BULLYING PREVENTION & MANAGEMENT POLICY

Aligned with the National Framework for Addressing Bullying in Australian Schools

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set out St Andrew's Anglican College's approach to preventing, identifying, reporting and responding to bullying and other harmful behaviours involving students. It is intended to support a safe, inclusive and respectful learning environment and to give students, parents/carers and staff clear and consistent expectations about what the College will do when concerns are raised.

This policy reflects the National Framework for Addressing Bullying in Australian Schools and the Anti-Bullying Rapid Review Implementation Plan, including the expectation that the College makes reasonable effort to initiate a response to observed or reported bullying and other harmful behaviours within two school days of becoming aware of the behaviour.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to students, employees, parents/carers and other members of the College Community in relation to bullying and other harmful behaviours involving students.

It applies to behaviour at the College, during College activities, camps, excursions, sport, travel and other College-related events, and to online or off-site behaviour where there is a connection with the College or the behaviour has, or is reasonably likely to have, an impact on a student's safety, wellbeing, participation or learning at the College.

Workplace bullying between employees is managed under the College's relevant workplace policies. Where an allegation concerns the conduct of an employee or another adult towards a student, the Student Protection Policy, Code of Conduct for Anglican Schools and other applicable processes take precedence as required, while student safety and support actions under this policy are implemented so far as they are consistent with those processes.

3. POLICY COMMITMENT AND RATIONALE

The College is committed to each student's right to education in a safe, supportive, inclusive, and respectful learning environment. Bullying and other harmful behaviours are not accepted. The College will use a whole-of-school approach that combines primary prevention, early intervention, appropriate response, follow-up, and continual improvement.

This policy must be read with the Student Protection Policy. If reported behaviour may amount to harm or otherwise triggers student protection or statutory reporting requirements, those requirements must be followed immediately. This does not prevent the College from commencing appropriate safety, support, communication, and behavioural response actions under this policy.

This policy should also be read with the Code of Conduct for Anglican Schools, the Positive Behaviour Management Policy, the Digital Technology Policy and the Complaints Management in Anglican Schools Policy & Procedures.

A safe, supportive and inclusive College community requires all members to actively promote:

- respect, dignity and acceptance for all members of the community
- a protective and encouraging culture in which concerns can be raised safely and taken seriously
- appropriate help-seeking, upstander behaviour and responsible digital citizenship
- shared responsibility for preventing and responding to bullying and other harmful behaviours.

Parents/carers and students agree to the expectations of this policy through the College's enrolment and community agreements. The policy also provides guidance to other members of the College Community about expected standards of behaviour.

4. DEFINITIONS

College Community means members of the College Council, employees, coaches, students, parents, guardians, step-parents, relatives, friends, supporters, carers, contractors and invited guests of the College when in the College environment or attending a College-related function or activity.

Bullying means deliberate behaviour in which an individual or group misuses power, or perceived power, in a relationship to cause physical, social or psychological harm. The behaviour is repeated over time. Bullying can occur in person or online and may be overt or covert.

Other harmful behaviours mean negative interpersonal behaviours that may not meet the definition of bullying but are inconsistent with a safe learning environment and require an appropriate response. Depending on the circumstances, these may include one-off aggression or intimidation, harassment, discrimination, racism, harmful exclusion, threats, harmful online conduct or other behaviour that causes or risks harm.

Cyberbullying means bullying carried out using digital technology, including mobile devices, computers, messaging services, online games, email, social media, websites, or other digital platforms. It can include verbal or written content, images, video, audio, impersonation, exclusion, distribution of material, or repeated sharing of digital records.

Initial response means the first safety, support, communication, recording and case-management actions taken after the College becomes aware of observed or reported bullying or other harmful behaviour. It is not the same as completing an investigation or reaching a final outcome.

Restorative Practice means relationship-focused strategies used to understand impact, repair harm and restore relationships where this is safe, appropriate, and consistent with the needs and wishes of those involved. A restorative meeting or conference will not be required where it may increase distress, risk or pressure on a student.

School day means a day on which the College is open for normal student instruction. Weekends, public holidays, and school vacation periods are not school days for the purpose of the two-school-day initial response timeframe.

