

Anti-Bullying

POLICY STATEMENT

- The aim of this Anti-Bullying Policy is to ensure that Learners are educated in a safe, caring, and supportive environment, without fear of being bullied. Bullying is an unacceptable and anti-social behaviour which affects everyone and therefore will not be tolerated.
- We are committed to providing a caring, friendly, and safe environment for all Learners so they can flourish in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. If bullying does occur, all Learners should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

Document Control

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1. Scope

1.1 Rationale

- 1.1.1 Our approach is to instil a culture of proactive actions to contribute towards a learning environment that is a positive experience for all Learners and Team Members. We strive to create an ethos of positive behaviour where Learners and Team Members treat one another with respect. We believe that it is important that all Team Members and Learners illustrate values of respect for each other, at all times.
- 1.1.2 We adopt a trauma-informed approach when supporting pupils who engage in bullying behaviours. This includes helping them to understand and develop healthy relationships, strengthen emotional regulation and social-emotional skills, support their emotional and moral development, and recognise the effects their actions can have on others.
- 1.1.3 This means that all Team Members have a responsibility not only to recognise and remain aware of bullying behaviours and the pupils involved, but also to respond in a timely, consistent and supportive manner to suspected or reported incidents. We seek to understand the underlying needs, experiences and circumstances that may be contributing to a pupil's behaviour, while ensuring that all pupils feel safe, heard and supported.

2. Definitions

2.1 What is Bullying?

2.1.1 Preventing and Tackling Bullying, Department for Education, (July 2017) defines bullying as behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

2.1.2 Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber bullying via text messages, social media, gaming, or the internet, which can include the use of videos and images), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a young person is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual or perceived differences between young people.

2.1.3 Bullying can take several forms, including:

- **Physical** – Causing actual bodily harm to another individual which cannot be considered as an event which occurs in the normal course of college life.
- **Verbal/Emotional** – behaviour such as name calling which demeans and erodes the sense of self-worth of another individual and which continues, even after supportive interventions have taken place.
- **Indirect** – Underhand actions carried out behind the victim's back or rumour-spreading.
- **Extortion** - demanding money and/or goods with threats.
- **Online** – using any form of technological means, mobile phones, social networks, gaming, chat rooms, forums, or apps to bully via text, messaging, images, or video. The use of online technology is increasing, and therefore the opportunity for online bullying with it. This policy addresses the general approach and procedure to any form of bullying but must be applied in line with our online safety policy.
- **Sexual** - unwanted touching, threats, suggestions, comments and jokes or innuendo. This can also include sextortion, so called 'revenge porn' and any misuse of intimate, explicit images of the Learner targeted.
- **Prejudice related** - bullying of a Learner, or a group of Learners because of prejudice. This could be linked to stereotypes or presumptions about identity. Prejudice-related bullying includes the protected characteristics.

2.2 Recognising signs of bullying

2.2.1 We recognise that Learners), may exhibit behaviours that challenge. As a result of this, it may be difficult to distinguish whether bullying is taking place, however, our Team Members will always take the signs below seriously and always follow our local safeguarding procedures.

2.2.2 The signs and symptoms of bullying include but are not limited to:

- Withdrawal

- Low self-esteem
- Lacking in confidence and/or increased anxiety
- Feeling isolated/left out
- Acting out/emotional outbursts, including name calling and physical actions toward others
- Physical marks (for example, cuts and bruises)
- Change from normal behaviour
- Absence/attendance issues
- Changes to behaviour
- Changes to health for an unexplained reason (for example, getting headaches or tummy ache)
- Change in friendship groups.
- Changes to diet/eating habits
- Loses, steals, or asks for money
- Self-harm
- Threats or attempts at suicide
- Being nervous or frightened by areas or environments
- Avoiding particular areas or activities
- Being nervous or upset when using electronic devices (including avoiding the use of these items or checking them obsessively)
- Gives unusual explanations for events, appearance, or behaviour, or appears frightened to talk about it

3. Safeguarding and Bullying

3.1 Roles and Responsibilities

3.1.1 Our College will:

- Provide a safe and secure environment where Learners and Team Members can feel confident to talk about challenging topics.
- Promote open and trusting relationships with clear boundaries, so that Learners can report their concerns, including incidents of bullying.
- Actively promote and celebrate diversity and equality.
- Provide information to safeguard Learners and protect them from instances of bullying, including the sharing of a clear and robust procedure to follow in the instance of bullying.
- Implement a clear and honest curriculum which educates Learners about what bullying is, and the impact it can have on individuals.
- Follow the agreed procedure whenever there is a report of bullying, with reference to the safeguarding and therapeutic approach (behaviour) policies, as appropriate to individual circumstances.
- Follow up instances of bullying with a clear support plan, individualised for and agreed with those involved.
- Adopt a reflective whole college approach if instances of bullying occur, in order to continually improve standards and ensure the ongoing safeguarding of all Learners.

