



Launceston College

A Multi Academy Trust

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Updated on: 29th April 2019

Review by: ARJ

Ratified by the MAT board on: 6th March 2020

Aims and values

We are committed to the highest standards of academic excellence and pastoral support; we are dedicated to providing the best education for all our students by developing the knowledge, understanding and skills essential for learning and leading a fulfilled life.

This anti bullying policy supports the work outlined in the DfE advice – Preventing and tackling bullying, Advice for Headteachers, staff and governing bodies, October 2014. It also reflects current practice and the college's focus on all students being happy, successful and responsible.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/623895/Preventing_and_tackling_bullying_advice.pdf

This policy aims to

- Prevent or reduce incidents of bullying
- Provide a clearly defined framework for dealing with victims and the perpetrators of incidents of bullying
- Ensure this framework is understood and trusted by all stakeholders: students, parents, teachers and support staff.

Position and values

This policy will help staff to achieve the vision of the college, which is shared by the staff and governors across the Multi Academy Trust (MAT). This will ensure that schools within the MAT provide an environment where every child can feel:

- Safe
- Healthy
- Able to enjoy and achieve
- Able to contribute to future economic well being
- Able to make a positive contribution

To protect the rights of all students to have a safe and secure learning environment the MAT will continuously work towards preventing acts of bullying, harassment and other forms of aggression and violence as these behaviours are unacceptable and interfere with both our college's ability to educate children and a child's ability to learn. If such a case arises, the staff within the MAT will follow the antibullying guidelines laid out in this policy. This will enable staff to:

- Identify children displaying unacceptable behaviour and know how to support them in order that they develop the necessary skills to participate in the school community effectively and positively
- Keep all other children safe, happy and confident

Clarification of terms

Definition of bullying

A bully is someone who deliberately sets out to hurt another person on more than one occasion. All children have upsets and squabbles; these are not classed as bullying and are dealt with through the behaviour policy.

Definition of cyber-bullying

Cyber bullying is the use of technology such as mobile phones, email, chat rooms or social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat to harass, threaten, embarrass, intimidate or target a child. Unlike physical bullying, cyber bullying can often be difficult to track as the cyber bully (the person responsible for the acts of cyber bullying) can remain anonymous when threatening other online, encouraging them to behave more aggressively than they might face to face.

Bullying and bullying behaviours can take the form of -

Physical

Assault, pushing, shouldering, elbowing, tripping, slapping, kicking, hair pulling, unacceptable touching (including that of a sexual nature), throwing items, blocking i.e.: preventing movement through an access point, pinching, stabbing, burning, spitting or any other form of physical activity that makes a person feel threatened or intimidated.

Social

Verbal – Any words (e.g. Racial, sexual, homophobic, disability etc...) used in a sexual or aggressive manner designed to hurt or cause offence. In addition, any comments made about the size, appearance, clothing, odour, academic ability or other abilities, home life, social circumstances, financial circumstances, spreading rumours or any other comments designed to be hurtful or words used to intimidate.

Written – Any insults contained in note passing, threatening letters, graffiti, defacing any property belonging to another; or any message passed electronically by text or via computer.

Interference with another person – Theft, extortion, vandalism, defacing property, ruling games, blackmail or any other activity designed to intimidate or hurt.

Incitement of others – Encouraging or forcing others to become in bullying or bullying behaviours e.g. blackmailing, excluding or use of threatening behaviours.

Sexist – Comments or observations that are derogatory to the opposite sex.

Emotional

Psychological pressure (silent bullying) – Social exclusion, rude gestures, lying, re-organising or pressurising friendship groups or any other activity designed to intimidate or hurt an individual.

Subtle bullying – Looking at a person in a particular way, swearing at or about a person.

Cyber-bullying – Emailing or texting about a person or to a person, happy slapping, blogging or through the use of social networking sites. This also includes spreading rumours or defacing or corrupting work

Racist bullying – Name calling, incitement, making comments about a person's country, culture, religion or appearance, commenting on parents, spreading rumours.

Faith based bullying – Making a person feel unwelcome and making comments with regard to their faith or beliefs.

Homophobic bullying – Name calling, incitement, making comments because of, or an assumption about a person's sexual orientation, commenting on slandering parents or other relations/friends, spreading rumours. Threat of 'outing' or emotional blackmail.

Disablist bullying – Bullying a person because of their disability, or perceived disability.