Employee/Staff means all persons employed by the College on a full-time, part-time, casual, permanent or contract basis.

Student means a person enrolled at St Andrew's Anglican College in the current year.

5. UNDERSTANDING BULLYING AND OTHER HARMFUL BEHAVIOURS

5.1 Features of bullying

Bullying is assessed by considering the behaviour, the relationship and context, the power imbalance or misuse of power, whether the behaviour is repeated, and the harm or likely harm caused. Power may arise from physical strength, age, social status, popularity, access to information or images, group membership, technology, or other personal or situational factors.

Bullying can be physical, verbal, relational/social or psychological. It can be direct or indirect, obvious or hidden, and can occur through digital technology. Online material may have the potential to be repeatedly viewed, forwarded or shared even where it was posted only once.

5.2 What is not usually bullying

Not every conflict or hurtful interaction is bullying. The following situations do not usually meet the definition of bullying when there is no misuse of power and no repeated or potentially repeated pattern:

- mutual conflict, disagreement or argument between people of similar power
- a one-off act of meanness, aggression, intimidation or social rejection
- an accidental or unintentional incident that does not form part of a pattern.

These behaviours may still be serious, distressing or harmful and will be addressed under another appropriate College process. The College will not delay a response while deciding whether a reported matter meets the technical definition of bullying.

6. PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION

The College uses a whole-of-school, locally tailored and evidence-informed approach to reduce the likelihood of bullying and other harmful behaviours and to intervene before concerns escalate. Prevention and early intervention strategies include:

- school leadership setting, communicating and modelling clear expectations for respectful behaviour and safe learning
- explicit, age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate teaching through the Personal Capacity Program and other curriculum and pastoral opportunities on respectful relationships, social and emotional skills, bullying and harmful behaviours, help-seeking, upstander behaviour, digital safety and digital citizenship
- building empathy, inclusion, connection, acceptance and positive peer relationships
- active supervision and proactive attention to locations, activities, online environments and transition points where risk may be higher
- early response to conflict, exclusion, harassment, discrimination, harmful online behaviour and other antecedent behaviours before patterns become entrenched
- considering the unique and intersecting needs of students who may face additional risk or barriers to reporting, including First Nations students, students with disability, students diverse in gender or sexuality, girls and young women, and other students experiencing additional risk factors
- providing accessible ways for students, parents/carers and staff to obtain information, raise concerns and contribute feedback to prevention and policy review
- ongoing staff induction and professional learning on recognising, preventing and responding to bullying and harmful behaviours, including relationship-focused and developmentally appropriate practice
- using incident data, student voice, and other evidence to identify patterns and improve prevention strategies, supervision, education and support.

7. REPORTING

Bullying and other harmful behaviours, including suspected behaviours, should be reported as early as possible. Any staff member may receive a report. A student or parent/carer does not need to determine whether the behaviour is technically bullying before reporting it.

Reports can be made verbally or in writing. Information should include, where known, what happened, who was involved, when and where it occurred, whether it has happened before, any immediate safety concerns and any relevant digital evidence. Students are not expected to confront another student or place themselves at risk in order to report.

7.1 Primary students

A Primary student may report to their classroom teacher, Dean of Students - Primary, Deputy Head of Primary, Head of Primary, College Psychologist, or any other trusted College staff member. The receiving staff member must ensure the concern is promptly referred to the appropriate pastoral or leadership staff for follow-up.

7.2 Secondary students

A Secondary student may report to their Head of Year, Dean of Students (Years 7 to 9 or Years 10 to 12), Head of Secondary, Chaplain, College Psychologist, Mentor, teacher, or another trusted College staff member. Reports may be verbal or in writing, including through College-approved tools such as email or iYarn.

7.3 Parents/carers

Parents/carers may report concerns to the relevant teacher, Head of Year, Dean of Students, Primary Dean of Students, or other appropriate College leader as soon as possible, providing all known details of the actual or suspected behaviour.

7.4 Staff

A staff member who observes, receives or otherwise becomes aware of bullying or other harmful behaviour must take appropriate immediate safety action, record the concern in TASS through Student Notes as required, and promptly notify the relevant Head of Year, Dean of Students, Primary Deans of Students, or other appropriate leader so that the two-school-day initial response timeframe can be met.

