

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Principles - Aims and Objectives

At Collingham College we seek to create a culture in which bullying of any kind, either against students or adults is not accepted by any member of the college community. As an organisation that is serious about child protection, we will also be serious about preventing and tackling bullying whether it is on the grounds of race, religion, educational need, disability or sexual orientation. Bullying of any kind can threaten both the mental health and educational progress of our students. Collingham College enables all members of the college community to understand what constitutes bullying; making it clear to students, staff, parents and guardians that bullying is completely unacceptable. We strongly believe that our students have the right to study in a safe, supportive and secure environment, free from physical threats, verbal taunts and any form of harassment. Incidents of bullying threaten this and cause enormous stress to victims. We are therefore strongly committed to the avoidance of bullying in all its forms. We provide a clear framework for dealing with incidents of bullying, ensuring that bullies are dealt with swiftly and firmly. Our aim is to promote positive relationships amongst all members of the college community and to develop a culture in which individuals are listened to and their concerns taken seriously.

We believe that the principle means of prevention is through the maintenance of conditions where bullying is less likely to flourish and is more easily detected. As we are a relatively small college, all students are known to us personally and it is therefore easier for us to detect signs of possible distress than it might be in a larger organization. Students are able to see their Personal Tutors on a one-to-one basis as a matter of course and are therefore offered excellent opportunities to discuss difficult experiences. Moreover, we feel that it is important that students have free and informal access to the Principal and other members of senior staff.

However, a formal anti-bullying policy is of utmost importance. This policy applies to all Collingham College activities both on and away from the college campus. Records of all incidents are kept to evaluate the effectiveness of the approach or to enable patterns to be identified. As part of our Behaviour Policy, our college believes that all children and adults have the right to live in a supportive, caring environment in which students feel safe and free from bullying and harassment that may include cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying related to special educational need, sexual orientation, sex, race, religion and belief, gender reassignment or disability (as defined in the Equality Act 2010), and the use of discriminatory language. Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour. Bullying in any form will not be tolerated. We are a 'TELLING COLLEGE'. We treat all our students and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff and the college.

In addition to fostering positive relationships between students and their Personal Tutors, the college uses the app Toottoot as an additional way in which students can report their concerns.

Bullying – Child Protection Related Issues

Staff are aware of the importance of safeguarding and are trained to relay all concerns regarding safeguarding, including bullying, to the DSL in person or through the College's secure internal safeguarding database. They are also aware of their legal duty in extreme cases of bullying, where there is immediate risk of danger or harm to a student, to alert the local Children's Social Care (CSC) and/or the police; given the small size of the College, however, this will almost always be carried out by the DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) or DDSL (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead). In all such circumstances the DSL

must always be informed and the informing member of staff has a duty to follow up the concern to ensure that it is being dealt with.

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Definition of Bullying

Bullying can be defined as a deliberate, unprovoked action to intentionally hurt, humiliate, threaten, frighten or hurt an individual or group physically or emotionally. It is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on grounds of race, religion and belief, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disability (as defined in the Equality Act 2010), or because a child is adopted or is a carer. It may occur directly or through cyber-technology such as social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email. A feature of bullying in schools is that its existence is not always immediately known or suspected by those in authority. The college recognises the seriousness of both physical and emotional bullying in causing psychological damage and even suicide. Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal act in the UK, some types of harassing or threatening behaviour or communications could be a criminal offence; for example, under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003 and the Public Order Act 1986. If our staff feel that an offence may have been committed, we will seek assistance from the police.

Bullying can be:

- *Emotional (indirect bullying) including isolation of others by a refusal to co-operate with them and exclusion* - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures), deliberately excluding from social groups or an activity by refusal to sit next to/ talk to/ work/ co-operate with others and refusal to follow staff instructions to do the above, or malicious rumours, e-mails or text messages, and also exclusion from play/discussions etc. with those whom they believe to be their friends.
- *Physical harm or its threat including the abuse of personal property* – jostling, serious fighting, pushing, kicking, hitting, taking or hiding belongings, punching or any use of violence; deliberately destroying or damaging work or possessions or removing personal property, use of weapons/threatening use of weapon (or any object which could be used as a weapon), intimidation through physical gestures and actions.
- *Cyber* – not occurring face to face but rather through electronic means including, but not limited to, social networking sites, internet and intranet sites, email, instant messaging, by mobile phone including through text messages and phone calls, photographs both real and manipulated and so on.
- *Racist* - Bullying directed at individuals of a certain race, culture, ethnicity, language, faith, community, national origin or national status. The distinctive feature of racist bullying is that the victim is attacked not as an individual but as the representative of a family, community or group. This is an area where schools and colleges are required to keep statistics about incidents.
- *Cultural* – focusing on and/or playing off perceived cultural differences or similar.
- *Sexist* – covers a wide range of behaviour from name calling to physical sexual assault. It is the use of sexual language or negative stereotyping on the basis of gender.
- *Sexual* - is unwanted or inappropriate physical contact or sexual innuendo.
- *Homophobic, BiPhobic and Transphobic* - This is bullying which is directed towards people who are openly gay, bisexual, are perceived as gay, or Trans (LGBT). Heterosexual young people subject to homophobic bullying are less reluctant to report it as this may enforce the stereotypical way that they are already viewed by others so sensitivity and positive support is required for victims.
- *Religious* – Attacking faith, belief, religious practice or custom.
- *Special Educational Needs and Disability* – remarking upon, drawing attention to, or discriminating against persons with physical disabilities or learning difficulties or other identified special educational needs such as emotional and behavioural disabilities (EBD) and Specific Learning Difficulties (SLD) - (Dyslexia, Dyscalculia and Dyspraxia).
- *Verbal* – name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, making snide comments, teasing, humiliating others, threatening others, inciting others to humiliate and threaten others and
- *Written* – spreading rumours, writing or printing unkind or malicious comments on paper.

Bullying can take place between student and student, staff and staff, and staff and student. We consider the pastoral care of the students and staff to be of prime importance. In class, this role largely rests with the class teacher. It is college policy that any misdemeanour will be dealt with by the member of staff present when it occurs, whether in the classroom or any part of the college. A common code of behaviour is expected from everyone at Collingham College (see Behaviour Policy). All staff at Collingham College are expected to treat each other with a professional level of respect.

Signs of Bullying

All staff must be alert to the signs of bullying. These may include:

- unwillingness to return to college;
- displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet;
- failure to produce work, or producing unusually bad work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others;
- books, bags and other belongings suddenly go missing, or are damaged;
- a change in established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary);
- psychological damage and diminished levels of self-confidence;
- frequent visits to Reception with symptoms such as stomach pains, headaches and so on;
- unexplained cuts and bruises;
- frequent absences, erratic attendance and late arrivals to class;
- nervousness and jumpy when a cyber-message is received;
- asking for extra pocket money or starts stealing money (to pay bully);
- choosing the company of adults;
- displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact, difficulty in sleeping, experiences nightmares;
- verbal taunts;
- students sitting on their own and students left out of activity groups during lessons or social activities; and
- talking of suicide or running away.

Although there may be other causes for some of the above symptoms, a repetition of, or a combination of these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents and teachers.

Strategies

We will work to prevent and eliminate any form of bullying by:

- promoting good behaviour and positive relationships based on mutual respect;
- making students fully aware of the college's policy by having our expectations of behaviour prominently displayed around the college;
- ensuring students understand that if they have been bullied or have witnessed bullying, they should tell a member of staff, their parents or any helpful adult or friend;
- promoting anti-bullying through education using the curriculum and in particular the Personal, Social, Health, Economic (PSHE) programme to raise awareness of issues relating to bullying;
- informing parents by various means of the college's anti-bullying policy whilst encouraging them to support it;
- providing counselling and help for victims of bullies and for bullies themselves;
- ensuring that the perpetrator and his/her parents, are fully aware of the unacceptable nature of the behaviour and the consequences of any repetition;
- giving support to those involved in bullying to enable them to change their behaviour;
- imposing reasonable, proportionate and consistent sanctions as and when necessary;
- seeking the support of outside professional agencies as appropriate;
- familiarising all staff at Collingham College with the anti-bullying policy through In-Service Training to ensure it is applied consistently and fairly and that by showing respect for all members of the college community, they act as good role models for students.

Collingham College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our students and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is our aim that all students fulfil their potential.

Collingham College's Anti-bullying Policy is dovetailed with the Behaviour Management Policy and makes it clear what the sanctions are for bullying. At Collingham, we implement disciplinary sanctions that reflect the seriousness of an incident and convey a deterrent effect. If necessary, strong sanctions, such as exclusion, would be used in cases of severe and persistent bullying, and may be used in cases of sexual harassment. It is incumbent on the college to have clear policies that are communicated to parents, students and staff, along with creating an environment of good behaviour and respect. Integral to our policy is making sure students are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders. Handling of a bullying incident is given much thought to ensure that the facts are fully known, agreed and understood by the bully/ies and the victim(s). Bullying instances are reported and recorded so that patterns can be identified.

