



Anti-Bullying Policy

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Introduction

We believe this policy should be a working document that is fit for purpose, represents the college ethos, enables consistency and quality across the college.

We believe “bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences”. (DfE)

We have a duty of care to protect learners from bullying as part of our responsibility to provide a safe, secure, caring and friendly college environment for all the young people in order to protect them from those who wish to deliberately hurt them either physically or emotionally. We believe all our safeguarding procedures are in line with current legislation and advice, including Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023, and that we promote the welfare of all young people in our care.

We are aware that bullying is not a criminal offence, but we will report to the police any incident of violence or assault, theft of college equipment or personal belongings, repeated incidents of harassment or victimisation or hate crimes.

We work hard to eliminate all forms of bullying, to keep records of all incidents of bullying and the different types of bullying that occur in this college.

We acknowledge that if bullying is left unaddressed it can have a devastating effect on individuals. It can be a barrier to their learning and have serious consequences for their mental health not only in childhood but also into adulthood.

We are aware that bullying can cause anxiety, depression, hyperactivity and behavioural problems but the results from recent research that anxiety and depression caused by childhood bullying decreases over a period of time. Bullying does cause suffering but the impact on mental health decreases over time, so that children are able to recover in the medium term. Research results also show the potential for resilience in children exposed to bullying.

We work hard to prevent bullying from happening and to support learners who have been bullied by having in place resilience processes in order to help their recovery. We will provide counselling, engage with parents, if necessary, refer to the local authority's children's services or complete a Common Assessment Framework or refer to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. All support will be reviewed and improved if necessary. It is very important to work with parents and to keep them well informed at all stages.

We believe it is our moral and legal duty to protect LGBTQ+ learners and college personnel from all forms of bullying and to educate all learners about the important role that LGBTQ+ people play in society. All forms of homophobic and transphobic bullying must be challenged, dealt with and recorded.

We believe by creating a safe, secure and caring college environment we will encourage all learners to report any incident of bullying to a member of the college personnel. We are aware that under Sections 90 and 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 that we have the power to discipline learners for misbehaving off the college premises such as on college or public transport, outside local shops or in a town or village centre. All reported incidents of bullying outside college will be investigated and acted on.

Under no circumstances will we tolerate any form of bullying and all incidents of bullying will be dealt with promptly and effectively as we wish to promote the wellbeing of all learners.

We work hard to demonstrate the effectiveness of this policy by ensuring all incidents of bullying are investigated, are dealt with and the outcome of each incident.

We believe we can achieve this by ensuring strategies are regularly reviewed; by creating a safe, secure and caring college environment; by involving learners and parents; by teaching anti-bullying through the curriculum; by organising anti-bullying events; by effectively training college personnel; by working with the local community; by dealing with all reported cases of bullying; by having in place an effective reporting system; by celebrating effective preventative strategies; and by ensuring all college personnel are aware of this policy and use it as a working document referred to when dealing with incidents of bullying.

We wish to work closely with the Youth Participation Group (YPG) and to hear their views and opinions as we acknowledge and support Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child that learners should be encouraged to form and to express their views.

We as a college community we have a commitment to promoting equality. Therefore, an equality impact assessment has been undertaken and we believe this policy is in line with the Equality Act 2010.

We all have a responsibility to ensure equality permeates into all aspects of college life and that everyone is treated equally irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. We want everyone connected with this college to feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth.

We acknowledge the findings of the Race Disparity Audit that clearly shows how people of different ethnicities are treated across the public services of health, education, employment and the criminal justice system.

The educational section of the audit that covers differences by region; attainment and economic disadvantage; exclusions and abuse; and destinations, has a significant importance for the strategic planning of this college. We believe it is essential that this policy clearly identifies and outlines the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the procedures and arrangements that is connected with this policy.

Aims and Objectives

- To protect learners from bullying as part of our responsibility to provide a safe, secure, caring and friendly college environment for all learners.
- To look out for all signs of bullying and to take the appropriate action to stop it.
- To develop a college environment that is both safe and secure for all learners.
- To have in place established systems that will deal with incidents of bullying.
- To develop confident young people who will notify staff of any incident of bullying.
- To inform everyone connected with the college of the college's anti-bullying policy.
- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation connected to this policy.
- To work with other educational providers and the local authority to share good practice in order to improve this policy.