Reports will be handled as confidentially as reasonably possible. Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed where information must be shared with people who need it to assess safety, provide support, investigate fairly, meet legal obligations or take appropriate action.

Retaliation, intimidation or victimisation because a person has made a report, supported another person to report or participated in an investigation is not acceptable and will be addressed as harmful behaviour.

8. INITIAL RESPONSE - WITHIN TWO SCHOOL DAYS

Two-school-day requirement: The College will make reasonable efforts to initiate a response to any observed or reported bullying or other harmful behaviour within two school days of becoming aware of the behaviour. Urgent safety or student protection concerns must be acted on immediately; the two-school-day timeframe is a maximum for initiating the response.

The initial response will be proportionate to the circumstances and as appropriate, will include:

- assessing immediate safety, wellbeing and risk of further harm and taking immediate protective action where needed
- acknowledging the concern and commencing initial communication with the student(s) affected, the person who made the report, and relevant parents/carers where appropriate and safe
- developing or commencing an early safety and support plan to prevent further harm, including practical adjustments where needed
- assigning an appropriate pastoral or leadership staff member to coordinate the response
- recording the report and initial actions in TASS and beginning appropriate information gathering
- considering whether the Student Protection Policy, police, child protection, eSafety Commissioner or another statutory or external process is required or appropriate
- identifying the next steps, expected communication arrangements and any immediate support required for students, witnesses and staff involved in the response.

The full investigation and resolution may require more than two school days, particularly where a matter is complex, involves multiple students, requires external advice or has student protection implications. In those circumstances, the College will continue safety and support measures and provide appropriate updates to relevant parties.

9. ASSESSMENT, INVESTIGATION AND MANAGEMENT

9.1 Response principles

The College will respond in a way that is trauma-informed, relationship-focused, procedurally fair, justifiable and tailored to the age, developmental stage, individual needs, cultural context and circumstances of those involved. Reasonable adjustments will be made where required to support communication, participation and safety.

No student will be labelled as a "bully" or "victim" as part of the response process. The focus is on behaviour, impact, safety, accountability, learning and change. A restorative process will only be used where it is safe and appropriate and will not be forced on a student who is distressed, fearful or does not wish to participate.

9.2 Assessment and investigation

The relevant pastoral or leadership staff member will gather information proportionate to the concern. This may include separate conversations with the student(s) affected, the student(s) alleged to have engaged in the behaviour and relevant witnesses; review of digital or documentary material; consultation with staff; and consideration of previous relevant records.

Fair process applies to all parties. Students whose behaviour is the subject of an allegation will be given an appropriate opportunity to understand and respond to the concerns before findings or significant disciplinary decisions are made, subject to any overriding safety, student protection or legal requirements.

In determining the nature and seriousness of the behaviour, the College may consider:

- the behaviour itself, frequency, duration, pattern and whether repetition is likely
- the actual or perceived power relationship between those involved
- the physical, social, emotional, psychological, learning or reputational impact
- the risk of further harm, retaliation or escalation
- the context, including online distribution or ongoing accessibility of digital content
- the age, development, disability, culture, identity, communication needs and other individual circumstances of those involved
- whether the behaviour may also constitute discrimination, harassment, violence, sexual behaviour, criminal conduct or a student protection concern requiring another process.

9.3 Responses and consequences

Responses will be proportionate to the severity, frequency, impact, risk and circumstances. They may include one or more of the following:

- safety planning, increased supervision, changes to movement, seating, groupings, activities, online access or other practical arrangements
- pastoral check-ins, College Psychologist support, Chaplaincy support or other appropriate wellbeing support
- education, coaching, social-emotional skill development, digital citizenship support and explicit teaching about the cause and impact of behaviour
- a behaviour support, engagement or monitoring plan with clear expectations and review points
- parent/carer meetings and collaborative planning
- restorative conversations, reparation or restorative conference where safe, appropriate and agreed
- reflection, loss of privileges, internal or external suspension, or other sanctions available under the Positive Behaviour Management Policy
- in serious or continuing cases, consideration of ongoing enrolment by the Principal in accordance with College policy and enrolment arrangements
- notification or referral to police, child protection, the eSafety Commissioner or another authority where required or appropriate.

