

S. Anselm's School



S. Anselm's
Prep School
Peak District

Policy Title: Anti-bullying Policy

Policy Category: Pastoral

Policy Number: P3

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1. Introduction

The School is committed to meeting ISI and Ofsted expectations that safeguarding and pupil wellbeing are prioritised through a vigilant, proactive, whole-school approach, including the early identification of concerns, consistent and accurate recording, and effective, timely responses in line with KCSIE, ensuring that all pupils are protected and supported.

This policy has two main purposes: first, to support a whole-school approach to preventing and responding to bullying, alongside the responsibilities of trustees and senior leaders; and second, to raise awareness across the school community: pupils, parents, staff, and partner agencies, so that bullying is recognised and addressed collaboratively within a wider community context.

The function of the school is to provide the optimum standard of education for all its pupils. The School actively promotes a culture where bullying is less likely to occur through clear expectations, strong relationships, staff visibility and curriculum work on respect and inclusion. A safe and secure environment is essential to achieving this goal. Bullying thrives in an atmosphere of uncertainty, secrecy, and fear and by its very nature undermines and weakens the quality of education and imposes psychological damage. Therefore, bullying is an issue which must be positively and firmly addressed through school and local community-based measures and strategies.

Bullying affects not only those immediately involved – it affects everyone in the classroom, families, the school community and ultimately, the wider society. A high degree of collective vigilance is needed if bullying is to be detected and dealt with in an appropriate way.

Although there is no legal definition of bullying, it is generally understood as behaviour intended to cause physical or emotional harm, which may be repeated or occur as a serious one-off incident, particularly where there is a power imbalance or safeguarding concern (KCSIE 2026). National data indicates that around one in five pupils experience bullying each year, underlining its prevalence. Given its impact, the School adopts a clear zero-tolerance approach and is committed to preventing bullying.

All concerns and allegations, including those occurring online, are taken seriously, investigated thoroughly, and addressed promptly. Staff are expected to remain vigilant at all times, particularly during unstructured periods, and to report concerns immediately to the Head, Head of Phase or DSL. Concerns should also be raised in staff and phase meetings, and staff on duty must actively supervise all areas, including changing rooms and toilets.

The children are addressed quite openly if it is felt something is amiss by form teacher, Head of Phase, or the Head, dependent on circumstance. Every child receives annual education on bullying, and the school actively participates in National Anti-Bullying Week each

November to raise awareness. The key messages about how bullying is addressed are also an integral part of the school's pupil planner, ensuring that expectations and procedures are clearly communicated.

Parent concerns are taken seriously and investigated fully. This policy is displayed on our website for easy access and there are key reminders in our school weekly bulletin, especially during Anti-bullying week.

2. What is Bullying?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. It is easily understood by the acronym STOP – Several Times On Purpose. In September 2020 the DfE updated their own definition to include a serious one-off incident and we have consequently expanded our definition here at S. Anselm's.

Bullying can take many forms (for instance, physical aggression or cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups with protected characteristics, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs and disability or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. When bullying incidents involve those with protected characteristics, these are recorded within a Protected Characteristic Log which can be found stored securely in the school office.

Many experts recognise that bullying often involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This imbalance may be physical, psychological, social or emotional, arising from factors such as popularity, group influence, access to technology, or knowledge of what may cause distress. It can make it difficult for the individual to defend themselves or seek support. Bullying may therefore include intimidation, coercion, or deliberate exclusion, both in person and online. Schools should be alert to the fact that power imbalances can shift over time and may not always be immediately apparent, particularly in cases of relational or cyberbullying (KCSIE 2026; Anti-Bullying Alliance).

3. Types of Bullying

Bullying generally is repeated, with intent, and can cover a very wide range of activity. It may also include prejudice-based bullying (including that related to protected characteristics), relational aggression, and peer-on-peer abuse which may, in some cases, meet safeguarding thresholds and require consideration under the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Pupil Behaviour

i) Physical aggression

This includes pushing, shoving, kicking and punching – it may also take the form of severe physical assault. In extreme cases, weapons, such as knives, might be used.

ii) Verbal

Here the voice is used as a weapon. It may be in the form of persistent name-calling directed at the same individual(s) which humiliates, hurts or insults. This bullying is often directed at the victim because of physical appearance, accent or distinct voice characteristics and academic ability of both high and low achievers. Name-calling may also take the form of suggestive remarks about a pupil's sexual orientation. Bullying can therefore also be racist, sexist and/or homophobic and may target protected characteristics.

