are responsible people and can do something about it.
vi.   Ask group members for suggestions about ways in which they might help and ensure that these are put into place. Follow-up to ensure that the matter has been resolved.
vii. All details of the procedure should be recorded, including whether the bullying is prejudice-based (of protected characteristics).

As per child-on-child abuse procedures, if staff suspect or know that a pupil is being harmed or is likely to suffer significant harm, that incidence of bullying is treated as a child protection concern, the DSL will be alerted, and school safeguarding procedures will be followed. Similarly, if a pupil is at risk of immediate harm, then staff will follow the School's safeguarding procedures and will report immediately to the LADO. Finally, if the School suspects or believes that a crime may have been committed, the School will inform the police.

In most cases, once a bullying incident has been reported and the pupil involved spoken to, there will be no further incidents. If bullying persists then the parents of both the bully and the victim will be informed and encouraged to work with the School to stop this from happening again. In such cases, the pupils involved will be highlighted to all staff to help monitor and prevent the bullying. The Head (or nominated senior member of staff) is responsible for conducting an investigation. **(The Head must be consulted before contacting parents.)**

Where it is found that a pupil is carrying out bullying, the Head (or nominated senior member of staff) arranges a separate meeting with the parents of both the bully and the victim. Both the victim and the

bully may be offered counselling and support. It may be necessary to exclude the bully if they do not stop bullying. Exclusions procedures will be followed (please see Admissions and Exclusions Policy).

Preventing Bullying

Staff should be familiar with the School's behaviour policy promoting positive behaviour through the school council, form discussions, assemblies, displays, stories, restorative conversations etc. Members of the school community should be encouraged to report instances of bullying straight away. Pupils may also be used to support other pupils e.g. circle of friends, peer mediation. Pupils should be made aware that being a bystander to bullying could mean being complicit in that bullying. Whistle-blowers who act in good faith will be supported irrespective of the outcome.

6. Who bullying can be reported to?

All members of staff take bullying seriously. Pupils are encouraged to tell someone straight away if they think they are being bullied or if one of their friends is being bullied, or if they find themselves as a bystander to a bullying situation. In assemblies/PSHCE lessons they are told they can tell any adult including:

- A member of staff in the playground
- Their class teacher
- Lunch time supervisors
- Classroom assistants
- Office staff
- The Head
- Their parents
- A friend or fellow pupil who is prepared to tell an adult

Parents should approach the form tutor in the first instance if they have concerns about their child being bullied. If their concerns continue, they can speak to the Assistant Head or Head.

If bullying remains a consistent problem, then reporting to, and asking for advice from external agencies (such as Bullying UK 0808 800 2222) may be necessary. Further helplines and agencies are listed at the end of this policy.

7. Support for Pupils

Victims will be:

- encouraged to confide in a named member of staff if the bullying continues;
- helped to develop positive strategies and appropriate assertive skills;
- monitored in class by teacher and in playground by meal supervisors;
- told how the bullies have been dealt with;
- encouraged to share feelings during class discussion times;
- supported through restorative justice methods if bullying persist.

Bullies will be:

- made aware of the seriousness of their actions and possible consequences;
- monitored in class by teacher and in playground by lunch time supervisors;
- where behaviour does not improve, have their own personal behaviour plan.

If bullying persists parents of victim and bullies will be informed and involved in the restorative justice process.

After the bullying has ceased, the pupils and families involved will continue to receive support from the School from time to time in order to ensure that incidents are not continuing.

All pupils will also be supported through the use of the curriculum, where it can be used to:

- raise awareness about bullying and the anti-bullying policy;
- increase understanding for victims, and help build an anti-bullying ethos;
- build resilience in pupils to protect themselves and their peers through education and information;
- teach pupils how constructively to manage their relationships with others.

At the School opportunities for pupils to discuss bullying and relationships are found through the following means:

- Assemblies
- Class assemblies
- Direct teaching through PSHCE
- Circle time
- Cooperative group work
- Restorative conversations
- Mentoring

Care is taken to include pupils with SEND in curriculum work about bullying in an appropriate way for their individual needs. The school recognises that pupils with SEND may be more vulnerable and at risk of being the victim of bullying and therefore maintain vigilance regarding this.

8. Boarders

As for all pupils in school, boarders should feel safe and secure, free from the threat of all forms of bullying and in an environment where they can be happy healthy and fulfilled.
The school recognises the very significant additional responsibilities they have with respect that resident in the School's boarding house with respect to pastoral and safeguarding matters. Houseparent's are responsible for inducting the boarders in all pastoral matters and provide the first point of contact for all concerns and pupil's immediate needs. The houseparent in charge holds extensive further documentation on matters relating to pastoral care in the Boarding House.

9. Bullying which occurs outside of school

St. James' School has the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises. Sections 90 and 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 say that a school's disciplinary powers can be used to address pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff, but only if it would be reasonable for the school to regulate pupils' behaviour in those circumstances.

This may include bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre. Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on.

The Head will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator in their local authority of the action taken against a pupil.

If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed. While school staff members have the power to discipline pupils for bullying that occurs outside school, they can only impose the disciplinary sanction and implement that sanction on the school premises or when the pupil is under the lawful control of school staff, for instance on a school trip.

