



ANTI-BULLYING & HARASSMENT POLICY

2026–2027

Document Title	Anti-bullying and Harassment Policy
Policy Owner	Deputy Head (Pastoral)
Responsible Officer	Deputy Head (Pastoral)
Approved by	Head and Governing Body
Applicable to	Whole College (Day and Boarding Students)
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St Andrew's College is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our students and staff. Bullying and harassment of any kind are not tolerated at the College. We expect all staff to be alert to bullying or harassment and to follow the College's anti-bullying, harassment and safeguarding procedures.

What is bullying?

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behaviour that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both those who are bullied and those who bully others may experience serious, lasting problems, including physical, mental or emotional harm.

Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumours, attacking someone physically or verbally, and deliberately excluding someone from a group. Bullying can occur between students or between staff and students.

Bullying may occur in person or online and may take place within or outside the College where it affects the wellbeing or safety of a student or the College community.

What is harassment?

Harassment is unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Harassment can be a single serious incident or a pattern of behaviour and may overlap with bullying.

The College recognises that students and staff may be particularly vulnerable to bullying, harassment or discrimination because of protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, including sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation and gender reassignment.



Bullying, harassment or discrimination based on an actual or perceived protected characteristic, or because of association with someone who has a protected characteristic, will be taken seriously.

Forms of bullying and harassment

Bullying and harassment may be:

- **Physical** – pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching or any use of violence.
- **Verbal** – name-calling, sarcasm, teasing, insulting, making threats, spreading rumours, or making racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic or otherwise discriminatory comments, including comments relating to disability, religion, culture or other protected characteristics.
- **Emotional** – being deliberately unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, humiliating, threatening or intimidating someone, including through gestures or graffiti.
- **Sexual** – unwanted physical contact, sexual comments, sexualised behaviour or other unwanted conduct of a sexual nature.
- **Electronic or cyber** – using electronic forms of communication to bully or harass, including text messaging, social media, chat rooms, emails, messaging platforms or posting offensive or harmful material online.

Sexual harassment and sexual violence are safeguarding matters. They must not be dismissed as "banter", "just a joke" or normal behaviour between young people and must be dealt with in accordance with the College's Safeguarding Policy and relevant safeguarding procedures.

What is hazing?

Hazing is any action, activity or behaviour—whether physical, emotional or psychological—required of a student as a condition of joining, participating in or remaining part of a group, team, club or organisation, that causes or is likely to cause harm, humiliation, embarrassment or discomfort.

Hazing can occur with or without the person's consent and is considered misconduct even if students view it as "tradition", "team bonding" or "just a joke".

Examples of hazing

- Physical tasks or endurance activities that cause pain, injury or fatigue.
- Activities that humiliate or degrade, such as embarrassing clothing or public shaming.
- Forced consumption of food, drink or substances.



- Coerced participation in illegal, dangerous or inappropriate acts.
- Social isolation or threats used to pressure students.
- Any activity that creates fear, emotional distress or unsafe conditions.

Key principles

- Hazing is prohibited in all College programmes and activities, both on and off campus.
- Consent is not a defence—students cannot agree to be hazed.
- Staff and students must report suspected hazing immediately.
- Staff are responsible for ensuring that all initiation or bonding activities are positive, inclusive and safe.

Bullying, harassment and hazing may constitute **child-on-child abuse**. Where this is suspected, the College's Safeguarding Policy and procedures for responding to child-on-child abuse must be followed.

Prevention of bullying, harassment and hazing

St Andrew's College aims to prevent bullying, harassment and hazing by:

- Promoting an environment where bullying and harassment are openly acknowledged and where "telling" is safe and encouraged.
- Building the confidence of students and staff by valuing them as individuals and celebrating success through regular awards and recognition.
- Making students and staff aware of expected standards of behaviour and what constitutes unacceptable behaviour.
- Including education about bullying, harassment, discrimination and respectful relationships within the PSHE curriculum and staff training.
- Welcoming diversity and promoting equality and inclusion.
- Expecting all staff to provide a positive role model to students.
- Ensuring clear communication between staff regarding student behaviour and wellbeing.
- **Being vigilant to signs of unhappiness, distress or changes in behaviour or character.**
- Ensuring adequate supervision of students.