3.1.2 We recognise that some incidents of bullying might be a safeguarding matter or may require the involvement of the police. The Children Act 1989, states that bullying becomes a child protection concern when there is:

‘Reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm’.

3.1.3 Where this is the case, we will report concerns to the local safeguarding board, via the college safeguarding procedure. This process applies to both a Learner who is being bullied and the Learner demonstrating the bullying behaviours, and Team Members are mindful that bullying may happen outside of the college setting. The behaviour of a Learner who is bullying others may be linked to unknown adverse experiences in their own lives. Bullying may also involve a Team Member as a target.

3.1.4 If in doubt always seek advice from Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

3.2 Whole College Preventative measures

3.2.1 Our curriculum aims to develop Learners' skills and knowledge of the personal, social and health issues relevant to them in a meaningful way, for example, raising awareness of bullying. Bullying is mandatory topic that is covered in the Personal Growth Programme (PGP) curriculum studied by all Learners. We also have a number of whole college measures to develop a safe and supportive environment for our Learners.

3.2.2 Whole college preventative measures may include:

- Building strong relationships with Learners and Team Members
- Attachment and trauma informed practice, with the application of restorative strategies
- Adopting a rights-based approach, and actively promoting Learner voice
- Working with multi-agencies to achieve the best outcomes for Learners
- Community links and opportunities to develop social skills
- Modelling behaviour
- Developing strategies to encourage and support family engagement (for example through a newsletter or end of term events)
- Easy-read material should be on display and include links to external agencies
- Non-judgmental attitude towards each other
- Rules and boundaries created alongside Learners
- Open channels of communication for Team Members and Learners
- An Inclusive ethos
- Raising awareness through participation in local and national initiatives, such as National Anti-Bullying Week
- Risk assessed management of the environment, including peer compatibility and support ratios
- Maintaining effective records to track patterns of behaviour and incidents
- Provide and promote opportunities to learn about and celebrate diversity and difference
- Robust recruitment and employee training processes

3.3 Training and Support for Team Members

3.3.1 All Team Members will become familiar with our Therapeutic Approaches (behaviour policy), Safeguarding, Online Safety and Anti-Bullying policies and procedures as part of their general induction to the college. Regular updates and reinforcement regarding these policies and procedures will be given at other training sessions as necessary. Face to face and e-learning sessions will be provided for Team Members in order for them to keep their knowledge and skills in these areas up to date.

- 3.3.2 Any Team Member who feels they need help and support in dealing with a bullying problem should approach a member of the Campus Management Team, Senior Leadership Team, or Therapies team.
- 3.3.3 Strategies that prove effective in helping both the Learner being bullied and targeted Learner should be shared with Team Members through Team Around Me (TAM) meetings and added to Learners individual Therapeutic Risk Management Plans and grab packs.

3.4 Disclosure

- 3.4.1 The development of secure and trusting relationships is a priority, as this will support Learners' confidence to share their concerns with Team Members. However, we recognise that disclosing an incident of bullying may be a frightening experience for our Learners, and it is important that they have options for disclosure. This includes:
- Approaching a trusted Team Member to give an account of what has happened. This can be via a range of communication methods depending on the Learners preference, for example a verbal report, a written account or via the use of an Augmentative Alternative Communication aid (AAC).
 - Confiding in a friend, carer, or other trusted person. The trusted person may then contact the DSL/ DDSL, in order to discuss the disclosure (this could be face-to-face, by phone, email or other method of communication).
 - A report may also be given by a witness to an incident(s). Again, each Learner's preferred communication style/method should be accommodated, to enable the Learner to share information in a way that is comfortable for them.
 - Information may be shared indirectly through the course of a lesson discussion or other activity.

3.5 Procedure

- 3.5.1 Team Members must always take a potential victim seriously and seek to offer support. Learner safety must be the first priority.
- 3.5.2 All incidents of suspected bullying must be reported immediately to the Teacher of both the potential victim(s) and alleged Learner/s who is demonstrating the bullying behaviour. They will then work in accordance with the strategies below to resolve the problem. If more than one Team Member is involved, they should work together to provide a co-ordinated approach. They will also ensure that the concerns are logged and shared with the Head of Campus and DSL.
- 3.5.3 Opportunities should be created whereby the Learner can be encouraged to express their concerns safely and in confidence. Sufficient time should be set aside for the supporter to listen and take note.

3.6 Initial Strategies to use with Learners involved

- 3.6.1 All Learners involved should be spoken to, individually if necessary, and what they say must be recorded.
- 3.6.2 The Learner who feels bullied should be consulted about what they can do and what they would like to happen to resolve the situation.