The College will support students who have engaged in harmful behaviour to understand the causes and impacts of their behaviour, take responsibility where appropriate, and develop the skills and supports needed to reduce the likelihood of recurrence.

10. SUPPORTS

Support is available to all those involved in or affected by an incident, not only the student who first reports the behaviour. Supports will be tailored and may include:

- a trusted staff member, Head of Year, Dean, Primary pastoral leader or other nominated case contact
- College Psychologist, Chaplaincy or other appropriate wellbeing support
- individual safety and support planning, including practical adjustments to reduce contact, risk or distress
- support to preserve and manage harmful online content safely and to use appropriate digital reporting pathways
- learning, participation or communication adjustments where the incident has affected access to education
- check-ins and support for witnesses or bystanders who have been affected
- support and guidance for parents/carers to understand the College process and assist their child
- appropriate wellbeing, leadership or professional support for staff who are affected by or responding to bullying and other harmful behaviours.

11. COMMUNICATION, PRIVACY AND RECORDS

The College will communicate with those involved or impacted about the actions that have been taken and the reasons for those actions to the greatest extent reasonably possible while maintaining privacy, safety, procedural fairness and legal obligations. Privacy requirements may limit the detail the College can provide about another student, including disciplinary consequences or personal information.

Parents/carers of students directly involved will generally be kept informed of significant safety, support and response actions. In limited circumstances, communication may be modified or delayed where this is necessary for student safety, student protection, legal requirements or professional advice.

Accurate records will be kept in TASS or other approved College systems, including as appropriate: the report or observation; date the College became aware; initial safety and support actions; communications; information gathered; assessment or findings; actions and consequences; referrals; follow-up; and any escalation. Records will be kept whether or not an allegation is substantiated, in accordance with applicable recordkeeping and privacy requirements.

12. FOLLOW-UP, ESCALATION AND COMPLAINTS

The College will follow up after significant incidents to check safety, wellbeing, implementation of agreed supports and whether behaviour has stopped or recurred. The timing and form of follow-up will be appropriate to the circumstances and recorded where relevant.

Where an intervention has not effectively resolved a concern, further or higher-level intervention may be required. A student or parent/carer may raise the matter with the relevant Head of Year, Dean of Students, Primary leader or Head of Sub-school, and then with the Principal or delegate as appropriate.

These escalation pathways do not limit immediate student protection, police, child protection, eSafety or other statutory reporting or complaint pathways that may apply.

13. RESPONSIBILITIES

13.1 Students

Students are expected to:

- treat others with respect and not participate in, encourage, share, "like", forward or otherwise amplify bullying or harmful behaviour
- take safe and appropriate upstander action when they can, including seeking adult help
- report bullying or other harmful behaviour affecting themselves or others as early as possible
- cooperate honestly with safety, support and investigation processes
- follow agreed safety and behaviour plans and not retaliate against a person who reports or participates in a response process.

13.2 Staff

College staff must:

- support, promote, enact and understand this policy and related procedures
- respond to observed or reported concerns, take immediate safety action where needed, and ensure prompt referral so the two-school-day initial response timeframe can be met
- record concerns and actions accurately in TASS or other approved systems
- participate in induction and professional learning provided by the College on bullying, harmful behaviours, student welfare, risk factors, protective factors and appropriate response
- use evidence-informed classroom management, active supervision and inclusive practices that reduce opportunities for bullying and other harmful behaviours
- explicitly teach and reinforce respectful relationships, social-emotional skills, help-seeking and digital citizenship through relevant curriculum and pastoral programs
- recognise the diverse needs of students and seek assistance from Heads of Year, Deans, College Psychologists, Primary leaders, Heads of Sub-school or other specialists where required
- maintain privacy and procedural fairness and seek support when personally impacted by or responding to difficult incidents.

