



# Anti-Cyber Bullying Policy

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<b>NAME OF 1<sup>st</sup> REVIEWER</b>	<b>Michelle Smith</b>
<b>NAME OF 2<sup>nd</sup> REVIEWER</b>	<b>Jojo Rassekh</b>

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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 cyber bullying is the use of a mobile phone or the internet to deliberately upset another person by spreading lies and rumours online; by sending or forwarding mean messages via instant messages, text or on social networks; by posting photographs without consent and by tricking others to reveal personal information. Cyber bullying can happen at all times of the day and is in most cases it is anonymous and difficult to monitor.

We have a responsibility to ensure that cyber bullying does not take place in this college by ensuring learners, college personnel and parents understand what it is and how it can be prevented.

We understand cyber bullying is highly intrusive and the hurt it causes can be very severe. As it leaves no physical scars cyber bullying is not easy to detect by a parent or a teacher.

We acknowledge cyber bullying can take place anywhere and can target learners and college personnel. There are many types of cyber bullying such as:

<b>Texting</b>	Sending abusive, nasty or threatening text messages to someone is a type of bullying. This could include sharing those texts with other people who might join in the bullying.
<b>Social Networking sites</b>	Social networks such Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Instagram, YouTube and many more, can be used in lots of different ways to bully someone.
<b>Sexting</b>	Sexting is when someone takes a sexually explicit picture or video of themselves and then sends it to someone else. Sometimes people who are trying to bully someone may ask for these kinds of images so they can send them on to other people.
<b>Online gaming</b>	Being abusive towards someone or harassing them on an online multi-player gaming site like Minecraft or Call of Duty is also a kind of online bullying. People may also steal or destroy your belongings or creations in games.
<b>Emailing</b>	Sending abusive emails is a type of bullying. Sometimes those emails might be shared with other people who could join in the bullying. Sending computer viruses or hurtful videos and pictures by email is also online bullying.
<b>Abusive personal info</b>	Sometimes people involved in bullying might post someone else's photos or personal information without that person's permission. This could include pretending to be someone else and writing fake comments or blogs.
<b>Instant messaging (IM) and chatrooms</b>	Sometimes people might get nasty messages when they are using instant messaging or chat rooms. Sending those types of messages using someone else's account without their permission is also online bullying.
<b>Online grooming</b>	This could be if someone is threatening to share a private or naked photo online.

(Reference: <https://www.childline.org.uk>)

We have a duty of care to protect learners and college personnel from cyber bullying as part of our responsibility to provide a safe, secure, caring and friendly college environment for all the learners in order to protect them from those who wish to deliberately hurt them emotionally. We believe all our safeguarding procedures are in line with current legislation and guidance including Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 and that we promote the welfare of all learners in our care and college personnel.

We work hard to prevent cyber bullying by having in place a variety of safeguarding procedures.

We teach our young people to 'stop, speak, support' when online and aim to encourage them to stop negative behaviour, tell a responsible adult and support victims of bullying.

We work hard to prevent all forms of 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 acknowledge that we have the power under the Education Act 2011 to examine the data or files of a mobile phone confiscated from a learner, and if the material breaches college discipline then the material may be deleted.

We are aware that a recent study has shown that there has been an increase in the number of incidents of bullying reported in colleges which have been caused by online bullying, harassment and problems caused by social media.

We believe that social networks are failing to understand the real scale of the problem. They need to realise that cyber-bullying is damaging the mental health of young users and they need to tackle this problem by:

- responding to reports of bullying within 24 hours;
- providing young users clear guidelines on how to behave online;
- taking tougher action on anyone who break the rules.

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.

However, a mobile phone containing material suspected to be evidence relevant to an offence or is a pornographic image of a child or an extreme pornographic image, will be handed to the police.

We wish to work closely with the Youth Participation Group 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 have a commitment to promote equality. Therefore, an equality impact assessment has been undertaken and we believe this policy is in line with the Equality Act 2010.

## Aims

- To ensure learners, college personnel and parents understand what cyber bullying is and how it can be prevented.
- To have in place procedures to prevent incidents of cyber bullying.
- To have in place effective procedures to deal with all reported incidents of cyber bullying.
- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation connected to this policy.
- To work with other colleges 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 has:

- appointed an external company to be responsible for ICT;
- 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 Senior Leadership Team 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;
- nominated a designated equalities person to ensure that appropriate action will be taken to deal with all prejudice related incidents or incidents which are a breach of this policy;
- ensure this policy and other linked policies are up to date;
- ensure that everyone connected with the college is aware of this policy;
- attend training related to this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring funding is in place to support this policy;
- 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 Youth Participation Group in:
  - determining this policy with the Head of College;
  - 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 the Head of College
- responsibility for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy.