iii) Intimidation

This is based on the use of very aggressive body language and tone of voice where the victim is pressurised to do something that he/she does not want to. The bully's facial expression or 'look' can convey aggression and/or dislike. Threats are consistently used to undermine the victim's confidence. This can also be experienced online and conveyed through language and tone.

iv) Exclusion / Relational Aggression

This practice is usually initiated by the bully. The victim is purposely isolated, excluded or ignored by some or the entire class group. This may include manipulating friendships, spreading rumours, or deliberately undermining social relationships. It may be compounded by circulating notes, whispering insults which can be overheard, or writing derogatory remarks either in person or online.

v) Extortion

Money or favours may be demanded, and the victim threatened if he/she does not comply. The victim may be coerced into stealing for the bully. Such tactics may be employed to exploit or incriminate the victim and may occur in person or online.

vi) Damage to property

The bully may focus on the victim's property. As a result, schoolbooks or other personal property may be damaged, stolen or hidden.

vii) Cyber Bullying (See also the Online Safety Policy)

Given the increasing use of digital communication, it is essential that the School remains vigilant to bullying taking place online. Cyberbullying is taken very seriously at S. Anselm's and is recognised as a safeguarding concern where appropriate.

Cyberbullying is the use of technology to deliberately upset, harm or intimidate another person. This may take place through mobile phones, email, social media, online gaming platforms or other digital communication tools. It can be particularly harmful due to its potential anonymity; its audience reach and the difficulty of removing or controlling content once shared.

Cyberbullying can include a wide range of behaviours, including but not limited to:

- Sending threatening or abusive messages
- Posting or sharing harmful or untrue content about someone
- Excluding individuals from online groups or conversations
- Impersonation or creation of fake accounts
- Sharing images or information without consent

The School also recognises the emerging risks associated with artificial intelligence (AI) and digital manipulation, including:

- Altering or manipulating images or videos to embarrass, threaten or humiliate others
- Creating fake or misleading content (including “deepfake”-style media) designed to harm reputation or relationships
- Using AI tools to generate abusive messages, images or content targeting individuals

Such behaviours can significantly impact a pupil’s wellbeing and may constitute a safeguarding concern.

Cyberbullying can have serious consequences for the victim, including anxiety, embarrassment, loss of confidence and, in extreme cases, harm to mental health. The following factors can make cyberbullying particularly distressing:

- The invasion of personal space, including the home environment
- The possibility of anonymity of the perpetrator
- The rapid and wide dissemination of harmful content
- The persistence of content online

The School’s monitoring and filtering systems are outlined in the Online Safety Policy. When incidents occur, they are addressed in line with this policy, the Behaviour Policy and, where appropriate, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Teacher Behaviour

A staff member’s conduct is an important factor in modelling positive, inclusive behaviour and following up any concerns carefully and promptly is key. (Teacher Handbook outlines our code of conduct). Unwittingly or otherwise, a teacher may engage in, instigate or reinforce bullying behaviour by humiliating a pupil who is academically weak/outstanding or vulnerable in other ways or by using gestures or expressions which are intimidating and threatening.

Peer on Peer

Peer-on-peer abuse occurs when a child is exploited, bullied and/or harmed by another child or children who are of the same or similar age. All individuals involved in such behaviour are under the age of 18. In line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)*

2026, the School recognises that peer-on-peer abuse can take many forms and is not limited to a single type of behaviour. It may include, but is not limited to, bullying (including cyberbullying and prejudice-based bullying), physical abuse, emotional harm, coercive behaviour, and other harmful interactions between pupils.

The School acknowledges that such behaviours can be harmful to both the victim and the perpetrator. Children who display harmful behaviours may themselves be vulnerable and in need of support and intervention. Allegations of bullying may therefore meet safeguarding thresholds depending on their nature, frequency, severity and context. All concerns will be assessed carefully, and where appropriate, managed in accordance with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Staff should always be alert to the possibility that peer-on-peer abuse may not be immediately obvious and may involve power imbalances, coercion or intimidation.