10. Cyber Bullying

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click.

The Education Act 2011 amended the power in the Education Act 1996 to provide that when an electronic device, such as a mobile phone, has been confiscated by a member of staff who has been formally authorised by the headteacher, that staff member can examine data or files, and delete these, where there is good reason to do so.
This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone. If the Head believes there is reasonable evidence to support a criminal offence. The device must be given to the police.

11. Preventing Cyber-bullying

Mobile phones & technology are not permitted in school, if they are seen by a member of staff they will be confiscated and kept at reception and parents will be notified. This is to ensure that cyber bullying does not take place in school and that technology does not become a distraction in school. (Please see the behaviour policy for further details).

St. James' strives to ensure that all pupils feel the environment is safe and calm and that is free from disruption and in which education is the primary focus. Bullying can occur at any school although we believe that it is the impact of the actions a school has taken, i.e. how effectively schools prevent or deal with any incident that is key to preventing bullying/ cyber bullying. This process includes thorough investigation, discussions with all parties and clear consequences.
Pupils are regularly taught about cyberbullying & it's impacts in PSHE, assemblies and through restorative practice when incidents occur.

We strive to excel at tackling bullying have through a strong ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat one another and the school staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave.

That culture extends beyond the classroom to the corridors, the dining hall, the playground, and beyond the school gates including travel to and from school. Values of respect for staff and other pupils, an understanding of the value of education, and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others permeate the whole school environment and are reinforced by staff and older pupils who set a good example to the rest.

St. James' School does this through:
- Teaching respect, empathy & diversity in our school values
- Listening to our parents and pupils and ensuring all understand that poor behaviour & conduct with regards to bullying is not permitted.
- Regularly update reflect and update our procedures and acceptable use policy
- Use external organisations to help the teaching of bullying/ cyberbullying
- Provide effective staff training
- Make it easy for pupils to report bullying/ cyber-bullying – wearelistening@saintjamesschool.co.uk and annoymous voice box
- Create an inclusive environment that celebrates everyone's successes

12. SEND & Venerable pupils

While bullied children will not be routinely considered as requiring SEN support, schools and where appropriate local authorities should provide support in a proportionate and tailored way to meet individual needs. The relevant statutory guidance, the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years, sets out how developing a graduated response to the varying levels of SEN among children and young people is the best way to offer support. Some bullied children will have SEN.

St. James' does not separate or remove bullied pupils from school, even for a short time as it disrupts their education and can make it difficult for them to reintegrate. In itself it also fails to address the causes of the problem and can send the wrong message that victims of bullying are unwelcome. Instead, the school will respond sensitively where an absence arises as a result of bullying and we will do all we can to ensure bullied children continue to attend school. In addition to the examples of support listed above, this could include using separate on-site provision that provides respite for bullied pupils, whilst maintaining their educational progression. It is important that this support goes hand-in-hand with measures to tackle the bullying so that bullied children feel safe at school, and on their way to and from school.

St James' School will focus on supporting children to continue their education whilst meeting their individual needs, including social, emotional and health needs. In the majority of cases the aim of alternative provision should be to support reintegration back into mainstream education, working closely with pupils and their parents to agree a plan and timetable for return. When this is not successful the admissions policy will be followed and the local authority will be notified.

St. James' School will apply disciplinary measures to pupils who bully in order to show clearly that their behaviour is wrong. Disciplinary measures must be applied fairly, consistently, and reasonably taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable pupils. It is also important to consider the motivations behind bullying behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator. Where this is the case the child engaging in bullying may need support themselves. The organisations listed in the 'further information' section provide a range of practical resources for schools to help staff develop their own approaches to different issues which might motivate bullying and conflict.

13. Sources of further information support and help

There is a vast amount of information and guidance available about bullying that can provide a wide range of support and help. The following list is just a small selection of the support available that teachers, parents and pupils have found useful.

Childline	0800 1111 (Helpline for children)	www.childline.org.uk
Parentline Plus	0808 800 2222	www.parentline.org.uk
Anti-bullying Alliance	0207 843 1901	www.anti-bullyingalliance.org
NSPCC	0808 800 5000	www.nspcc.org.uk
Beat Bullying	0208 771 3377	www.beatbullying.org
Advisory Centre for Education	0808 800 5793	www.ace-ed.org.uk
Bullying Online	020 7378 1446	www.bullying.co.uk
Bully Free Zone	01204 454 958	www.bullyfreezone.co.uk
The Children's Legal Centre	01206 872 466	www.childrenslegalcentre.com
Anti-bullying Network	0131 651 6103	www.antibullying.net
Department for Education	0370 000 2288	https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education

Monitoring and evaluation of the policy

As with all our policies, the School will strive to ensure this policy is effective, follows the relevant guidance, and adheres to the principles of the School. This will be achieved through regular monitoring and evaluation by the Head, who holds the responsibility of this policy. During this review, amendments will be made where necessary and agreed upon with the Proprietor.

Date of Review	Position	Name of Reviewer	Date of Next Review
August 2023	Headteacher	Miss T. Harris	August 2024
August 2023	Proprietor	Mr A. Khan	August 2024