Procedures

It is important that all staff be alert to early signs of distress in students. If a member of staff witnesses a bullying incident, in any form, or is approached by a student about bullying, they should investigate the incident without delay according to the agreed procedures that are as follows:

- Minor cases of verbal or physical unpleasantness should be dealt with on the spot by the teacher.
- Students should be reminded of the standards of behaviour expected.
- Where an incident gives greater cause for concern, teaching or support staff who witness or are told of the bullying should take a detailed record of the incident and names of those involved. The record of bullying should be passed to the Principal or Head of GCSE.
- The Principal or Head of GCSE will investigate the incident and see the student/s involved.
- Parents will always be informed if their child has been found to be either a victim or a perpetrator of a bullying incident.
- Victims, alleged bullies and witnesses should be interviewed separately and are required to write down independent accounts of the incidents/situations. In the course of this procedure, enquiries should be made to ascertain whether or not the alleged bully has been involved in similar incidents involving this or other students, thus enabling patterns of behaviour to be established.
- The college will continue to monitor the wellbeing of the victim and the behaviour of the bully: meet with the victim on the review date to determine whether the bully/ies have stopped their behaviour. If the bullying has continued, the Principal will then take appropriate action.
- It should always be acknowledged that on rare occasions some students set themselves up as victims, and the reasons for this should be thoroughly investigated and appropriate support given.
- The College Behaviour Policy is central to the college's stance against bullying.

The above process and sanctions should impress on the person instigating any act of bullying that:

- their action is totally unacceptable;
- it is meant as a deterrent to enabling repeat behaviour; and
- it is a signal to other members of the community that bullying is not tolerated.

Action should then be taken with regard to each of the following:

- Advice and support for the victim in accordance with the Behaviour Management Policy.
- The bully must understand what he/she has done and why the sanctions are being applied. Sanctions and support for the bully are used in accordance with the Behaviour Management Policy.
- Informing the parent of the victim, the bully and possibly others involved.
- Formally recording the incident on the student(s)' files, in an incident report and on the anti-bullying log.
- Giving general information to all staff, through staff briefings and staff meetings, of incidents of bullying, mentioning the type of incident and the individuals involved.
- Giving relevant feedback and reminders about appropriate behaviour to students.

Accusations of bullying of a student (students) by members of staff will be investigated thoroughly. Each student is treated fairly and with respect. Members of staff to whom disclosures are made should report the details directly to the Principal or Deputy Principal. All disclosures, whether from a student, a parent, a member of staff or a volunteer should be taken seriously and treated with sensitivity. The victim(s) should be made aware that their safety is considered to be of paramount importance.

Good Practice for Staff:

- Be continually aware, watchful and available promoting good behaviour and encourage the care of others.
- Ensure students are appropriately supervised.
- Report all cases of bullying to the Principal.
- Parents' involvement and cooperation can be sought and parents of students involved will be kept informed.

Classroom Management

Teachers' classroom management will link strongly to the College Behaviour Policy. This includes a positive ethos with emphasis on the dignity of each student, on praise and reward, rather than punishment. Through our PSHE programme, students will be given the opportunity to discuss bullying and how to deal with it. Students will be encouraged to discuss how they get on with others and how to form positive attitudes towards them. This includes a review of what friendship really is and how to treat everyone with dignity and respect. Teachers will be aware that they can radically affect the incidence of bullying and that it must always be taken seriously.

Remember we are a 'TELLING COLLEGE'. Bullying in any form will not be tolerated.

Legal Status

- Complies with Part 3, paragraph 10 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014 in force from 5th January 2015
- Prepared with reference to: Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying (DfE- November 2014), Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff (DfE- November 2014), Preventing and tackling bullying: Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies (DfE- October 2014) and School support for children and young people who are bullied (DfE- March 2014)
- Has regard to the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty

Applies to:

- The whole college along with all activities provided by the college, including those outside of the normal college hours;
- All staff (teaching and support staff) and the directors in the college.

Related documents

- Behaviour Management Policy
- Single Equalities Policy
- Safeguarding Policy And Procedures including Child Protection
- E-Safety Policy including ICT Acceptable Use
- Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural Education (SMSC) Policy

Designated Member of Staff responsible for Anti-Bullying

The Member of Staff with overall responsibility for Anti-bullying in the whole college is James Alder

Availability

This Policy is made available to parents, staff and students in the following ways: via the college Website and on request a copy may be obtained from the College Office.

Monitoring and Review

- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Principal who is also responsible for managing anti-bullying within the whole college.
- The Board of Directors undertake a formal review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than two years from the date shown below, or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

Signed:

Date: 4th December 2024

James Allder
Principal

Edward Browne and Robert Marsden on behalf of the
Board of Directors