## Role of the Senior Leadership Team

### The Senior Leadership Team 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;
- ensure all college personnel, learners and parents are aware of and comply with this policy;
- work closely with the ICT coordinator to review how the college network is monitored.
- ensure the Acceptable Use Policy outlines how the ICT suite and the Internet should be used;
- ensure risk assessments are:
  - in place and cover all aspects of this policy;
  - accurate and suitable;
  - reviewed annually;
  - easily available for all college personnel.
- provide support and counselling for those learners and college personnel who may be victims of cyber bullying;
- deal with all incidents of cyber bullying quickly and effectively;
- impose sanctions as outlined in the college's Behaviour policy on any learner identified as being the bully;
- contact the police and social services if the cyber bullying is sufficiently severe;
- keep parents informed of the college's actions;
- record and keep all incidents and their outcomes;
- report all incidents to the Head of College;
- work with parents in dealing with cyber bullying;
- inform parents of any incident of cyber bullying and how it has been dealt with;
- authorise senior members of staff to confiscate mobile phones of learners and to examine and if necessary, delete the data or files if it is felt the material breaches college discipline;
- contact the police if a confiscated learner's mobile contains evidence relevant to an offence or is a pornographic image of a child or an extreme pornographic image;
- monitor the number of recorded incidents in an academic year;
- monitor the types of cyber bullying that occur in an academic year;
- monitor how swiftly incidents of cyber bullying are dealt with;
- discuss with the Youth Participation Group:
  - Are learners aware of this policy?
  - How can cyber bullying be effectively dealt with?
  - How good are college personnel in dealing with incidents of cyber bullying?
  - How good are college personnel in identifying the symptoms of cyber bullying amongst learners?
- give all perpetrators of bullying time to discuss why they have bullied and why their actions were wrong;
- encourage any cyber bully to change their behaviour;
- impose sanctions on any learner who continues to cyber bully;
- consider permanent exclusion in the most serious incidents of cyber bullying;
- consider the use of legal powers under the Education Act 2006 that allow him/her to regulate behaviour of learners when they are off-site;
- provide leadership and vision in respect of equality;
- provide guidance, support and training to all staff;
- provide awareness training for college personnel in order to:
  - understand the online world of young people;
  - keep up with technology.

- monitor the effectiveness of this policy by speaking with learners, college personnel, parents;
- annually report to the Head of College on the success and development of this policy.

## Role of the ICT Coordinator

### The coordinator will:

- work closely with the Head of College and Senior Leadership Team to ensure that:
  - the Acceptable Use Policy is up to date
  - the college network is monitored
  - information is provided for learners and parents
- provide guidance and support to all staff;
- ensure cyber bullying is discussed during staff meetings and inset days;
- ensure cyberbullying is discussed with learners through class discussions;
- invite learners to consider the effects of cyberbullying;
- help review anti-bullying and learner behaviour and discipline policies;
- ensure all college personnel and learners use the new internet code of online behaviour of 'stop, speak, support';
- keep up to date with new developments and resources;
- review and monitor;
- annually report to the Head of College on the success and development of this policy.

## Role of the Pastoral Care Coordinator

### The coordinator 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;
- ensure the Safeguarding and Child Protection 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 self-employed counsellors to provide emotional support to 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 child protection disclosure and then will:
  - inform the child 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 all the afore mentioned aspects of this policy;
- be alert to the dangers of cyber bullying;
- report all incidents of cyber bullying to a member of the SLT;
- regularly remind learners of:
  - the safe use of the IT suite;
  - the Acceptable Use Policy;
  - the need to report any incident of cyber bullying to a member of the college personnel;
  - the new internet code of online behaviour of 'stop, speak, support';
- inform learners of the dangers of cyber bullying through lessons;
- be advised:
  - not to give their mobile phone numbers or email addresses to any learner;
  - not to accept as a 'friend' any learner past or present on social media sites;
  - not to leave a computer or any other device logged in when they are away from their desk;
  - to ensure their mobile phone or any other device is password protected;
  - to keep a regular check on their online presence and reporting any negative content;
  - to ensure their friends do not share information about them online;
  - to use social media correctly and does not breach their employment code of conduct;
  - to have in place security and privacy settings;
  - not to give out personal contact details;
  - to carry a college mobile when on college educational trips;
  - to use their college email address for college business;
  - to report all incidents of cyber bullying to their line manager;
  - to save all evidence of any online abuse by taking screen shots etc.;
  - to contact the police if any abusive online comments are sexist, of a sexual nature, or constitute a hate crime;
  - to request all offensive or inappropriate online content is taken down.
- attend awareness training in order to:



- understand the online world of young people;
- keep up with technology.
- seek the views of learners in monitoring and evaluating this policy;
- 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 will:

- comply with all the afore mentioned aspects of this policy;
- sign an Acceptable Use of ICT contract;
- be encouraged to report all incidents of cyber bullying to a member of the college personnel;
- be advised:
  - to use the new internet code of online behaviour of 'stop, speak, support';
  - not to take everything to heart;
  - not to give out their own or anybody else's personal information;
  - to be careful what they write and post online;
  - how to block or report people;
  - not to 'like' or share an unkind comment or image;
  - to talk to an adult they trust if something upsets them;
  - to keep a diary of what bullies do including dates and descriptions;
  - to write a letter to their Tutor, Senior Leadership Team or Head of College;
  - not to react but to show bullies that they don't care and often they will lose interest;
  - to save evidence of online bullying;
  - to contact the police if they are being harassed online.
- be advised, if they are bullying someone, to:
  - Think about what you're doing. The first step is realising that you've been involved in bullying. We all make mistakes and it doesn't make you a bad person.
  - Ask for some advice. Tell someone you trust, like a parent, carer or teacher. They may be able to offer you some advice about what to do.
  - Delete the bullying. Go back and delete any upsetting or nasty posts, tweets or comments you've written.
  - Be the one to make a stand. Talk to others involved and encourage them to stop the bullying. It only takes one person to start making a big change.
  - Say sorry. Apologise to the person who was bullied and offer them support. This can mean a lot to the other person.
  - Learn from this. Sometimes we do things without really thinking them through, but the important thing is to learn from it and change the way you act in the future.

*(Reference: <https://www.childline.org.uk>)*
- be advised to help a friend who is being bullied by:
  - listening to them;
  - supporting them;
  - writing supportive comments;
  - doing things together such as socialising out of college.

- listen carefully to all instructions given by the tutor;
- ask for further help if they do not understand;
- treat others, their work and equipment with respect;
- support the Code of Conduct and guidance necessary to ensure the smooth running of the college;
- liaise with the Youth Participation Group;
- take part in questionnaires and surveys.

## Role of Parents

### Parents will:

- be made aware of this policy;
- comply with this policy;
- sign an Acceptable Use of ICT contract;
- be encouraged to discuss the Acceptable Use of ICT contract with their children;
- report all incidents of cyber bullying involving their child to the college;
- be encouraged not to use their mobile phone when on the college premises especially for the taking of photographs;
- teach their children to use the internet safely by:
  - using the internet online code of behaviour of 'stop, speak, support' at all times;
  - keeping their password secure and private
  - making sure they use the privacy settings;
  - only adding people they know to their list of friends;
  - not talking to strangers online;
  - showing respect for others by being carefully what they say online;
  - being carefully when sharing photographs and videos;
  - learning how to block an online bully or someone behaving badly;
  - not replying to offending emails, text messages or online conversations;
  - saving evidence of offending emails etc;
  - by reporting any offending emails etc. to a trusting adult;
  - making it clear that it is not acceptable behaviour to message college personnel in any form;
  - knowing that some social media services have a button that once pressed will send report a bullying incident.
- Understand how they can spot the signs of bullying when their children are:
  - upset or angry after using their mobile phone or using social media;
  - unwilling to talk about or are secretive about what they are doing online or on their mobile;
  - spending more or less time on their mobile phone or online;
  - not wanting to go to college;
  - avoiding meeting their friends;
  - not wanting to go to social events;
  - having difficulty sleeping;
  - displaying low self-esteem.
- understand how they can support their child who is being cyber bullied.
- be asked to take part periodic surveys conducted by the college;
- support the college Code of Conduct and guidance necessary to ensure smooth running of the college.

## Raising Awareness of this Policy

**We will raise awareness of this policy via:**

- College website;
- Staff Community 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;
- Text messages
- Email
- Social media

## Training

**All college personnel:**

- have equal chances of training, career development and promotion
- receive training on induction which specifically covers:
  - All aspects of this policy
  - Safeguarding
  - Learner Behaviour Management
  - Anti-bullying
  - Acceptable Internet Use Agreement
  - ICT
  - Equal opportunities
- 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.

## 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 Implementation and Effectiveness of the Policy

The practical application of this policy will be reviewed annually or when the need arises by the Head of College and Senior Leadership Team.

A statement of the policy's effectiveness and the necessary recommendations for improvement will be presented to the Head of College for further discussion and endorsement.