- 3.6.3 The Learner who is alleged to have been bullying should also be consulted about what they can do and would like to happen to resolve the situation. Potential underlying issues that may be present should be explored.
- 3.6.4 Where appropriate, both parties should be brought together to discuss the way forward and stop any further incidents of bullying. This must be done sensitively and carefully, as it could be frightening for some Learners.
- 3.6.5 It may also be appropriate to consult any bystanders involved in the situation.
- 3.6.6 Team Members should be informed through the morning briefing (or immediately if the matter is serious) and advised if the situation arose out of a circumstance that everyone needs to be vigilant e.g., breaks, lunchtimes etc.
- 3.6.7 Parents or Carers (if appropriate) should be informed as soon as possible.
- 3.6.8 The Head of Campus and DSL should be informed. This can be done verbally but should always be followed up by a written report via Databridge.
- 3.6.9 A member of the Senior Leadership Team will review if there is a pattern in behaviours.
- 3.6.10 Team Members will continue to monitor the situation after all of the steps above have been followed.

3.7 Escalation

- 3.7.1 In the event of ongoing or repeated problems, the following procedure should be implemented:
- Action should be taken to ensure that the Learner involved suffers from no adverse consequences, and to verify and stop any bullying.
 - A Child on Child/Peer on Peer plan should be created to capture any actions which will mitigate any ongoing risks.
 - The situation should be monitored closely by the Class Teacher and Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) who will co-ordinate assistance of other Team Members as appropriate.
 - All incidents and discussions with Team Members, Learners and Parents/Carers should be recorded, in writing (Databridge).
- 3.7.2 Details of the action taken will be individualised according to the specific circumstance, and the details of this will be authorised by the Head of Campus or Principal. Actions will also be in line with the Therapeutic Approach Policy (Behaviour Policy).
- 3.7.3 Examples of potential actions are:
- Multi-disciplinary agreement of specific intervention. This may include the Learner's education team, Integrated Therapies Team, Parents/Carers, and other relevant agencies.
 - Further revision of risk assessments, including the management of the environment, and level of contact between the Learners involved,

- Revised curriculum to focus on the development of positive relationships, and Health and Wellbeing.
- Targeted intervention from the Integrated Therapies Team.

3.7.4 If appropriate, potential victims and/or those who are demonstrating the bullying behaviours, should be supported by their Class Teacher, LSAs and/or Integrated Therapies Team Members to help them develop skills such as confidence and resilience.

3.7.5 In extreme circumstances, an exclusion or suspension from college may be considered, though this would be a rare and last resort (please refer to the exclusion policy for further information).

3.7.6 Responses to serious incidents or those where child protection concerns are present (including allegations of bullying against a Team member), must also be in line with the college safeguarding procedure, whilst responses to online bullying must also be in line with the online safety procedure.

3.8 Guidance for Parents or Carers

3.8.1 Parents/Carers who have concerns will be listened to carefully and their concerns will be effectively and sensitively investigated in line with this Anti-bullying policy and procedures.

3.8.2 If a Parent/Carer feels they have not been heard or feel the situation has been dealt with unfairly, they can raise a complaint via the procedure outlined in the Complaints Policy.

3.9 Monitoring and Review

3.9.1 Incidents of bullying at our college will be monitored by the Senior Leadership Team, who will adopt a curious approach and be vigilant to patterns of data gathered, for example:

- Recurring complaints of bullying against a particular Learner or group of Learners
- Evidence that a particular Learner is, for some reason, becoming a target for bullies.
- Particular times of the college day/week when bullying is tending to occur.
- Specific situations where bullying may be occurring.
- Incident data gathered as part of the weekly incident review meetings.

3.9.2 If a pattern appears to be forming, the Team Members will work to address the problem, both with the individuals concerned and the college, through targeted lessons, and other measures as appropriate. There will be time allocated for reflective practice, to discuss how incidents were managed and what as a college, we can learn and improve.

- 3.9.3 This policy will have a periodic review of twelve months, but it will also be reviewed as and when needs are identified. Where possible, the strategy will be revised following capturing Learner voice.

4. Legislative Framework and Guidance

4.1.1 This policy has been written with reference to the following legislation:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)
- Education Act 2002
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Equality Act 2010
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015