Actions not considered to be bullying

- Not liking someone
- Being excluded
- Accidentally bumping into someone
- Making other children play things in a certain way
- A single act of telling a joke about someone
- Arguments
- Expression of unpleasant thoughts or feelings regarding others
- Isolated acts of harassment, aggressive behaviour, intimidation or meanness

Reasons for bullying

Some reasons why children might bully someone include:

- They think it is fun or that it makes them popular or cool
- They feel more powerful or confident, or they want to get their own way all the time

- They feel insecure or lack confidence and are trying to fit in with a group
- They are fearful of other children's differences
- They are jealous of another child
- They are unhappy
- They are copying what they have seen others do before, or what has been done to them

The effects of bullying

All forms of bullying cause psychological, emotional and physical stress. Each child's response to being bullied is unique, however some signs that may point to a bullying problem are:

- Depression and anxiety
- Increased feelings of sadness, helplessness, decreased self-esteem and loneliness
- Loss of interest in activities they used to enjoy
- Unexplained injuries
- Lost or destroyed clothing, books, electronics or jewellery
- Frequent headaches or stomach aches, feeling sick or faking illness
- Changes in eating habits, like suddenly skipping meals or binge eating. Children may come home from school hungry because they did not eat lunch
- Difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares
- Declining grades, loss of interest in school work, or not wanting to go to school
- Sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations
- Self-destructive behaviours such as running away from home, harming themselves, or talking about suicide

Roles and responsibilities

The Education act 2002, Education and Inspections Act and Equalities Act 2006 all make reference to a school's legal responsibility to prevent and tackle bullying. Although not required by law we feel we have a duty to prevent discrimination, harassment and victimisation within the school.

This antibullying policy is available to all stakeholders, a copy is available from the college reception and on the college website for parents, staff and students to access as and when they wish.

Schools have the legal power to make sure students behave and do not bully outside of school premises, for example on public transport or in nearby public communal areas. It is seen as appropriate the Principal or staff can choose to report bullying to the police or local council. During school hours, including while students are taking part in school visits, after school clubs and cyber bullying the school has direct responsibility to ensure children feel safe and secure.

The role of governors

The local governing body supports the Principal in all attempts to eliminate bullying from the college. The MAT Board will not condone any bullying at all, and any incidents of bullying that do occur will be taken very seriously, and dealt with appropriately.

The local governing body monitors incidents of bullying that do occur and will review the effectiveness of this policy regularly. The MAT board require the Principal to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying and to report to the local governing body on request about the effectiveness of the college's anti-bullying strategies.

The role of the Principal

It is the responsibility of the Principal to implement the college's anti-bullying strategy, to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the college policy and they know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying. The Principal will report to the governing body about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.

It is the Principal who must ensure that all students know that bullying is wrong and that it is unacceptable behaviour in college. The Principal will draw the attention of students to this fact at suitable moments. For example, the Principal may decide to use an assembly as the forum in which to discuss with the students why bullying is wrong.

The Principal will ensure that all members of staff receive sufficient training to be equipped to identify and deal with all incidents of bullying.

The Principal will set the college climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When students feel that are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming college, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

Anti-bullying assemblies, tutorial activities and the IAG curriculum will ensure students understand why bullying is wrong and how to report bullying.

The role of the staff

Members of staff will do all that they can to eradicate bullying; they will ensure that they follow the college's anti-bullying policy.

All members of staff will routinely attend training that equips them to identify bullying and to follow college policy and procedure with regards to behaviour management.

Staff will use a range of methods to help prevent bullying and establish a climate of trust and respect for all.

Members of staff will keep a vigilant watch on suspected "bullies"; any incidents will be handled carefully. It is important that the child responsible for initiating the bullying is dealt with appropriately.

The role of parents/carers

Parents/carers who are concerned that their child might be bullied or who suspect their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's tutor immediately in a calm manner. If they are not satisfied with the action taken they should contact the Head of House. If they remain dissatisfied they should contact the Assistant Principal for the appropriate Key Stage.

Parents and carers have a responsibility to support the college's anti-bullying policy by actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the school and this expectation of support is outlined in the home school agreement.

The role of students

Students are encouraged to tell someone they trust if they are being bullied, and if the bullying continues they must keep on letting people know; the students are encouraged by staff to do this.

Students are also encouraged to participate fully in activities that raise their awareness about bullying in order that they clearly understand what to do if they, or another student, are being bullied. Guidance is given to all students through the assembly and tutor program and during IAG lessons.

Procedures

An incident of bullying is reported to staff, either by the person being bullied or a third person. This extends to incidents that take place outside the school day, during offsite activities or to and from college.

