

Anti-Bullying Policy

All cases of bullying are serious, whether physical or emotional/psychological.

The aim of the policy is to prevent bullying of any sort and to ensure that everyone can operate in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. All members of the community should have an understanding of what bullying is and aim to help members of the school community to deal with bullying when it occurs and, even more importantly, to prevent it. Bullying is an anti-social behaviour which affects everyone; it is unacceptable and it will not be tolerated. Everyone in the community has a responsibility to report any incident of bullying that comes to their attention and these reports will always be taken seriously.

This anti-bullying document has been written in accordance with best practice guidelines in the:

- Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for School Leaders, Staff and Governing Bodies, October 2014
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, DFE, July 2015 and KCSIE 2016

Definition of Bullying

Bullying may be defined as any deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually but not exclusively repeated over a period of time, which intentionally hurts another pupil or group physically or emotionally. It is often difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves, and it is often motivated by prejudice. Examples of unacceptable bullying behaviour include:

- Physical – where a student is physically punched, kicked etc.
- Verbal - name calling, teasing or making offensive remarks
- Cyber-bullying - use of ICT by an individual or group in a way that is intended to upset others. Examples include using social websites, mobile phones, text messaging, photographs, video and e-mail
- Exclusion – where a student is excluded from discussions/ activities/ social events with those she believes to be her friends

Bullying may involve complicity that falls short of direct participation by, for instance, manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It may be overt and intimidatory but is often hidden and subtle. It includes actions or comments that are racist, religious or cultural, homophobic, transphobic, sexist, sexual or which focus on disabilities or other physical

attributes (such as hair, colour or body shape) or any reference to Special Educational Needs and/or disability.

Bullying makes the lives of its victims a misery: it undermines their confidence and self-esteem and destroys their sense of security. Bullying impacts on its victims' attendance and attainment at school. It also affects observers who can be upset, intimidated or unsettled by what they see and hear. No one should underestimate the potential impact of bullying. No one, whether student or staff, should have to accept this type of behaviour. There are criminal laws that apply to harassment, assault and threatening behaviour. If staff feel that a criminal offence may have been committed they should seek assistance from the police.

The College Aims:

1. To create an atmosphere of mutual respect and understanding.
2. To raise awareness with discussions about differences between people and the importance of avoiding prejudice to help students to develop positive strategies and to become assertive without using threats and violence.
3. To be vigilant and report any concerns about possible bullying to Form Tutors, Year Coordinators, the Deputy Principal and Principal.
4. To record all incidents of bullying. These are kept on students' files in the Secretary's office and on the Central Bullying record, including where parents have made us aware for information only.
5. To establish the facts of any bullying incident, before considering the use a range of sanctions available. (In extreme situations parents may be asked to take their daughter from College either on a short term (suspension) or long term (exclusion) basis).
6. To offer counselling to support the victim and the bully.
7. To stay in touch with the parents, if appropriate, and inform them if matters improve as well as if the problem continues.
8. The School will raise awareness of the staff through training and take action to reduce the risk of bullying at the times and places where it is most likely to occur.
9. The key points from this policy will be prominently displayed on School notice boards and will be discussed with pupils during Tutor led sessions.
10. Anti-bullying will feature as a discussion point for Student voice. It will also be revisited as necessary during PSHEE sessions to all years and reinforced in other areas of the curriculum as the opportunities present themselves e.g. drama, physical education.
11. The record of bullying offences will be reviewed by the Deputy Principal and the Pastoral teams regularly to watch for patterns and check that the policy is effective.

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH A REPORTED INCIDENT OF BULLYING

If an incident of bullying including cyberbullying and bullying outside of College is reported (by the student or their parent), the following procedures are adopted:

- The member of staff to whom it was reported or who first discovers the situation, will control the situation, reassure and support the student(s) involved. (If the incident is reported by another concerned student, the member of staff will discuss and agree action with the Year Co-ordinator).
- He/she will inform an appropriate member of the pastoral team (Form Tutor/Year Co-ordinator, Deputy Principal) as soon as possible.
- The student reporting the incident will be asked to outline the cause of their concern and to give an account of events to their tutor or Year Co-ordinator.
- The action taken to support the student reporting the incident will be agreed with them.
- The student reporting the incident will be monitored and offered support to develop a strategy to help herself.
- If agreed with the student reporting the incident, the ‘bully’, together with all others who were involved, will be interviewed individually and asked to give their account of events.
- The alleged bully will be interviewed by a member of the pastoral team, separately from the victim, to get their perspective. If it is appropriate, at this stage, it will be made clear why her behaviour was inappropriate and caused distress. She will be offered guidance on modifying her behaviour, together with any appropriate disciplinary sanctions. (This could take the form of a detention, an internal exclusion or an external exclusion.)
- If it is not clear which party is at fault, all girls involved will be interviewed and asked to give an account of events.
- A way forward, including disciplinary sanctions and counselling, should be agreed with those involved in the incident. This should recognise that suitable support is needed both for all students involved, as well as dealing with appropriate disciplinary measures.
- The incident should be recorded on the student file and on the central Bullying file. It will also be added to the child protection register where there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.
- All Form Tutors of those involved should be informed.
- In serious incidents, the Principal/Deputy Principal will be informed by the person who has spoken to the student(s) involved.
- The parents/guardians of all parties will be informed if bullying has occurred, by the Year Co-ordinator or a member of SMT.
- As part of the monitoring and review strategy, the matter will be raised at a weekly pastoral briefing so all staff are aware of sensitivities and can support strategies put in place.
- If a criminal offence has been committed – harassment, assault or/and threatening behaviour it may be necessary to treat the incident as child protection (CP) concern and it will be necessary to make a report to Social Services or the Police.