Responsibility for the Policy and Procedure

Role of the Head of College

The Head of College will not condone any bullying and has:

- appointed a member of staff to be responsible for promoting positive learner behaviour;
- appointed a member of SLT to be responsible for pastoral care;
- appointed independent counsellors to be responsible for counselling learners;
- delegated powers and responsibilities to the SLT to eliminate all forms of bullying, to keep records of all incidents of bullying and the different types of bullying;
- delegated powers and responsibilities to the SLT to ensure all college personnel and visitors to the college are aware of and comply with this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring that the college complies with all equalities legislation;
- responsibility for ensuring this policy and all policies are maintained and updated regularly;
- responsibility for ensuring all policies are made available to parents;
- the responsibility of involving the YPG in the development, approval, implementation and review of this policy;
- worked with the YPG, college personnel and parents to agree a definition of bullying;
- the responsibility of involving the YPG in:
 - discussing improvements to this policy during the college year;
 - organising surveys to gauge the thoughts of all learners;
 - reviewing the effectiveness of this policy with SLT;
- responsibility for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy.

Role of the SLT

The SLT will:

- under Section 157 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 encourage good behaviour, the respect for others and endeavour to prevent all forms of bullying among learners;
- ensure that the college follows Keeping Children Safe In Education 2023 guidelines in the development of this policy;
- work in conjunction with the Head of College to ensure all college personnel, learners and parents are aware of and comply with this policy;
- implement this policy;
- work to create a safe, secure, caring and friendly college environment for all learners;
- ensure risk assessments are:
 - in place and cover all aspects of this policy;
 - accurate and suitable;
 - reviewed annually;
 - easily available for all college personnel;
- ensure college personnel have a clear understanding of the extent and nature of bullying that may take place in college;
- work hard with college personnel to create an ethos of good behaviour;
- encourage college personnel to 'proactively gather intelligence about issues between learners which might provoke conflict and develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place';
- ensure that the curriculum helps to deal with anti-bullying;
- investigate all reported incidents of bullying;
- ensure that all learners understand that bullying is wrong;
- ensure that all parents aware of this policy and that we do not tolerate bullying;

- raise awareness of bullying with learners, parents, college personnel on the grounds of protected characteristics;
- consult with learners and parents to identify the extent and nature of bullying in the college;
- inform parents of any incident of bullying and how it has been dealt with;
- ensure college personnel report and record incidents of bullying;
- ensure records of all incidents of bullying are:
 - stored in a secure place;
 - kept for a specific period of time;
 - kept in a central log in order to build up a picture of concerns of individual learners and in identifying patterns of behaviour;
 - kept in a uniform and systematic way;
 - kept as well as specific types of bullying and their outcomes;
 - used to effectively track learners through college;
- ensure counselling and support mechanisms are in place to help those who have been bullied;
- ensure all perpetrators of bullying are given time to discuss why they have bullied and why their actions were wrong;
- discuss with YPG:
 - A definition for bullying;
 - Are learners aware of this policy?
 - How can bullying be effectively dealt with?
 - How good are college personnel in dealing with incidents of bullying?
 - How good are college personnel in identifying the symptoms of bullying amongst learners?
- support any learner who has been bullied;
- encourage any bully to change their behaviour;
- impose sanctions on any learner who continues to bully;
- consider permanent exclusion in the most serious incidents of bullying;
- make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy;
- work closely with external agencies to support learners who experience bullying;
- work with anti-bullying organisations when dealing with certain forms of bullying;
- ensure effective supervision is in place between lessons, break times and lunchtimes;
- work with the wider community to deal with bullying that takes place outside college;
- deal with any form of bullying that takes place to and from college;
- proactively work with the police, parents/carers and the local community to help reduce local tensions.
- work closely with the coordinator;
- provide leadership and vision in respect of equality;
- provide guidance, support and training to all staff.
- monitor the effectiveness of this policy by monitoring:
 - the number of recorded incidents in an academic year;
 - the types of bullying that occur in an academic year;
 - how swiftly incidents of bullying are dealt with
- report termly the number of incidents of bullying and the outcomes to the Head of College.
- annually report to the Head of College on the success and development of this policy.

Role of the Learning Support Coordinator

The LSCO will:

- lead the development of this policy and all linked policies throughout the college;
- work closely with the Head of College and SLT;
- provide guidance and support to all college personnel to understand the signs or behaviour of someone being bullied;
- work with learners to determine those parts of the college where they do not feel safe;
- have in place good systems at breaktime and lunchtime to reduce the risk of bullying;
- plan opportunities in the curriculum to discuss issues related to the protected characteristics;
- build learners' resilience to bullying;
- develop philosophy sessions to provide learners with opportunities to discuss equality and diversity;
- work closely with external agencies to support learners who experience bullying;
- collaboratively work with other colleges to identify common issues related to the protected characteristics;
- make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy;
- keep up to date with new developments and resources;
- provide training for all staff on induction and when the need arises;
- help counsel learners who have been bullied and those who use bullying behaviour;
- review and monitor;
- annually report to the Head of College on the success of this policy.

