



# *Anti-Bullying Policy for St George's College & Hartmann House*



## ***1 Policy Statement***

### ***1.1 Scope and Application:***

- This policy applies to all students and staff at St George's College and Hartmann House (hereinafter referred to as "SGC/HH") irrespective of their age.
- The policy addresses bullying indicated in child to child, adult to child, child to adult and adult to adult situations.
- The policy applies to all students and staff in their relationships with each other both on and off campus and is not limited to term-time.
- All adults must accept that they have a responsibility to act under the Duty of Care (safeguarding and promoting the well-being of the child).

### ***1.2 Publication:***

This policy is provided to all students, parents and staff on the SGC/HH official websites and is also available on request in the above mentioned offices. This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required. SGC/HH's Anti-Bullying Policy towards bullying is also taught through the assemblies, orientation programme, chapel periods, registration periods and other forums. All students, therefore, including the very young, should understand this policy.

### ***1.3 Government Guidance:***

This policy has been drawn up on the principles used to draw up Anti-Bullying Policies in other Jesuit institutions, the Children's Act CHAPTER 5:06 of Zimbabwe (hereafter the Children's Act and will be reviewed against any new government guidance issued from time to time. This policy has due regard to the provisions of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020.

## ***Policy Aims:***

1.3.1 SGC/HH is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at SGC/HH and will always be treated as a serious matter. It undermines the safety, security and confidence in individuals and the community in general. Whether physical or emotional, bullying can also cause psychological damage. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to seek help and know that incidents will be taken seriously and will be dealt with promptly & effectively. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the appropriate staff.

### ***1.3.2 Through the operation of this policy we therefore aim:***

- To maintain and drive a positive and supportive culture among all students and staff throughout SGC/HH to deter bullying behaviour, detect it when it occurs, and deal with it on a case-by-case basis by counselling and/or disciplinary sanctions and, if necessary, by expulsion.
- To comply with SGC/HH's duties under the Children's Act and other laws of Zimbabwe to ensure that all teaching and non-teaching staff, students and parents have an understanding of what bullying is.
- To ensure that all teaching and non-teaching staff know what SGC/HH policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.



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- To ensure that all students and parents know what SGC/HH policy is on bullying and what they should do if bullying arises.
- To ensure that as a school we take bullying seriously. Students and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

## *1.4 Bullying behaviour is always unacceptable and will not be tolerated at SGC/HH because:*

- It is contrary to the Jesuit Ethos of SGC/HH and therefore all our aims and values, our internal culture and the reputation of the SGC/HH
- It is harmful to the person who is bullied, and to those who engage in bullying behaviour, and those who support them, and can in some cases lead to lasting psychological damage and
- It interferes with a student's right to enjoy his/her learning and leisure time free from intimidation.

## **2 Bullying Behaviour**

**2.1 Meaning:** Bullying is repeated behaviour which hurts or causes distress by taking unfair advantage of another person in some way, making him or her feel uncomfortable or threatened. Bullying may be but not limited to:

- Physical – body shaming, hitting, kicking, pushing people around, spitting, taking, stealing, damaging or hiding possessions
- Verbal - name-calling, taunting, teasing, insulting,
- Exclusionary behaviour - intimidating, isolating or excluding a person from a group
- General unkindness - spreading rumours or writing unkind notes, phone texts or emails, demanding money
- Cyberbullying - using the internet, mobile phones, social networking sites, etc to deliberately upset someone else (see section 2.2 below)

### *Bullying may also be:*

- Sexual - talking to or touching someone in a sexually inappropriate way; up skirting
- Sexist - related to a person's gender
- Racist, or relating to someone's religion, belief or culture
- Related to a person's sexual orientation (homophobia)
- Related to pregnancy or maternity
- Related to a person's home circumstances or
- Related to a person's disability, special educational needs, learning difficulty, health or appearance.

### *2.2 Cyberbullying:*

Cyberbullying is the use of information and communications technology (ICT), particularly mobile electronic devices and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else. An incident of cyberbullying will be dealt with in accordance with the procedures in this policy. SGC/HH's separate Acceptable Use of IT provides guidance for students about cyberbullying and online safety.