4. Effects of Bullying

Although victims often remain silent, changes of mood and behaviour can be indicative of their suffering. Victims of bullying feel helpless and overwhelmed by the power that the bully exercises. This leads to insecurity, increased fear, loss of confidence and consequent lowering of self-esteem. Thus, the victim becomes more vulnerable. Bullying can affect a pupil's attendance. In extreme cases, bullying can lead to self-harm, increased mental health issues and even suicide. Vigilance about any behavioural changes is important, as early intervention is crucial.

5. Signs and Symptoms of Bullying Behaviour

A pupil who is being bullied may display some of the following signs or changes in behaviour:

- A pattern of physical complaints, e.g. headaches or stomach aches
- Anxiety about travelling to and from school, including reluctance to use usual routes or requests to be accompanied
- Changes in temperament or behaviour, such as anxiety, low mood, withdrawal, aggression, or heightened stress
- Signs of distress, including difficulty sleeping, loss of appetite, tearfulness, nightmares, regression (e.g. bed-wetting), or becoming unusually introverted or unsociable
- Damaged or missing possessions or clothing
- Increased requests for money or belongings, or unexplained loss of items
- Unexplained bruises or injuries
- A decline in academic performance or loss of interest and enthusiasm for school life, including poor attendance.
- Reluctance or refusal to explain concerns or talk about what is troubling them

These indicators should be considered carefully. Individually, they do not necessarily mean that a pupil is being bullied; however, a combination of signs, a repeated pattern

over time, or a noticeable change in behaviour may indicate that a pupil needs support and further investigation is required.

Staff are expected to remain vigilant and to consider patterns over time and contextual safeguarding risks, including those beyond the school environment (for example, online interactions or issues arising outside of school), which may impact a pupil's wellbeing in school.

At S. Anselm's, pupil wellbeing is regularly monitored through regular pastoral meetings. Pupils are also encouraged to share concerns through established routes, including the 'Thoughts' box in the Prep School and the 'Worry Monster' in Pre-Prep. In addition, the School places strong emphasis on knowing each pupil well; our small class sizes enable staff to identify changes in behaviour early and respond promptly and appropriately.

6. Characteristics of Bullying Behaviour

Any child can be bullied through no fault of their own. National data indicates that around 21% of pupils report being bullied in the past year, with a smaller proportion experiencing bullying regularly or frequently (DfE National Behaviour Survey, 2025). Evidence also shows that bullying can occur both in person and online and may have a significant impact on pupils' wellbeing (Anti-Bullying Alliance; ONS).

The victim may be perceived to be different, he/she may be sensitive, emotional, passive, a loner, successful socially or academically, or may be a victim of abuse at home. The victim may include those with protected characteristics. During normal activity, pupils may tease each other. However, there comes a time when this can develop into bullying behaviour. While some pupils can unwittingly behave in a provocative manner attracting bullying behaviour, 90% of bullying victims are passive. It is generally accepted that bullying is a learned behaviour, which can be carried out by an individual or a group. The bully is often insecure, can be an underachiever with low self-esteem, is power seeking, a show-off, jealous and less motivated than his/her peers. He/she can lack any sense of remorse and can convince himself/herself that the victim deserves the treatment meted out. It is important that schools recognise that any pupil can be a victim of, or perpetrator of, bullying behaviour. This is why S. Anselm's staff carefully and thoroughly investigate bullying, whether raised by a pupil, their parent(s) their friend(s) or when following up on wellbeing and pastoral issues/observation.

7. Where does bullying happen?

Bullying in school often takes place at times when pupils are more loosely supervised such as at break times or in the changing rooms or in a dorm. Bullies can take advantage of their victim when there is no adult in authority to check their behaviour. This includes when a child is at home and possibly online.

Research shows that most bullying at school takes place in the playground. It is important that staff at S. Anselm's:

- a. Supervise vigilantly areas used by pupils
- b. Encourage constructive activities and play
- c. Visit areas obscured from general view
- d. Watch physical games carefully and are aware of groups or individuals whose body language suggests that intimidation is happening
- e. Encourage older pupils and guides to be aware of the play patterns of their younger charges, and report concerns to staff

Other areas where there is opportunity for intimidation include: - toilets, cloakrooms, locker areas, corridors, showers, changing rooms and school buses. Close supervision is required if the incidence of bullying is to be reduced.

Bullying may also occur in the classroom. This is where the teacher plays an important role in providing an atmosphere of stability and security. Pupils must be discouraged from using verbal or physical abuse, however subtle. Teachers should also model positive behaviour.

