



ST JAMES

Preparatory School

Anti-Bullying Policy

2025-2026

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Aims and objectives

The School aims to teach the value of kindness, integrity, morality, a concern for others and to develop pupils' self-confidence and independence so that they are well-equipped to play an active role in society. The Behaviour and Discipline Policy explicitly states that pupils should show courtesy, respect and consideration for all. Members of the school community, pupils or staff, should be free from the fear of bullying. Everyone should feel able to speak out and report any concerns about bullying in the knowledge that they will be listened to and that the matter will be investigated. Bullying has not been and will not be tolerated at St James Preparatory School.

The School aims to provide a secure, happy and caring environment for pupils and staff to ensure that they are safe to learn and develop unimpeded by fear. Recognising that bullying amongst any members of the School community is unacceptable is enshrined in our ethos and the duty of care that we have towards pupils and staff. Bullying can cause serious and long-term psychological damage to victims. It affects well-being in childhood but can also have a lasting effect on life well into adulthood and in some cases has been known to lead to suicide. Where bullying is found to have taken place by any means, and whether on or off the school site, robust action will be taken to protect the wellbeing of pupils and staff.

The aims and objectives of this policy are:

- To promote and safeguard the welfare of pupils and staff;
- To demonstrate that the School takes bullying seriously and that it will not be tolerated;
- To define bullying;
- To outline how bullying may be recognised;
- To explain how this policy is implemented by detailing the measures that are in place to prevent bullying and promote a culture of integrity, kindness and tolerance;
- To detail how incidences of bullying are addressed at St James Preparatory School;
- To state who is responsible for the implementation of this policy.

What is bullying?

Bullying is hurtful behaviour that usually occurs over a period of time, though it also may be an isolated incident. It is behaviour that a reasonable bystander would say was calculated or intended to hurt or upset the victim. It is behaviour that harasses, humiliates or intimidates others. It may be intentional or sometimes can result from thoughtlessness. It may take the form of teasing, physical assault, verbal criticism, name calling, harassment on the grounds, for example that someone has different coloured skin, the way they talk, their size or their name, and cyberbullying (bullying via mobile phone or online). The following could all constitute claims of bullying or harassment: racism, sexual bullying, negative remarks about appearance, health conditions or home circumstances, nationality, religion or culture, disability, gender or sexual orientation, special educational needs or disability or because a child is adopted or is a carer.

Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways; it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

Relational Aggression

Relational aggression is defined as behaviour that harms others through damage to relationships or feelings of acceptance, friendship, or group inclusion. It is a deliberate intention to damage a pupil's peer relationships or social standing, and ultimately cause social exclusion. It can therefore be covert or overt.

Examples include:

- Teasing;
- Embarrassing someone;
- Imitating someone behind their back;
- Breaking secrets;
- Spreading rumours, gossiping and whispering;
- Sending abusive notes;
- Maliciously excluding someone;
- Coercive behaviour;
- Not allowing someone to sit with or near you;

Cyberbullying

'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.'

'Cyberbullying can be an extension of face to face bullying. It differs in several significant ways from other kinds of bullying: the invasion of home and personal space; the difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages; the size of the audience; perceived anonymity; and even the profile of the person doing the bullying and their target.'

For further information and guidance about cyberbullying and e-safety, please see the Department of Education's advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying (2014). The appendix to this policy contains helpful links to other departmental advice and guidance. The Prep School runs regular e-safety parent workshops.

The active management of hardware, software and connectivity, and the vigilance of teachers and parents have a part to play in the safeguarding and protection of pupils.

Bullying outside school premises

Bullying that takes place outside of school and which is reported to school staff, will be investigated and acted on. The Deputy Head, in connection with the Head, will consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or Children's Services in the event of the matter being deemed a safeguarding concern. They will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the 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 will be informed.

How does bullying differ from teasing or friendship difficulties?

Sometimes pupils can feel hurt or upset because they have fallen out with a friend. This is not always the same as bullying. Staff are ready to help and support pupils who have fallen out with friends, but such situations may not be treated in the same way as a case of bullying, if it does

not seem helpful to the pupil's development and personal growth to do so. However, the strategies used may be similar because over a period of time the situation could become bullying if it escalates.

Examples of bullying behaviour

Whilst this policy cites the following as potential examples of bullying behaviour these are not limited and pastoral staff may deem other actions, not listed here, to constitute bullying.