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## *2.3 Relational Aggression:*

The way boys and girls bully is different. Girls tend to use communication to connect – to validate themselves and others. Boys, in contrast, tend to use communication to establish hierarchy and status. Consequently, the way boys and girls bully is also different. Relational Aggression is the manipulation of relationships with the intent of harming or hurting others. Social exclusion is the basis of relational aggression. It is most commonly used by teenage girls, but can be used by boys on occasion. It is subtle and often hard to detect as many of the behaviours can appear to be a misinterpretation by the on looker. Examples might include cold shouldering, purposely leaving a table when someone sits down and general nonverbal aggression. Equally, relational aggression may take the form of gossiping, rumour spreading, alliance building, negative online comments, name calling and back stabbing. SGC/HH continually provides guidance to students and staff on how to deal with this and other types of bullying.

When addressing issues of relational aggression staff will look for patterns that are indicative of relational aggressive behaviour. It is the slow persistent drip of small, apparently insignificant, actions over a prolonged period of time that cause the greatest upset and damage. If a student is judged to be exhibiting these behaviours towards another person over a period of time, no matter how insignificant any one incident may seem in isolation, firm action will be taken by SGC/HH to address the behaviour of that student. Suspension is not excluded as a sanction and in extreme, prolonged cases of relational aggression a student may be asked to leave SGC/HH.

## *2.4 Intention:*

Not all bullying is deliberate or intended to hurt. Some individuals may see their hurtful conduct as 'teasing' or 'a game' or 'for the good of' the other person'. These forms of bullying are equally unacceptable but may not be malicious and can often be corrected quickly with advice and without disciplinary sanctions. A bully who does not respond appropriately to advice or sanctions would ultimately have to leave SGC/HH.

## *2.5 Responsibility:*

It is everyone's responsibility to ensure, whatever the circumstances, that no-one becomes a victim of bullying. A person may be vulnerable to bullying because of his/her age, physical appearance, nationality, colour, gender, sexual orientation, religion, culture or disability, or because he/she is new to SGC/HH, appears to be uncertain or has no friends. He/she may also become a target because of an irrational decision by a bully.

## *2.6 Legal Aspects:*

A person who makes a physical or sexual assault on another, or who steals or causes damage to the property of another, commits a criminal offence. Bullying behaviour may also be regarded as threatening behaviour or harassment which can be either a criminal offence or a civil wrong. Misuse of electronic communications could also be a criminal offence, for example it is an offence to send an electronic communication (such as a text message or e-mail) to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety. Advice may be taken if it is suspected that a criminal offence has been committed, and the police informed. The procedure for the children's court is governed under section 5 of the Children's Act.

## *2.7 Safeguarding:*

A bullying incident will be treated as a safeguarding concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.



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## *3 Anti-bullying Culture*

### *3.1 Ethos:*

Our expectation of all members of SGC/HH community is that:

- A student or a member of staff who witnesses or hears of an incident of bullying will report it
- A complaint of bullying will always be taken seriously and
- No one will tolerate unkind actions or remarks or stand by when someone else is being bullied.

### *3.2 Equal Opportunities:*

At SGC/HH in every year group:

- discriminatory words and behaviour are treated as unacceptable
- positive attitudes are fostered towards people who are disabled and towards ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic groups within and outside SGC/HH and
- positive attitudes are fostered towards gender and sexuality differences through the curriculum and tutorials.

### *3.3 Staff:*

Through their training and experience, members of staff are expected to promote an anti-bullying culture by:

- celebrating achievement
- anticipating problems and providing support
- disciplining sensibly, fairly and consistently, taking into account any special educational needs or disabilities of the student and the needs of vulnerable students making opportunities to listen to students and
- acting as advocates of students.

### *3.4 Students:*

Through our pastoral care systems, students are informed and taught that bullying will not be tolerated at SGC/HH. They are encouraged:

- to celebrate the effort and achievements of others
- to hold and promote positive attitudes
- to feel able to share problems with staff
- to turn to someone, they trust, if they have a problem
- not to feel guilty about airing complaints and
- to treat meals as pleasant social occasions.

### *3.5 Parents:*

Parents and guardians have a vital role to play in supporting their child who may be at risk of being bullied, or is being bullied.