Bullying can also happen online when young people have access to this technology. We have run Safeguarding workshops for parents annually to discuss research about the safety of children online and potential threats to their wellbeing.

8. Not everything is Bullying

Care must be taken before someone is accused of bullying—it is a serious allegation and should be considered carefully. Often, situations may begin with unkind behaviour, such as saying or doing something thoughtless or hurtful. If this behaviour continues, it may develop into teasing, sometimes involving more than one pupil. Where behaviour becomes repeated, deliberate and intended to cause harm or distress, it may then be identified as bullying.



The School aims to intervene early so that concerns are addressed before they escalate. Pupils should be encouraged to seek support at any stage, whether from friends, Prefects, their Form Tutor or another trusted adult.

It is also important to recognise that not all experiences of upset or conflict are bullying. For example, a pupil may feel hurt following a disagreement or fall-out with a friend. While these situations can be distressing, they are not necessarily bullying. Bullying differs in that it is intentional, repeated, and involves a power imbalance, making it difficult for the pupil to defend themselves. It often involves a lack of remorse or recognition of the impact on the victim.

Staff will always support pupils who are experiencing friendship difficulties or conflict, and may use similar strategies to resolve issues, recognising that the impact on the pupil can still be significant. However, such situations will not be classified or managed as bullying unless the threshold is met.

Some incidents may be more serious and go beyond bullying. In certain cases, behaviour may constitute peer-on-peer abuse and require a safeguarding response. This may include situations involving coercion, significant harm, or potential criminal behaviour. In such circumstances, the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will be followed.

9. Putting Anti-Bullying Measures into practice for staff and pupils at S. Anselm's

a. Safeguarding and Governance

- Bullying concerns may constitute safeguarding issues. In such cases, the School follows its Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, including referral to external agencies (e.g. LADO) where appropriate.

- All Governors, Trustees, staff, pupils and parents should understand what bullying is and be aware of the School's Anti-Bullying Policy, which is available on the School website.
- Where concerns arise involving external organisations using the school site (e.g. clubs or providers), safeguarding procedures will be followed.

b. Whole-School Culture and Ethos

- The School promotes a culture in which every member of the community has the right to be respected. This is reinforced through assemblies, PSHE, tutor time and the example set by staff.
- A culture of openness is encouraged so that reporting concerns is seen as responsible and expected.
- Kindness, respect and inclusion are actively promoted and recognised.
- Positive relationships between pupils and staff are fostered to ensure pupils feel safe, supported and able to seek help.

c. Education and Prevention

- Pupils are supported in understanding bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice, discrimination and respectful relationships, through the PSHE curriculum and tutor programme.
- The School promotes awareness through participation in Anti-Bullying Week, supported by assemblies, activities, and pupil/parent materials.
- School IT systems include appropriate monitoring and filtering to help identify and address online risks.

d. Monitoring, Recording and Review

- The School identifies and tracks concerns through multiple systems, including:
 - Blue Slips (monitoring incidents involving unkindness, name-calling or exclusion)
 - Wellbeing Manager (iSAMs), providing a timeline of concerns and enabling pattern identification
 - Pastoral meetings (weekly age-group discussions)
 - Attendance monitoring and audits
 - CPOMS
 - Bullying incidents log (retained in the school office) and see appendices for the recording sheet.
- These systems enable staff to identify trends, respond promptly, and provide targeted support.
- Records are reviewed regularly by senior staff to ensure consistency and effectiveness of response.

e. Reporting and Support

- All pupils are able to speak to a trusted adult in school, with clear and accessible reporting routes communicated to them.

- External support (e.g. Independent Listener, Childline) is publicised throughout the school environment.
- Staff ensure that concerns are taken seriously, investigated appropriately, and that support is provided to all parties.

f. Response, Intervention and Follow-Up

- A clear and consistent procedure is in place for responding to incidents (see Appendices).
- The unacceptable nature of bullying and its consequences are made clear to pupils and, where appropriate, to parents.
- Each incident is followed up to ensure resolution and to prevent recurrence.
- Ongoing monitoring ensures that concerns are addressed effectively and do not reoccur.
- Parents are informed of actions taken and are supported in reinforcing expectations at home.

g. Staff Training and Awareness

- All staff receive regular safeguarding and pastoral training, including recognising and responding to bullying and patterns of behaviour.
- Training supports staff in identifying risk in specific contexts or locations and responding appropriately.