- Physical bullying may include: fighting; damaging or hiding someone else's belongings or clothes; setting up someone else to get the blame for a breach of school rules; initiation ceremonies.
- Emotional or psychological bullying may include: excluding someone from a group, activity or place; spreading rumours, being deliberately unfriendly; unpleasant emails or telephone calls or unpleasant material placed on social networking sites.
- Verbal bullying may include aggressive name-calling, teasing, mockery, insults, and "banter".
- Sexual violence and harassment include making inappropriate comments about appearance and attractiveness, uninvited propositions, uninvited touching and using innuendo or inappropriate imagery.
- Child-on-child abuse (including relationship abuse, sexting, sexual exploitation and youth violence).
- Examples of cyberbullying include: sending threatening or abusive text messages, creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos, trolling - the sending of menacing or upsetting images on social networks, chat rooms or online games, excluding children from online games, activities or friendship groups, setting up hate sites or groups, encouraging young people to self-harm, 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.

We monitor and filter any device connected to the school network or to the wireless network via our filtering and monitoring system, Securly. Prep School pupils are educated as to good and safe use of digital technologies.

What are the signs of bullying?

Changes in behaviour that may indicate a pupil is being bullied include:

- Unwillingness to go to school or return after a break
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually bad work, work that appears to have been copied, or interfered with or spoiled by others
- Belongings suddenly going missing or being damaged
- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, sitting in the library instead of going out at playtime)
- Diminished levels of self confidence
- Inability to concentrate
- Anxiety, depression, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet
- Repressed body language and poor eye contact
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class
- Reluctance to leave the classroom at the end of lessons or school day

- Choosing the company of adults
- Frequent visits to the medical centre with symptoms such as stomach pains or headaches, especially at particular times or during particular lessons
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Difficulty in sleeping, nightmares
- Talking of suicide or running away

Procedures for dealing with Bullying

Pupils

If you are being bullied or suspect someone else is being bullied it is very important to tell someone who may be able to help. This may be a friend, a member of your family, your Form Teacher, your Head of Pastoral or Head of Academic, the School Matron, Deputy Head or Head; or anyone else you feel you can confide in. It is important to share with another person any concern about bullying which is worrying you. You should never just be a 'bystander'; let someone know what is happening.

Staff

Staff who have concerns about bullying should tell an appropriate person (in most cases this will be the Head of Pastoral or Head of Upper School). See Appendix 4 for the procedures for dealing with an incident of bullying.

If a member of staff witnesses an incident they should:

- Stay calm, don't make snap decisions or attach blame
- Refer to 'unkind behaviour' rather than the 'bully'
- State briefly why the behaviour is unacceptable
- Assure all concerned that the incident will be treated seriously, and further action will be taken
- Be sensitive to what the child is saying and make a record of what has been said
- Do not promise confidentiality and reassure the child that they were right to speak
- Ensure that the child is safe to resume their lesson or

activity THEN

- Refer the incident as soon as possible to the relevant Head of Pastoral or Head of Upper School, who will inform the Deputy Head as appropriate.
- Record the incident (on the CPOMS reporting system if they have access to this) stating the child's name and any others involved, including witnesses, date, time and place. Give any brief details of injuries suffered.
- The Head of Pastoral or Head of Academic will ensure that the record of the incident and any action taken, including notification of parents, will be stored on the pupil's file so that patterns can be identified over time.

Parents

Parents who have concerns about bullying should tell an appropriate person. In most cases this will be the Head of Pastoral or Head of Academic but, where there is a cause for serious concern, or if the problem continues, the Head must be informed in writing.

Implementation of this policy

In promoting a culture which rejects bullying St James Prep School takes the following steps:

- The Behaviour and Discipline Policy explicitly states that pupils should show courtesy, respect and consideration for others and that bullying is not tolerated here.
- Staff are made aware through regular training that any type of bullying behaviour may also constitute peer on peer abuse and therefore warrant a response under safeguarding as well as anti-bullying procedures. This will always be the case if there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. Below this threshold, it is more likely to be the case if the allegation: is made against an older pupil and refers to their behaviour towards a younger or more vulnerable pupil; is of a very serious nature; or raises risk factors for other children within or outside the School.
- Pupils and staff are regularly reminded of their responsibility to ensure that bullying does not occur and that they should speak to a relevant member of staff if they witness or suspect bullying
- Positive values of integrity, morality, the avoidance of prejudice-based language and a concern for others will be promoted in a range of contexts including assembly, drama, literature, philosophy lessons and form time.
- The PSHE course addresses bullying, relational aggression, friendship issues and cyberbullying and Form Teachers remind their form groups at the start of each academic year of their responsibility to ensure that they neither perpetrate bullying behaviour nor are a bystander to it.
- Talks to students, staff and parents (at our regular parental seminars) by outside speakers help to raise awareness of issues surrounding bullying including peer on peer abuse and cyberbullying.
- In the event of an observed or reported instance of bullying, the facts will be ascertained from the victim(s), alleged perpetrator(s) and witness(es). The member of staff contacted/witness will record who was involved, what happened, when and where. This will be passed to the relevant Form Teacher and/or Head of Pastoral or Head of Upper School. The Deputy Head (also designated safeguarding lead) must be informed of all suspicions and incidents of bullying.
- The school will keep parents informed if it is dealing with a bullying situation. Parents are asked to let the School know directly if they have cause for concern. The School always tries to handle information discreetly, but staff are not able to promise confidentiality particularly if there are safeguarding concerns or if the matter becomes part of an investigation into serious misconduct. If matters need to be followed up the staff will do so with sensitivity

- Once investigated, every effort will be made to resolve the problem through support of both parties, this will seek to help the victim(s) and change the behaviour of the perpetrator(s). The School acknowledges that in some circumstances the consequences of bullying may lead to a student experiencing pronounced social, emotional or mental health difficulties. The School has a responsibility to support students who are bullied and to make appropriate provision for their needs. The nature and level of support will depend on the individual circumstances and the level of need.
- For all incidents of bullying (whether isolated or occurring over a period), disciplinary sanctions will normally be applied, and this may extend to suspension, a requirement to leave or in the gravest cases of severe or persistent bullying - expulsion. Support may, however, be maintained for both parties even after certain sanctions have been applied.
- The Deputy Head, in consultation with the Head, will decide whether any external agencies need to be notified of bullying incidences. Possibilities include notifying the police or Children's Services. Whilst bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, some types of harassing or threatening behaviour - or communications - may constitute a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003 and the Public Order Act 1986.
- The Deputy Head will keep a record of all incidences of bullying and seek to identify patterns of bullying in order to decide what action needs to be taken to prevent similar occurrences.

Responsibility for this policy

Responsibility for ensuring that St James Preparatory School promotes and maintains a culture in which bullying is not tolerated rests with all staff. However, the Deputy Head, the team of Safeguarding Leads and Head of Pastoral or Head of Academic provide first line accountability and expertise.

The School has a duty of care towards the students and should an instance of bullying raise child protection concerns, the School's Safeguarding (Child Protection) policy will be implemented. The Deputy Head is the Designated Safeguarding Lead responsible for dealing with matters relating to child protection and welfare.

Staff are regularly trained and know how to identify signs of bullying. It is clearly understood that early intervention and parental involvement are key in successfully dealing with allegations of bullying.

The Deputy Head holds a central record of bullying incidents to identify any patterns or specific areas of concern. Incidents of bullying are reported to Governors termly as part of our regular review of safeguarding.

Appendix 1: Related Policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Acceptable Use and E-Safety
- PSHE Policy
- Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions Policy (which includes the Expulsion, Removal and Review Policy)

For further information about dealing with bullying we refer to the following three DfE documents:

- Preventing and Tackling Bullying (2017).
- Cyberbullying: Advice for head teachers and school staff (2014)
- Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying (2014)

Appendix 2: Who can I talk to about bullying?

All pupils are encouraged to share any concerns that they may have about themselves or others with their Form Teacher or Head of Pastoral or Head of Academic. Alternatively, of course, pupils can talk to any teacher and the School Nurse is also available in her office by reception. The Deputy Head and Head are often available in their offices and are always willing to talk to pupils who have any worries.

Parents who have concerns about their child or others may seek help through the same channels. Head of Academic: Ms Rachael Simmons

Head of Pastoral: Mr Erik Edwards

Deputy Head: Mrs Nicola Scott-Phillips

School Nurse: Mrs Kathy Main

Appendix 3: Where can I get help from outside bodies

We feel that we can help children most effectively if they are willing to share concerns with us. However, we also recognise there are some situations in which a student may not feel comfortable talking to their teachers. These external organisations may be able to help in those instances.