They can:

- help identify and monitor incidents of bullying behaviour
- can be called upon to reinforce or reassert anti-bullying strategies with their child at home
- support SGC/HH's commitment to provide a caring, friendly and safe environment for children.



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## 4 Anti-bullying Systems

4.1 Approach: SGC/HH is committed to provide clear and effective pupil reporting systems. These include:

- A comprehensive Pastoral System in which each year group has several members of staff in whom students can confide.

## 4.6 Students' Responsibilities:

We emphasise with senior students the role which is expected of them in setting a good example and being helpful to younger students and each other. Older students are encouraged to keep an eye on younger students and offer support, where it is needed, and in particular:

- all senior students have the opportunity for duties but senior students who do not wish to have extended pastoral responsibilities are not coerced
- the responsibilities of senior students are appropriately limited
- Students are given the opportunity to participate in anti-bullying groups e.g. Student Council, Prefects.
- members of staff expect the SGC/HH Child Protection Committee to offer supervisory support and
- members of staff, prefects and senior student body at SGC/HH receive training on how to work with and support younger students with sensitivity and care.

## 4.7 Record Keeping and Monitoring:

### 4.7.1 Day School:

Whenever an incident is formally handled, then a record is kept by the relevant deputy head in charge of the concerned students. Patterns and behaviours are then monitored by relevant staff to deal with and prevent future incidents. Discipline of individuals and groups as whole is discussed regularly at weekly senior management meetings.

### 4.7.2 Boarding:

All incidents of bullying and other misdemeanours that cause disruption in the boarding community are recorded on an "incident report" which is kept in an individualized file for each student. Patterns and behaviours are then monitored by boarding staff to deal with and prevent future incidents. Discipline of individuals and the boarding community as whole is discussed regularly at weekly boarding management meetings.

## 4.8 Why incidents might not be reported.

### 4.8.1 Victim:

There are many reasons why a student who has suffered bullying may be reluctant to report it. He/she may become demoralised and may say, for example:

- it is telling tales. They won't believe me because the person I am complaining about is popular and I am not, and I will become even more unpopular
- the things they are saying and doing are too embarrassing to discuss with an adult
- it is all my fault anyway for being overweight/too studious etc
- there are too many of them - there is nothing the staff can do
- it will get back to my parents and they will think less of me
- I will just try and toughen up and grow a thicker skin or
- I will lie low and not draw attention to myself
- It will make matters worse.



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## *4.8.2 Witnesses:*

There are also reasons why a student who has witnessed or learned of bullying behaviour may not want to make a report. He/she may say:

- it is 'snitching' and I will become unpopular
- it is not my concern anyway or
- I don't like the victim and I would find it embarrassing to be associated with him/her
- They may turn on me.

## **4.9 Culture:**

Any of these responses would be contrary to our culture at SGC/HH. When we drive and implement this policy we encourage every student to understand that:

- every complaint of bullying will be taken seriously
- peer on peer abuse will not be dismissed as "banter" or "part of growing up"
- members of staff will deal with a complaint sensitively and effectively in accordance with their experience and the training they have received
- there is a solution to every problem of bullying
- a student who complains will receive support and advice and in many cases the problem can be dealt with in a confidential manner and
- the primary aim will be for the bullying to cease, not the punishment of the bully unless this is necessary.

## **5 Procedures**

### *5.1 Guidelines:*

The following procedures are a guideline except where expressed in the terms 'should' or 'must'. The best guide is the experience and training of the staff.

### **5.2 Reporting Bullying Complaints**

#### *5.2.1 Students:*

A student who is being bullied, or who is worried about another student being bullied, should report without delay and can do so in several ways.

He/she can:

- tell his/her parents, his/her Divisional Deputy Head, Line Teacher, Class Teacher, School Chaplain, Tutor, Prefect, or a trusted classmate ; alternatively
- contact SGC/HH Counsellor
- contact the Clinic Sister
- contact Childline (31 Frank Johnson Ave, Harare, 073 211 6116 or 116 )

#### *5.2.2 Parents:*

Parents who are concerned that their child is being bullied should inform their child's Divisional Deputy Head, Line Teacher, Class Teacher, School Chaplain, Tutor without delay.



