

# Anti-Bullying Policy

*Last reviewed: Wednesday, September 27, 2023*

*Every member of our staff and student population should be aware that everyone is different and other people's views, wishes and habits should be respected.*

## Definition of Bullying

### **Bullying is:**

Deliberately hurtful behaviour repeated over a period of time at a targeted individual/group arising from and taking advantage of an imbalance of power. Bullying may be indirectly contributed to by others who do not inform staff that help is needed. Bullying can arise from a lack of respect for others and can occur in a variety of ways.

- Physical – e.g. hitting, pushing or any act that invades personal space
- Verbal – e.g. name calling, teasing, taunting, playing cruel jokes on people. Racist or sexual harassment
- Social – e.g. ignoring people, embarrassing people in public, not including people (in real life or online). Discriminating on grounds of religion, culture, race, gender, disability or sexuality
- Online – e.g. posting hurtful or threatening messages on social media or messaging apps

### **Some Signs that Bullying may be Taking Place:**

- Crying repeatedly
- Not wanting to attend a certain class or activity
- Isolation in free time
- Diminished levels of confidence
- Withdrawn and quiet, displays of excessive anxiety
- Belongings go missing or are damaged
- Unexplained cuts or bruises
- Frequently complaining of stomach pains, headaches etc.
- Choosing the company of adults/clinging to adults
- Difficulty in sleeping/nightmares/bedwetting
- Eating too much/too little
- Self-harm
- Running away – this includes short-term running away from activities or situations
- A student telling an adult about bullying directly or via a parent, another student or a Homestay Host

These are indicators only and may occur for some individuals without bullying being present or being the cause. However, any of these would need to be considered and investigated so that the student can be supported.

### **How Do We Prevent Bullying?**

- Explain the basic Melton College, York rules to students
- At all times set an excellent example of kindness and inclusiveness
- Never allow prejudicial or hurtful language or actions to go unchallenged
- Ensure students are adequately supervised at all times
- Ensure students feel comfortable approaching staff if they have a problem. Have an open door policy
- Manage the amount of time students spend on their phones e.g by only allowing phone use in class for a defined purpose
- Report any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Principal
- Read student feedback

## **How do we at all times set an excellent example of kindness and inclusiveness?**

As listed in the definition, bullying can be prompted by discrimination. We need to be aware and counter language and views which run counter to the core British Value of inclusiveness, even if in doing so we are speaking out against a culturally accepted norm of the student's country/culture.

Remember, discrimination can be based on a perception as well as on reality, for example, the use of derogatory language to describe LGBT people is totally unacceptable, even if the target is not LGBT.

Students who are concerned that they may suffer discrimination of a known or concealed ground will need to feel that they have access to a trusted, sympathetic adult. It is vital that we provide a safe space for them to speak and share their concerns.

## **Response to Bullying**

**We believe everyone can be the victim of bullying and everyone has the potential to be a bully.**

The response to bullying starts with ensuring that both sides are aware that bullying is occurring, that it is viewed as a serious issue and that if it continues the bully may be asked to leave the course.

The following steps are to be taken when cases of bullying arise. NB at all stages, a written record should be kept using a Major Concerns Reporting Form if the incident is not classed as a Low Level Concern.

1. If you become aware of bullying, listen carefully to the student(s), question but do not ask leading questions and speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
2. The DSL will decide if this is a Low Level incident and will deal with it accordingly. If the DSL decides that this is a case of bullying, the incident(s) will be further investigated and classed as a Major Concern.
3. The DSL speak to the alleged bully and the bullied separately.
4. The DSL may speak to other staff and/or students who may be aware of other instances of bullying/significant issues.
5. The victim will be offered immediate support and staff will explain what will happen next. We are also committed to supporting the alleged bully.
6. Following the DSL's investigation, a 'no blame' approach may be offered to both parties. The DSL will talk to the victim and bully and try to find a mutually agreeable solution. During or following this, agents/parents are to be contacted and the outcome of the discussion is to be made clear. Information will be confidential although other members of staff may be informed where appropriate.
7. If the DSL decides that a 'no blame' approach is not appropriate or the bullying continues after the 'no blame' approach, the College may consider exclusion from activities or classes or, in extreme circumstances, asking parents to remove their child from the course.
8. The final decision is to be taken by the Principal.