PARENTS

Parents and families have an important part to play in helping us deal with bullying.

- Discourage your daughter from using bullying behaviour at home and elsewhere.
- Show her how to resolve difficult situations without using violence or aggression.
- Ensure that you and your daughter are conversant with the Student Anti-Bullying policy which can be found in form rooms and / or student planners.
- Watch out for signs that your daughter is being bullied, or is bullying others. Parents and families are often the first to detect that a problem exists. Don't dismiss it.
- Contact the College immediately if you are worried

Peer to peer abuse (including online) (Bullying)

Bullying affects a child or young person emotionally and physically. It is difficult to detect as the physical indicators are not directly visible. Indicators that a child is being bullied is exhibited through their behaviour, attendance, engagement and achievement.

It can be hard for adults, including parents, to know whether or not a child is being bullied. A child might not tell anyone because they are scared the bullying will get worse. They might think that they deserve to be bullied, or that it is their fault.

You cannot always see the signs of bullying and no one sign indicates for certain that a child is being bullied. You should look out for indicators that a child is being bullied through their behaviour, attendance, engagement and achievement.

Children sometime bully other children because:

- a) They don't know it is wrong.
- b) They are emulating older brothers or sisters or other people whom they admire.
- c) They haven't learnt other, better ways of mixing with their school friends.
- d) Their friends encourage them to bully.
- e) They are going through a difficult time and are acting out aggressive feelings

Physical and behavioural indicators to consider:

- Overly quiet
- Change in attitude or behaviour
- Failure to engage in activity
- Belongings getting "lost" or damaged
- Physical injuries such as unexplained bruises
- Asking for, or stealing, money (to give to a bully)
- Being afraid to go to school, being mysteriously 'ill' each morning, or skipping school
- Not doing as well at school
- Being nervous, losing confidence, or becoming distressed and withdrawn
- Problems with eating or sleeping
- Bullying others

If your daughter has been bullied

1. Talk calmly with your daughter about her experiences.
2. Make a note of what she says - particularly who was involved; how often the bullying has occurred; where it happened and what has happened.
3. Reassure her that she has done the right thing to tell you about the bullying and discuss with her how she would like the problem to be tackled.
4. If she considers the College should be informed, contact your daughter's Form Tutor, Year Co-ordinator or Deputy Principal.

Talking with staff about bullying

1. Try and stay calm - bear in mind that the member of staff may have no idea that your daughter is being bullied or may have heard conflicting accounts of an incident.
2. Be as specific as possible about what your daughter says has happened - give dates, places and names of other children involved.
3. Make a note of what action the College intends to take.
4. Ascertain if there is anything you can do to help your daughter or the College.
5. Stay in touch with the College. Let them know if things improve as well as if the problem continues.

If you are not satisfied.

Families who feel that their concerns are not being addressed appropriately by the College should make an appointment to discuss the matter with the Principal.

If your daughter is bullying other children

Many children may be involved in bullying other pupils at some time or another. Often parents are not aware that their daughter is involved in bullying.

To stop your daughter from bullying others:

- a) Talk with your daughter, explain that what she is doing is unacceptable and makes other pupils unhappy.
- b) Discourage other members of your family from bullying behaviour or from using aggression or force to get what they want.
- c) Show your daughter how she can join in with other pupils without bullying.
- d) Make an appointment to see your daughter's Form Tutor; explain the problems your daughter is experiencing; discuss how you and the College can stop her bullying others.
- e) Check regularly with your daughter how things are going at College.

Student Anti-Bullying policy

Pupils are encouraged to follow these guidelines which are found in form rooms and/or the student planner.

If you are being bullied the following responses should help:

1. Explain to the bully that her words/actions are upsetting and wrong; she may not be aware of this. However, if the bullying continues try not to show your feelings.
2. Walk away quickly and confidently, even if you do not feel that way inside.
3. If you are different in any way, be proud of it - it is good to be an individual.
4. Share your feelings with someone else. They may be able to advise on an appropriate course of action or will be able to involve other people who can.
5. Discuss the problem with a member of staff or ask your friends to tell a member of staff on your behalf or report using the whisper button.
6. Call Childline 0800 1111

You can help to stop bullying:

1. If the girl being bullied is in any danger, fetch help. If she is not, remain with her; your presence may ease the situation.
2. Show that you and your friends disapprove and that in your opinion what is happening to them is wrong.
3. Give sympathy and support to other girls who may be bullied. Encourage them to speak out on their own behalf.
4. Be careful about teasing people and making personal remarks. If you think that they might not find your comments funny then do not say them.
5. If you know of serious bullying tell someone. The victim may be too scared or lonely to tell or offer to accompany them to see a trusted adult.

When you are talking about bullying with an adult, be clear about:

- a) What has happened,
- b) How often this has happened,
- c) Who was involved,
- d) Who saw what was happening,
- e) Where it happened,
- f) What you have done about it already