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## 5.2.3 Staff:

This policy focuses on the bullying of students although it is recognised that staff can be the victims of bullying and on occasion could be perceived to be guilty of bullying. Staff members who are concerned about being bullied or harassed should refer to the Staff Handbook. Students and parents who feel that a member of staff is bullying should report this in accordance with the procedures set out above. Complaints against teachers will be dealt with in accordance with staff disciplinary procedures.

## 5.3 Initial Complaint:

A member of staff who learns of alleged bullying behaviour should:

- firstly, respond quickly and sensitively by offering advice, support and reassurance to the alleged victim then
- report the allegation to the relevant Divisional Deputy Headmaster/mistress and/or Line Teacher where it will be dealt with in the first instance.

An initial assessment will consider:

- the nature of the incident/s - physical? verbal? exclusionary? etc
- is it a 'one-off' incident involving an individual or a group?
- is it part of a pattern of behaviour by an individual or a group? - has physical injury been caused? Who should be informed - Parents? SGC/HH's Child Protection Officer? (can the alleged bully be seen on a no-names basis?)
- what is the likely outcome if the complaint proves to be correct?

At this initial stage, the possible outcomes for an incident include:

- there has been a misunderstanding which can be explained sympathetically to the alleged victim with advice to the alleged bully or
- the complaint is justified in whole or in part, and further action will be needed (see Range of Action, below)
- If the form of bullying is regarded as particularly serious, the matter should be handed over directly to the Divisional Deputy Headmaster/mistress/Child Protection Officer.

The Divisional Deputy Headmaster/mistress/Child Protection Officer must ensure that:

- the complaint is recorded in the relevant student file
- they co-ordinate SGC/HH's response to the complaint
- there is consistency in applying a threshold

The member of staff should reassure the student, but must not give a guarantee of absolute confidentiality.

## 5.4 Serious Incident:

If any member of staff at SGC/HH believes that serious bullying behaviour:

- has occurred or
- has recurred after warnings have been given to the 'bully'

The staff member shall in the first instance interview the victim to collect preliminary information and or refer the victim to their relevant Line Teacher/Divisional Deputy Headmaster/mistress or the Child Protection Officer who will then:



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- interview the alleged victim, bully and any witnesses separately, in order to establish the facts of the case. He /she may decide to ask another senior member of staff to be present and
- send a summary of his/her findings to the Headmaster
- advise the Headmaster so that there is consistency in applying a threshold.

The Headmaster may interview the alleged victim and bully separately:

- to confirm the facts of the case, if considered necessary and
- to decide on the action to be taken in accordance with the Range of Action set out below

The Headmaster will notify the parents of the victim and bully giving them details of the case and the action being taken. The Headmaster may also delegate to either the relevant Line Teacher/Divisional Deputy Headmaster/mistress or the Child Protection Officer or any other staff member as is seen fit to carry out the Range of Actions.

## **5.5 Range of Action:**

When a complaint of bullying behaviour is upheld, the range of responses will include one or more of the following:

- advice and support for the victim and, where appropriate, establishing a course of action to help the victim, including support from external services where appropriate;
- advice and support to the bully in trying to change his/her behaviour. This may include clear instructions and a warning or final warning, and involvement of the Chaplain or the School Counsellor;
- consideration of the motivation behind the bullying behaviour and whether external services should be used to tackle any underlying issues of the bully which contributed to the bullying behaviour. If these considerations lead to any concerns that the bully may be at risk of harm, SGC/HH's child protection procedures will be followed;
- a supervised meeting (circle) between the bully and the victim to discuss their differences and the ways in which they may be able to avoid future conflict;
- a disciplinary sanction against the bully, in accordance with SGC/HH's Behaviour Policy such as GEM, gating, loss of privileges, additional duties or suspension. In a very serious case or a case of persistent bullying, a student may, after a fair hearing, be required to leave SGC/HH permanently in accordance with SGC/HH's Disciplinary Policy;
- action to break up a 'power base';
- confiscation of mobile electronic devices, increased monitoring procedures or limiting access to SGC/HH's internet and email facilities if cyberbullying (see SGC/HH's IT Policy);
- involving Children's Social Care and/or the police;
- implementation of a Behavioural Contract;
- parental interview;
- notifying the parents of one or both students about the case and the action which has been taken;
- such other action as may appear to the Headmaster to be appropriate;
- noting the outcome in the relevant student file.