Role of the Person Responsible for Pastoral Care

The Pastoral Lead will:

- create and establish a pastoral care programme to assist the needs of all learners;
- lead the development of this policy throughout the college;
- work closely with the Head of College and SLT.
- ensure the Safeguarding policy protects all learners from physical, intellectual, moral, emotional harm;
- assist in establishing and maintaining good communication between college, parents/carers and external agencies.
- make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy;
- provide guidance and support to all staff.
- provide training for all staff on induction and when the need arises;
- keep up to date with new developments and resources;
- undertake risk assessments when required;
- review and monitor;
- annually report to the Head of College on the success and development of this policy.

Role of Counsellors

Liberty uses external counsellors to provide emotional support for our learners.

Counsellors will:

- provide support for learners who have been bullied;
- be trained and qualified in counselling;
- be trained to listen without passing judgement;
- be trained to help learners to sort out their thoughts and feelings;
- provide emotional support allowing learners to concentrate more in class, to feel better about themselves and to build their self-confidence;
- use a variety of creative methods to help learners express their concerns;
- provide enough time for a learner for to explore issues in a meaningful way;
- undertake counselling sessions in a private room;
- regularly review the situation with the learner and come to a joint decision when the sessions should end;
- ensure that all matters discussed during counselling sessions are completely confidential;
- only break confidentiality if there is a safeguarding disclosure and then will:
 - inform the learner that the information has to be shared with others;
 - inform and seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Role of College Personnel

College personnel will:

- comply with this policy;
- be aware of all other linked policies;
- be aware of the signs of bullying in order to prevent bullying taking place;
- report all incidents of bullying;
- investigate all reported incidents of bullying;
- take all forms of bullying seriously;
- make sure that all learners know what to do if they are bullied;
- encourage learners to report any incidents of bullying to any member of the college personnel;
- support any learner who has been bullied;
- raise awareness of the wrongs of bullying through lessons;
- use preventative strategies such as buddy systems/Peer Mentors;
- undertake the appropriate training;
- implement the college's equalities policy and schemes;
- report and deal with all incidents of discrimination;
- attend appropriate training sessions on equality;
- report any concerns they have on any aspect of the college community.

Role of Learners

Learners must:

- be aware of and comply with this policy;
- report if they are being bullied;

- report if they see someone being bullied;
- discuss ways of preventing bullying through the YPG;
- follow the following instructions if they are bullied:
 - get away from the situation as quickly as you can
 - report what happened to you to one of the college personnel by telling them:
 - what has happened to you
 - how you feel
 - if you have been bullied before
 - who bullied you
 - where the incident happened
 - when it happened
 - make sure that your report is dealt with and who you told
 - tell your parents or another family member
 - ask for counselling if you are really upset
- treat others, their work and equipment with respect;
- talk to others without shouting and will use language which is neither abusive nor offensive;
- support the Code of Conduct and guidance necessary to ensure the smooth running of the college;
- liaise with the YPG;
- take part in questionnaires and surveys.

Role of Parents

Parents must:

- be aware of and support this policy;
- report to the college any concerns they have of their child being bullied;
- be assured that the college will deal with all incidents of bullying;
- be assured that they will be informed of incidents and will be involved in discussions;
- be asked to take part in periodic surveys conducted by the college;
- support the Code of Conduct and guidance necessary to ensure smooth running of the college.

Training for College Personnel

All college personnel:

- have equal chances of training, career development and promotion
- receive training on this policy on induction which specifically covers:
 - What is bullying?
 - How to identify, prevent and manage bullying.
 - Types of bullying such as Cyberbullying, bullying, bullying of learners with special educational needs, homophobic bullying and bullying around race, religion and culture.
 - Recognising bullying.
 - Anti-bullying strategies.
 - How to deal with a bullying incident.
 - Tackling Homophobia
 - Building learners resilience to bullying.
 - Working and co-operating with parents and carers
- receive periodic training so that they are kept up to date with new information;

- receive equal opportunities training on induction in order to improve their understanding of the Equality Act 2010 and its implications.

Raising Awareness of this Policy

We will raise awareness of this policy via:

- Learner Handbook;
- College website;
- Staff Shared Drive;
- Meetings with parents such as introductory, transition, parent-teacher consultations;
- College events;
- Meetings with college personnel;
- Information displays in the main college entrance;
- Shared via CPOMS Library for ease of reference;
- Text messages;
- Email

Equality Impact Assessment

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any learner and it helps to promote equality at this college.

Monitoring the Effectiveness of the Policy

The practical application of this policy will be reviewed annually or when the need arises by the SLT Lead, Head of College and Governing Board.