- Displaying anti-bullying and harassment information in appropriate areas of College buildings.
- Making clear to students who they can speak to if they are experiencing or witnessing bullying or harassment.
- Providing advice on online safety and what to do in the event of negative or harmful contact online.
- Including child-on-child abuse, bullying, harassment and hazing in safeguarding training for staff.

As a boarding College, particular consideration will be given to the safety and wellbeing of boarders who may have limited opportunity to be away from those involved in bullying or harassment. Appropriate measures will be taken to ensure that boarders can feel and remain safe within the boarding environment.

Reporting concerns

Students are encouraged to report bullying, harassment or hazing affecting themselves or another student to any member of staff they trust. Staff must take reports seriously and ensure that concerns are passed to the appropriate member of staff.

Reports may be made directly by the student affected, by another student, by a parent or guardian, or by a member of staff.

Students should never be expected to resolve bullying or harassment themselves.

Procedure

When bullying or harassment is identified or suspected, the following action should be taken promptly:

- A senior member of staff should be informed, usually the Deputy Head Boarding and Pastoral Care, or, if unavailable, another member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy DSL must be informed where the matter raises a safeguarding concern or may constitute child-on-child abuse.
- The student affected should be reassured, supported and kept safe.
- Appropriate steps should be taken to prevent further bullying or harassment while the matter is being considered.
- Where appropriate and having regard to safeguarding considerations, those involved may be spoken to separately and written accounts may be recorded.



- Sexual violence, sexual harassment and other behaviour that may constitute child-on-child abuse must be dealt with in accordance with the College's Safeguarding Policy and relevant safeguarding procedures.
- Parents and/or guardians will normally be informed where appropriate and in accordance with safeguarding, confidentiality and information-sharing requirements.
- Appropriate support will be given to the student affected.
- Students found to have bullied or harassed others will be given appropriate advice and support to help them understand and manage their behaviour.
- Appropriate sanctions may be applied in accordance with the College's Student Behaviour Policy and, where applicable, the Exclusions and Suspensions Procedure.
- Clear records must be made of incidents and kept securely, in accordance with the College's record-keeping and data protection arrangements, to monitor trends and inform improvements.
- Where bullying, harassment or discrimination relates to a protected characteristic, this must be recorded so that the College can monitor patterns and the effectiveness of its equality and inclusion work.

Safeguarding

Bullying or harassment can become a child protection or safeguarding issue. If there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer harm, the DSL must be informed and the College's Safeguarding Policy must be followed.

Staff should be alert to the possibility that bullying, harassment or hazing may form part of wider abuse, exploitation or other safeguarding concerns. Safeguarding concerns must not be treated solely as behavioural matters.

Where appropriate, this may include referral to the local Children's Social Care team or the police. Contact details and procedures are contained within the College's Safeguarding Policy.

Concerns involving staff

St Andrew's College recognises that bullying or harassment may occur between students, between staff and students, or between fellow staff members, including teaching, residential, administrative and support staff.

Where a concern or allegation about a member of staff may indicate that they have harmed a child or may pose a risk of harm to a child, the concern must be reported immediately in



accordance with the College's Safeguarding Policy and procedures for managing allegations against staff.

The College will follow the appropriate safeguarding process, including consultation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where required. Such concerns must not be dealt with solely under the College's disciplinary procedures.

Where a concern relates to bullying or harassment between staff members and does not raise a safeguarding concern, the matter will be dealt with under the College's relevant staff policies and procedures.

Sanctions

Bullying, harassment and hazing are serious matters and may result in disciplinary action.

Sanctions will be applied in accordance with the College's Student Behaviour Policy and, where applicable, the Exclusions and Suspensions Procedure. Depending on the seriousness and circumstances of the incident, these may include:

- A formal warning.
- A behavioural report or other appropriate monitoring.
- Involvement of parents or guardians, where appropriate.
- Internal exclusion.
- Suspension.
- Permanent exclusion from the College.
- Reporting to the police where the behaviour may constitute a criminal offence.

The College will consider the circumstances and seriousness of each incident, including any safeguarding concerns, the impact on those affected, whether the behaviour is discriminatory, whether there has been repetition or escalation, and any relevant previous behaviour.

Related policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the College's:

- Safeguarding Policy.
- Student Behaviour Policy.
- Equality and Diversity Policy.
- Staff Code of Conduct.



- Exclusions and Suspensions Procedure.
- Disciplinary Procedures.
- Online Safety and Acceptable Use arrangements.
- Boarding policies and procedures.

Policy review: August 2027