13.3 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- be familiar with this policy and the Parent Code of Conduct and engage with education or information provided by the College where possible
- model respectful behaviour and encourage their child to seek help rather than retaliate
- report concerns and relevant information to the College as early as possible, including where their child is a witness or is alleged to have engaged in harmful behaviour
- work with the College in good faith on safety, support, behaviour and follow-up plans and keep an open mind while information is gathered
- respect student privacy and avoid actions that may escalate the matter or interfere with a fair investigation.

13.4 College leadership

College leadership is responsible for:

- driving and embedding anti-bullying and behavioural expectations across College culture, operations and programs
- ensuring this policy and reporting processes are publicly available, accessible and communicated to students, staff and parents/carers
- ensuring staff have appropriate induction, professional learning, time, guidance and support to implement the policy
- monitoring the timeliness and quality of responses and ensuring clear escalation pathways
- reviewing data, feedback and implementation evidence to improve prevention and response
- providing opportunities for students, parents/carers and staff to contribute to policy and prevention approaches.

14. REVIEW AND CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT

The College will monitor the implementation and impact of its anti-bullying approach through incident records, response timeliness, recurrence and pattern data, student wellbeing information, student/parent/staff feedback and other relevant evidence. De-identified trends may be used to improve supervision, curriculum, professional learning, support and prevention strategies.

This policy and associated processes will be reviewed during 2027 and routinely thereafter to ensure they remain fit for purpose and are having the intended impact. A formal policy review will occur at least every two years,

and earlier where there is a significant change to legislation, sector requirements, the National Framework, College practice or evidence of a need for change.

15. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Student Protection Policy
- Positive Behaviour Management Policy
- Supporting Students Diverse in Gender Policy
- Digital Technology Policy
- Complaints Management in Anglican Schools Policy & Procedures
- College Community Agreement
- Application for Enrolment
- St Andrew's PAC Risk Assessment
- Queensland Government - Bullying prevention and support / national definition of bullying
- National Framework for Addressing Bullying in Australian Schools (Australian Government Department of Education, 2025)
- Anti-Bullying Rapid Review Implementation Plan, Version 1 (Australian Government Department of Education, February 2026)
- Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2017 (Qld)
- Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld)

DOCUMENT CONTROL	
Title	Bullying Prevention & Management Policy
Policy Owner	Principal
Review Frequency	24 Months
Last Reviewed	17/09/2026
Due for Review	31/01/2026
Category	Pastoral

APPENDIX ONE - BULLYING AND HARMFUL BEHAVIOUR RESPONSE PROCESS

Core timing rule: Urgent safety and student protection action is immediate. For all observed or reported bullying and other harmful behaviours, the College makes reasonable effort to initiate safety/support planning and initial communication within two school days of becoming aware.

1. REPORT / OBSERVE Any trusted staff member can receive a report. Staff promptly refer and record the concern. Do not wait to decide whether it is technically bullying.	**2. SAFETY TRIAGE** Check immediate safety, risk of further harm and student protection issues. Act immediately where urgent. Put temporary protective measures in place if needed.	**3. WITHIN 2 SCHOOL DAYS** Acknowledge concern; commence communication; start safety/support planning; assign a case lead; record in TASS; begin information gathering; identify next steps and referrals.
4. INVESTIGATE / ASSESS Use fair, sensitive and tailored processes. Hear relevant parties separately as appropriate, review evidence, assess power/pattern/impact/risk and determine the nature of the behaviour.	**5. RESPOND / COMMUNICATE** Put supports and proportionate responses in place. Communicate actions taken and reasons to the greatest extent possible while protecting privacy and safety.	**6. FOLLOW-UP / ESCALATE** Check safety, wellbeing and recurrence. Adjust plans as needed. Escalate to senior leadership/Principal or the complaints process if intervention has not resolved the concern.

Important: The two-school-day timeframe relates to initiating the response. It does not require the full investigation to be completed within two days. Safety/support measures and communication should continue while a complex matter is being investigated.

APPENDIX TWO - PROCEDURES FOR MANAGING STUDENT INCIDENTS

Application to bullying and harmful behaviour: Where this general student incident procedure is used for bullying or other harmful behaviour, section 8 and Appendix One of this policy apply. In particular, the College must make reasonable effort to initiate safety/support planning and initial communication within two school days, while urgent concerns are addressed immediately.