8. School Environment and Relationships

- The School recognises that children learn best in a safe, supportive and respectful environment.
- Staff model positive behaviour and ensure that disagreements are handled calmly and respectfully.
- Pupils are supported in developing resilience, responsibility and respect for others.

10. Action taken and recording policy

1st Incident

- Investigated by senior staff and form tutor
- Clear expectations set
- Victim supported and monitored
- Recorded appropriately

2nd Incident

- Senior staff involvement
- Parents of perpetrator informed
- Warning issued regarding escalation
- Sanction applied (Behaviour Policy Level 3)
- Victim supported and monitored
- Recorded appropriately

3rd Incident

- Head involved; parents required to attend meeting
- Formal warning issued regarding suspension
- Sanction applied (Behaviour Policy Level 4)
- Victim supported and monitored
- Recorded appropriately

4th Incident

- Fixed-term suspension (typically 1–3 days, depending on severity)
- Parents informed
- Victim supported and monitored
- Recorded appropriately

5th Incident

- Permanent exclusion likely
- Parents informed immediately
- Victim supported and monitored
- Recorded appropriately

The School reserves the right to escalate stages depending on severity.

Recording and Monitoring

All incidents are recorded and monitored via Wellbeing Manager (iSAMs) and/or CPOMS, in the School's Bullying Log and shared with relevant staff as appropriate.

All incidents are formally recorded, including:

- Pupils involved
- Description of incident
- Action taken
- Follow-up

Records are held securely and reviewed by senior leaders to identify patterns and ensure appropriate intervention.

Conclusion

Those responsible for bullying behaviour will be held to account, supported to understand the impact of their actions, and guided to change their behaviour. Sanctions will be fair, proportionate and in line with the Behaviour Policy, taking account of individual needs and vulnerabilities.

The victim will be supported, reassured and monitored.

The School works in partnership with parents and, where necessary, external agencies. In serious cases, incidents may be referred as safeguarding concerns.

Above all, the School ensures that:

- the victim is supported, reassured and monitored
- the behaviour is addressed and does not recur
- all pupils feel safe and able to seek help

References

Department for Education. *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)*. Statutory guidance for schools and colleges (2026).

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Department for Education. *Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff*. (Updated guidance available via GOV.UK).

Derbyshire SchoolsNet. *Anti-bullying resource for schools*.

<https://schoolsnet.derbyshire.gov.uk/site-elements/documents/keeping-children-safe-in-education/anti-bullying/anti-bullying-resource-for-schools.pdf>

GOV.UK. *Preventing bullying*.

<https://www.gov.uk/bullying-at-school>

NSPCC. *Bullying and cyberbullying advice*.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/bullying-and-cyberbullying/>

Childline. *Bullying: advice on coping and making it stop*.

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/types-bullying/>

Anti-Bullying Alliance. *KCSIE updates and bullying guidance*.

<https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk>

UK Government. *Keeping Children Safe in Education (latest version)*.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education>