## **5.6 Monitoring:**

The position should be monitored for as long as necessary thereafter. Action may include:

- sharing information with some or all colleagues, senior students and all other relevant parties so that they may be alert to the need to monitor certain students closely;
- ongoing counselling and support;
- vigilance;





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- mentioning the incident at meetings of staff;
- reviewing vulnerable individuals and areas of SGC/HH;
- referral for review to the Safeguarding Committee.

## 5.7 Formal Complaint:

If the victim or his/her parents are not satisfied with the action taken, they should be advised to make a formal complaint, through the office of the relevant Deputy Headmaster.

## 6 Review

6.1 The Child Protection Committee will review and make revisions to this policy on an annual basis, or more regularly as required, taking into account the results of the reviews as set out at section 4.7 above, as well as any changes in legislation and/or statutory guidance.

6.2 The Headmaster will consider the revisions made as part of his overall responsibility to carry out an annual review of safeguarding.

## Appendix 1

### *Signs and Symptoms of Bullying*

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child,

- changes their usual routine;
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobia);
- begins truanting/skiving;
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence;
- starts stammering;
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away;
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares;
- feels ill in the morning;
- begins to do poorly in school work;
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged;
- has possessions go "missing";
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the bully);
- has unexplained cuts or bruises;
- comes home hungry having missed meals;
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable;
- is bullying other children or siblings;
- stops eating;
- is frightened to say what's wrong;
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying will be considered a possibility and will be investigated.



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## **Appendix 2**

### *Cyberbullying & Sexting and/or Youth Produced Sexual Imaging*

What is cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is the use of the internet, mobile phones or other digital technologies to deliberately threaten, embarrass or humiliate another person. It may take different forms:

- Threats and intimidation via electronic means;
- Harassment or 'cyberstalking';
- Sexting;
- Vilification/defamation;
- Setting up website pages to invite others to post derogatory comment about a pupil;
- The sending of insulting and vicious text messages;
- Exclusion or peer rejection;
- Impersonation;
- Unauthorised publication of private information or images (including 'happy slapping');
- The posting of fake and/or obscene photographs of the victim on a social networking site;
- Hacking into social networking sites and removing and circulating material which may be embarrassing or personal;
- Manipulation;
- Verbal online abuse e.g. through Social Network/Gaming Sites etc.

How does cyberbullying happen?

- Instant messaging in chat rooms;
- Email;
- Online games and virtual worlds;
- Abusing personal information such as photographs;
- Mobile phones – abusive texts, photos, videos;
- Social networking sites;
- Other web pages set up specifically to post abusive comments.

Why is cyberbullying such a problem?

- Victims can be reached anywhere;
- The bullying can happen 24 hours a day;
- It can reach a widespread audience very quickly;
- It can remain forever in 'cyberspace' and resurface at any time;
- Often anonymous and invites others to join in (a digital 'pile-on');
- Young people often have a better grasp of the technology than adults.

Advice for young people regarding cyberbullying

- Don't reply to any messages;
- Don't be provoked and show any emotion;
- Keep any abusive message and emails;



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- Seek help immediately; don't just hope it goes away;
- Keep a log of what's happening;
- Don't be a bystander. If you know it is happening to someone else, you should always report it;
- Don't share anything via text, instant messaging or email that you wouldn't want made public;
- Never give out personal information online;
- Be responsible online;
- Never share passwords or login details;
- Further advice can be obtained

Preventing cyberbullying in school:

- Ethos;
- Acceptable Use of IT Policy;
- Education through promoting e-safety and the positive use of technology;
- Clear systems for reporting cyberbullying.

**Specialist organisations who can offer further help:**

**Childline (31 Frank Johnson Ave, Harare, 073 211 6116 or 116)**

**Stand up to Bullying**

**[www.standuptobullying.co.uk](http://www.standuptobullying.co.uk)**

**Advice for parents and children about dealing with bullying.**

**The Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA)**

**<http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>**

**ChildNet International <http://www.childnet.com/>**

**Digizen <https://www.digizen.org/>**