Childline	https://www.childline.org.uk/	0800 1111	Childline is a free, confidential helpline for children and young people. They offer advice and support, by phone and online, 24 hours a day. They have a designated page for bullying issues that includes a new video about building up your confidence after bullying.
EACH	https://each.education	0808 1000 143	EACH has a Freephone Helpline for children experiencing homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying or harassment. It is open Monday to Friday 10.00am - 5.00pm.
Victim Support	https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/	0808 1689 111	Victim Support: Can offer support to young people affected by crime. Their Children and Young People's (CYP) Service also deals with cases of bullying; offering advice and working with professionals to ensure young people get the support they need.
The National Bullying Helpline	https://www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk	0845 2255 787	The National Bullying Helpline offers bullying advice for students and parents from playground bullying to threatening and violent behaviour.

The websites below have information and advice for parents/carers and students on bullying:

- The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) maintains a website for children and young people, and parents and carers about staying safe online. <https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>
- Think U Know: <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>
- Anti-Bullying Alliance <https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>

- Bullying UK <https://www.bullying.co.uk/>
- Childline <https://www.childline.org.uk/>
- The Diana Award <https://diana-award.org.uk/>
- Internet Matters <https://www.internetmatters.org/>
- Kidscape <https://www.kidscape.org.uk/>
(Information for young people reporting cyberbullying)
- The UK Safer Internet Centre <https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/>
- UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis>
- Direct Gov <https://www.gov.uk/bullying-at-school>

Appendix 4: Procedures

Staff will undertake to follow the procedures detailed below:

1. Never ignore suspected bullying - listen, believe, act - without prejudice
2. Listen carefully to all accounts (several pupils with the same version does not necessarily mean they are telling the truth)
3. Avoid premature assumptions
4. Report bullying incidents to the Head of Pastoral or Head Academic, who will in turn report to the Deputy Head and Head.
5. Record on CPOMS all details of conversations in all cases where bullying is reported by a child, parent or member of staff

6. A member of Senior Management will investigate bullying behaviour or threats of bullying

Investigating may be started by the form teacher or teachers involved and continued by SMT at the point where the behaviour is deemed as more serious.

7. Where allegations are substantiated point out to the perpetrator that what he/she is doing constitutes bullying behaviour and that such behaviour must stop immediately
8. If the behaviour continues the parents would be informed and an appropriate Programme for dealing with Bullying instigated. (See below) - the aim would be to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour
9. The person being bullied must be supported and confidentiality maintained, as must the person bullying
10. In serious cases, parents would be informed immediately and asked to come in for a meeting to discuss the problem with the child
11. If the discipline procedure proves ineffective the staged procedure for exclusion may have to be invoked (see Policy for Exclusion)
12. In extreme cases consultation with the Head may be necessary to consider if appropriate to inform the police

Outcomes

1. The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may occur. Approaches to clear the air will be discussed. A round table approach, with all parties appropriately supported, will be used
2. In serious or reoccurring cases, exclusion may be considered (see Policy for Exclusion)
3. If possible, the pupils will be reconciled
4. After the incident/incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place. (See Plan for dealing with bullying)

5. Detailed records of all procedures undertaken will be kept on CPOMS

6. The Bullying log is regularly updated. The Deputy Head is responsible for the Bullying log which will be discussed at SLT level as appropriate but at least Termly as a rolling agenda item.

Plan for dealing with bullying

- Every detail of the bullying incidents and those involved must be recorded on CPOMS
- The Form Teacher, Head of Pastoral or **Head of Academic** and the Deputy Head must be informed and they will inform the Head
- Opportunities for further bullying must be prevented - e.g. bully may have movements restricted particularly when adult supervision is less structured
- The bully may be put on a daily report where each teacher or playground assistant reports on his/her behaviour for each separate lesson, lunch and playtime. The report card must be shown to the Form Teacher at the end of the day or to a specified senior teacher
- Parents must be informed and may be part of the daily report
- The bully victim should have the opportunity to report to his or her Form Teacher on a regular basis until he or she is feeling better and can confirm that the bullying has stopped.
- The bully may have regular meetings with a trusted teacher in order to unpick why he or she might feel the need to bully and also to change the pattern of bullying behaviour
- A review date should be fixed and agreed with the Form Teacher, parents, the senior teacher and the children involved to ensure that the bullying has stopped and that the sanctions may be lifted
- If no progress is made and further incidents of bullying occur a period of exclusion may be enforced at the discretion of the Head.

- Keeping records (on CPOMS) at every stage is essential.