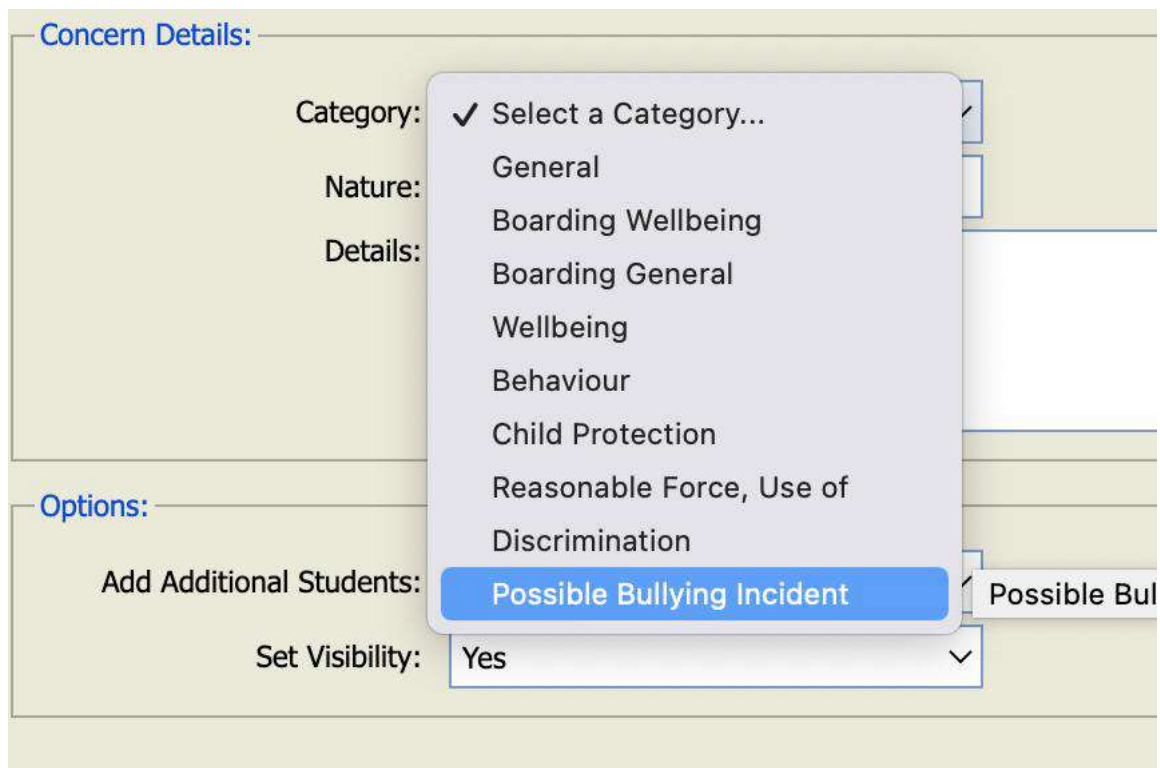
Fight Cybercrime. *Cyberbullying guidance and support*.

<https://fightcybercrime.org/scams/harassment/cyberbullying/>

Appendix 1 Recording

Any incidents which could be of a bullying nature should be recorded on Wellbeing Manager and shared with senior staff, safeguarding staff, tutors and teaching staff.

The Concern Details category that should be chosen is as illustrated below.



The image shows a screenshot of a software interface with a dropdown menu open. The interface is divided into two sections: 'Concern Details' and 'Options'. In the 'Concern Details' section, there are three labels: 'Category:', 'Nature:', and 'Details:'. The 'Category:' dropdown menu is open, showing a list of options: 'Select a Category...' (with a checkmark), 'General', 'Boarding Wellbeing', 'Boarding General', 'Wellbeing', 'Behaviour', 'Child Protection', 'Reasonable Force, Use of', and 'Discrimination'. The 'Possible Bullying Incident' option is highlighted in blue. In the 'Options' section, there are two labels: 'Add Additional Students:' and 'Set Visibility:'. The 'Add Additional Students:' dropdown menu is open, showing 'Possible Bul' as an option. The 'Set Visibility:' dropdown menu is open, showing 'Yes' as an option.

Bullying Incidents Log Cover Page

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------|-----------|
| Date | | |
| Person recording | | |
| | | |
| Parents involved | Yes | No |
| | | |
| Recorded on Wellbeing Manager | Yes | No |
| Recorded on CPOMS | Yes | No |
| Shared at a pastoral meeting | Yes | No |
| Protected characteristic log | Yes | No |

S. Anselm's takes a very positive role to prevent bullying in school and emphasise a zero-tolerance approach. There is no legal definition of bullying. However, it's usually defined as behaviour that is repeated, intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally and can often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation.

Pupils involved

Description of incident

Action taken

Summary:

Consideration Of Bullying Action

All incidents are recorded and monitored via Wellbeing Manager (iSAMs) and/or CPOMS , in the School's Bullying Log and shared with relevant staff. The victim is reassured, supported and monitored at all stages.

1st Incident

- Investigated by senior staff and form tutor
- Recorded (Wellbeing Manager / CPOMS/ staff discussion)
- Clear expectations set
- Victim supported and monitored

2nd Incident

- Senior staff involvement
- Parents of perpetrator informed
- Warning issued regarding escalation
- Sanction applied (Behaviour Policy Level 3)
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- Head involved; parents required to attend meeting
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- Fixed-term suspension (typically 1–3 days, depending on severity)
- Parents informed
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5th Incident

- Permanent exclusion likely
- Parents informed immediately
- Victim supported and monitored
-

The School reserves the right to escalate stages depending on severity.

Follow up (with times and dates)