4.1.2 The following guidance and documents have also been used in formulating this policy:

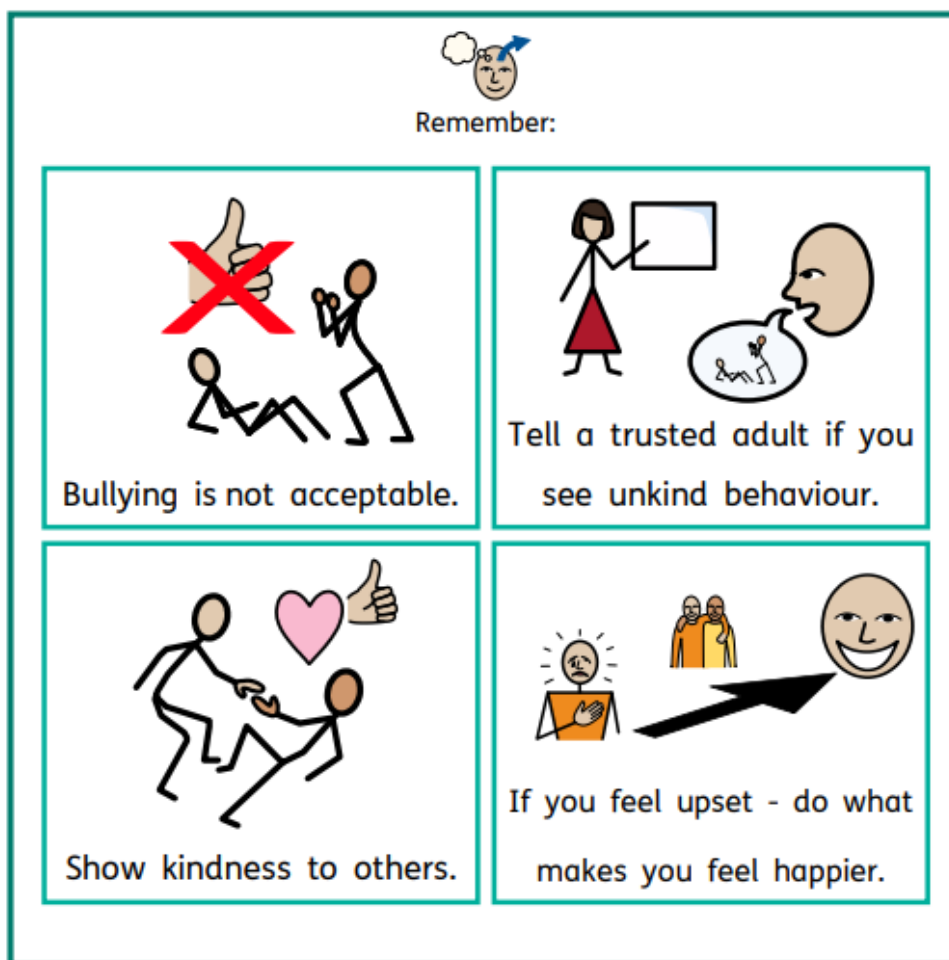
- Anti-bullying alliance: anti-bullying policy
- Challenging Bullying Rights, respect, equality: Statutory guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools 2019
- Respecting Others: Anti Bullying Guidance circular 23/03
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying
- UNCRC Rights of the Child

4.1.3 This policy should also be read and implemented in conjunction with the following policies:

- Safeguarding policy
- Online Safety and Acceptable Use
- Therapeutic Approach policy
- Attendance policy
- Exclusion and Suspension policy
- Equality and Diversity policy
- Anti-Radicalisation policy
- Recruitment and Selection policy

- Confidentiality
- Team Member Code of Conduct
- Raising Concerns and Whistleblowing.
- Looked after and Previously Looked after Children policy.
- SEND policy
- Educational Visits and Off-site Activities policy

5. Appendix 1 – Easy read display information



You can get help and advice from:

BulliesOut®

www.bulliesout.com

e-mail: mail@bulliesout.com

ANTI-BULLYING ALLIANCE

www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

KIDSCAPE
Help With Bullying

www.kidscape.org.uk

NSPCC

www.nspcc.org.uk | The UK children's charity | NSPCC

childline

ONLINE, ON THE PHONE, ANYTIME

www.childline.org.uk Tel: 0800 1111

6. Appendix 2 – Where to find further help and advice.

- 6.1.1 **Bullies Out** – Anti-bullying charity based in Wales that works with individuals, schools, colleges, youth, and community settings. E-mentors offer online support.

e-mail: mentorsonline@bulliesout.com

www.bulliesout.com

e-mail: mail@bulliesout.com

- 6.1.2 **Anti-Bullying Alliance** – Information for schools, parents/carers, and children and young people on all aspects of bullying.

www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

- 6.1.3 **Kidscape** – Anti-bullying charity that runs workshops for children and young people who have been bullied.

www.kidscape.org.uk

- 6.1.4 **The Diana Award** – Trains young anti-bullying ambassadors to help others.

www.antibullyingpro.com

- 6.1.5 **Childline** – Provide counselling for anyone aged under 19 in the UK.

www.childline.org.uk

Tel: 0800 1111

- 6.1.6 **Samaritans** – Charity dedicated to reducing feelings of isolation and disconnection that can lead to suicide. E-mail, live chat, and other services available.

www.samaritans.org

Tel: 116 123 (English-language line – free to call)

Tel: 0808 164 0123 (Welsh-language line – free to call)