

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

This policy is applicable to Senior School Pupils only.

This Policy is available on the College website, or upon request from the School Administration Office.

In developing this policy, note has been taken of the useful non-statutory advice *Behaviour and Discipline in Schools: Advice for headteachers and school staff (January 2016)* and *Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies (October 2014)*.

The College takes Bullying extremely seriously, be it physical or emotional (which may cause psychological damage);

The staff and pupils at St. Lawrence College are fully committed to ensuring an environment in which a pupil can develop his/her own individuality with confidence and without fear. We believe that bullying is not a frequent occurrence here, but we are ever mindful of the risk of occurrence and the long-lasting impacts it can have.

What is bullying?

Bullying is behaviour that is repeated over time and intentionally hurts another pupil or group physically or emotionally. It is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disability, or because a child is adopted or is a carer. It may occur directly or through cyber-technology (e.g. social websites, mobile 'phones, text messages, photographs and email);

Bullying takes place through means which can be verbal (e.g. name-calling), indirect (e.g. exclusion) and physical (e.g. hitting).

As with other aspects of school discipline, we aim to educate our pupils about bullying, as well as setting out a disciplinary procedure.

We also hope to support both the victim and the bully, while still making it clear that no form of bullying is to be tolerated at St Lawrence College.

Tackling Bullying:

The college strives to make it is easy to report bullying, including cyber-bullying and bullying outside school. We are committed to responding and acting upon all reported instances of bullying and records are kept to evaluate the effectiveness of the approach adopted or to enable patterns to be identified.

Staff awareness of bullying issues and trends is raised through regular training (e.g by attending courses, seminars and visiting speakers) so that the principles of this policy are understood, legal responsibilities are known, ways of resolving and preventing problems are identified, and sources of support are made known and available.

Education:

- Every pupil has access to our 'Anti-Bullying' leaflet, an electronic version of which can be found on Firefly.
- Our Pastoral system and PSHE programme will enable pupils to discuss the topic and assess the reasons why it happens, and the effects on both victim and bully;
- The influence of good role models from senior pupils is also important;
- Pupils are made aware of the part they can play in preventing bullying not least when they find themselves as bystanders;
- The College recognises that parents need to be involved as they also have an important role to play in helping to educate, report and address bullying behaviour and to support their child whether they are the perpetrator or the victim.
- Through this policy, training and staff meetings, staff are aware that bullying can cause psychological

damage, and therefore need to be extra vigilant of vulnerable children. A bullying incident would be treated as a Safeguarding / Child Protection concern if there is reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. The DSL will be informed of all allegations of bullying.

Procedures and response:

- Our first concern is to prevent bullying rather than punish bullies;
- Initial instances of bullying will generally be dealt with sympathetically: it is important that the victim, or his peers, should feel able to go to House staff or other members of staff, knowing that they will try to resolve the matter by counselling both parties;
- Staff will make the relevant Housemaster/Housemistress aware of any instances of bullying which are reported to them as soon as possible. The Housemaster/Housemistress will then carry out a thorough investigation, which will normally include interviewing the pupils concerned and, where necessary, any witnesses. Pupils will also be asked to write statements. The Housemaster/Housemistress will then share this information the Deputy Head (Pastoral), who will have already been made aware of the situation. He will then decide on the appropriate course of action, both from a punitive and a pastoral perspective.
- Extreme or persistent bullying will be dealt with severely. The Head of College and parents will be involved, and this may lead to suspension or expulsion;
- Where the Deputy Head (Pastoral), who is also the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead, feels that the bullying incident needs to be treated as a child protection issue, he will follow the procedures outlined in the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy;
- The person responsible must pay for any damage to property.

Support:

- Pupils must be aware that there is a range of people to whom they can go for help and/or should refer to the school's document entitled "Problems, Help and Advice";
- This applies not only to victims, but also to bullies who are often unhappy about their actions;
- **Bullies must never be punished by bullying.** Physical or verbal abuse directed at a bully is not an acceptable response;
- Pupils are strongly encouraged to report bullying, either of themselves or of others. Protecting a bully by not reporting him/her never makes the problem go away;
- Pupils have the opportunity to make any comments regarding bullying in the annual pupil survey.