The suspected or reported bullying incident will be investigated thoroughly, including interviewing students confidentially and taking statements.

If confirmed the details will be recorded on the schools monitoring system. All key staff will be notified.

Parents of all the students involved will be involved and may be asked to come in for a meeting to discuss the problem.

In certain cases where a crime has been committed, the police will be informed.

In certain cases the incident will be reported to the Local Authority.

Outcomes

Each incident of bullying is unique and the action taken will vary with each situation. Below are a range of interventions that may be employed;

- Speaking to the bully about their actions; in most cases this will stop the bullying
- Asking the students concerned to write down how they are feeling. This can calm the situation down and helps the person dealing with it understand why it may have occurred.
- Asking the bully/bullies to sign an agreement for it to stop.
- Asking the bully/bullies to make a genuine apology in person or in writing.
- Supporting students in reconciling differences. This can be done through tutors, Heads of House or Sixth Form mentors. This may include restorative work where appropriate. Mediation may be arranged through an outside agency if appropriate, including the police.
- Issuing a sanction in line with the college's behaviour policy, including a period in the Internal Exclusion Room (IER) or time at the Off Site Centre (OSC) in more serious cases.
- Involvement of external agencies through Early Help to support the perpetrators and the victims develop strategies, resilience, positive relationships, confidence and self-esteem.
- Continued monitoring of the situation to ensure that repeated bullying does not take place.

Strategies to reduce bullying

Schools within the MAT have adopted a range of strategies to prevent and reduce bullying, to raise awareness of bullying and support victims and those displaying bullying behaviour, including;

- The consistent promotion of the college's behavioural expectations which requires all students to respect the rights of others at all times.
- The reinforcement that bullying has no place at any school within the MAT
- Consultation with the student leadership team and college council on appropriate action
- Participation in initiatives such as Anti Bullying Week
- Training for all staff on antibullying policy and strategy
- Increased supervision by college staff of all social areas at lunch times and breaktimes
- A Sixth Form drop in base where students can go and discuss their problems
- IAG curriculum

Our advice to students

If you are being bullied;

- Never ignore bullying – you do not have to accept it
- Don't try to deal with the problem on your own – tell someone about it
- Always tell the truth about what is really going on
- Don't hit out at the bullies either verbally or physically
- Keep a diary of all incidents; this will help when the matter is being investigated
- Tell someone even if the bully or bullies threaten to make it worse if you do. If you don't tell the bullying will go on; you must tell every time. They are counting on you staying silent.

If you witness someone being bullied;

- Always take action, do not ignore it
- Seek help from a member of staff immediately if the person is in physical danger
- The sooner it is dealt with, the sooner it will stop. You are a bystander and have the power to make a difference.
- Let the person who is being bullied know you have seen what is going on and that you are concerned.
- Encourage them to tell someone, even offer to accompany them to see a member of staff if you are able to.
- If necessary, report the incident yourself. Don't worry about bullies finding out that you have reported them; your information will be confidential.

Useful websites

www.bullying.co.uk

www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

www.childline.org.uk

www.kidscape.org.uk

www.each.education

www.youngminds.org.uk

www.youngstonewall.org.uk

www.nspcc.org.uk

www.stoptextbully.com

Appendix B- Bideford College

The following procedure will be followed when a bullying incident is reported

Statements will be collected from the student reporting the incident

Statements will be triaged by the pastoral support team and passed to Head of House with information about any sanctions issued thus far by other staff

Discussion with both the alleged bully and the victim will take place to establish how the current situation came about. No blame and no sanction at this stage. Parents/carers of both the victim and the alleged bully do not necessarily need to be contacted at this point.

Students will be encouraged to 'put things right' on their own, with a clearly defined staged-approach providing clear choices to those involved, thus building resilience and positive solution focussed problem solving and restoration.

If the above low key approach does not stop the bullying behaviour

Parents/carers will be informed by the Head of House or a member of ALT and an investigating officer will be identified.

An investigation will begin and statements will be collected from all students and staff involved.

The investigating officer will present their findings to the Assistant Principal Key Stage and outcomes for both victim and perpetrator will be decided.

Parents of both the victim and the perpetrator will be invited to attend a meeting in college to discuss the issues and the sanctions and support that will be put in place.

Details of the incident, including any relevant documents (statements, interview notes, emails, police reports) will be recorded on CPOMS.

Further actions will also be recorded on CPOMS e.g. outcomes of referrals, counselling appointments, engagement with external agencies etc.