Cyber bullying:

Cyberbullying, which means the use of electronic equipment such as computers and mobile phones, involves new and increasingly complex forms and types of bullying such as impersonation and exclusion from social networking. It includes sending or posting harmful or cruel texts or images using the internet or other digital communications devices. The College takes online safety seriously and employs strict filters on all its internet access via WiFi and computers. However with increasing availability to pupils of devices that give unrestricted access to the internet, the College actively encourages teachers and parents to be vigilant both at school and at home. Additionally, pupils are encouraged to stay safe on line by following the guidelines listed below and in our leaflet 'e-Safety Advice to Pupils'.

Advice to young people

- Don't reply to an abusive message, it encourages the bully;
- Keep a record of any event/message (needed for Police, ISP, Mobile Co. to trace);
- Think before you send pictures; they can spread beyond your circle of friends;
- If you receive a rude message or image don't forward it, you could be breaking the law/assisting the bully;
- Make sure you tell someone (offline you would probably tell someone earlier);
- Don't let anyone else have your password.

Peer on Peer Abuse:

As a school we recognise the gendered nature of peer-on-peer abuse whilst acknowledging that all peer-on-peer abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously. The different forms peer-on-peer abuse can take include bullying (including cyber-bullying), sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse, sexting; initiation/ hazing type violence and rituals; upskirting.

Pupils who are concerned about any form of peer-on-peer abuse may wish to report it to the **NSPCC (Report Abuse in Education) Helpline** - 0800 136 663

The School will take all reasonable measures to minimise the risk of peer-on-peer abuse, including:
Adopting a whole school approach to safeguarding & child protection
Providing training to staff and to Prefects/Senior Pupils
Providing a clear set of values and standards, underpinned by the College's behaviour policy and pastoral support system, and by a planned programme of evidence-based content delivered through the curriculum.
Allocating time in assemblies and PSHE to discussions about what constitutes appropriate behaviour and why bullying and a lack of respect for others is never acceptable
Engaging with specialist support and interventions.

Dealing with allegations of peer-on-peer abuse:

Any allegations of peer-on-peer abuse will be taken seriously by the school and treated as a child protection concern if there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh' or 'part of growing up'. A pupil against whom an allegation of abuse has been made may be suspended from the College during the investigation and the College's policies on behaviour, discipline and sanctions will apply. The College will take advice from children's social care on the investigation of such allegations and will take appropriate action to ensure the safety and welfare of all pupils involved including the pupil or pupils accused of abuse. If it is necessary for a pupil to be interviewed by the police in relation to allegations of abuse, the College will ensure that, subject to the advice of children's social care, parents are informed as soon as possible and that the pupil is supported during the interview by an appropriate adult. In the case of pupils whose parents are abroad, the pupil's guardian will be requested to provide support to the pupil and to accommodate him/her if it is necessary to suspend him/her during the investigation. Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) will be appropriately supported in order to reduce any additional barriers that may prevent the recognition and discussion of abuse and neglect. Where an allegation is made against a pupil, both the victim and the perpetrator will be treated as being at risk and safeguarding procedures in accordance with this policy will be followed. The DSL will keep secure written and electronic records of all incidents.

Records:

- The Deputy Head (Pastoral) keeps a record of all instances of bullying that have been reported, together with information about the sanction applied.
- The number of instances of bullying is included in the annual report for the Education and Welfare Committee. As part of this, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) will make Governors aware of any particular trends which have been identified
- The Deputy Head (Pastoral), in his capacity as Designated Safeguarding Lead, will make sure that the Safeguarding Governor is made aware of any bullying incidents which are a child protection issue.

See also:

- ◇ Are you worried about bullying? (leaflet)
- ◇ Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- ◇ IT Acceptable Use Policy
- ◇ E-Safety Policy
- ◇ E-Safety Advice to Pupils (leaflet)
- ◇ Mobile Phone AUP
- ◇ Social Media Policy
- ◇ PSHE Policy

This policy will be reviewed in accordance with the Policy Review Schedule

REVISION HISTORY

Version No.	Revision Date	Summary of change	Approved by	Updated by
1.1	12/03/18	More detail on staff procedures and recording of incidents	ASp	DJJ
1.2	14/03/18	Sentence added about bullying of vulnerable children being a CP issue	DJJ	PJW
1.3	13/03/20	Clause re psychological damage	DJJ	JAC
1.4	01/06/21	Peer on peer abuse section added	TM	TM