

CATEGORY: Student Engagement and Partnerships

TYPE: Procedure

TITLE: Student Bullying and Harassment

PERSON RESPONSIBLE: Assistant Principal for Student Services & Designated Safeguarding Lead

PURPOSE: this a guide for staff and students on how to deal with reports of bullying or harassment of students, whether they are made by the victim of the bullying or others. Advice for staff is in Annex 1 (below) and advice for students is in Annex 2 (below). It covers all students enrolled at the College and applied equally when they are on the College campus, on visits and excursions, on journeys to and from College, or involved in any other College-related activity.

1.0 Definition

1.1 Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person and results in pain and distress to the victim.

1.2 Bullying can be:

- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence;
- Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting;
- Verbal: name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing;
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments/sexting/harassment;
- Disability: making fun of someone's disability, laughing, pointing, scaring, asking students to do things they do not want to;
- Racist: racial taunts, graffiti, gestures;
- Homophobic: because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality;
- Misuse of technology: phone, camera and video facilities;
- Cyber: such as email and social media misuse, threatening phone calls and text messages.
- Gender questioning: making fun of someone's choice of how they wish to present, laughing, pointing, name calling, being unfriendly, excluding

1.3 Harassment motivated by hate for an aspect of someone's identity (protected characteristic) is a crime in British law.

2.0 Collective Responsibility

2.1 The College is committed to providing a supportive, friendly and safe environment so that students can learn in a secure atmosphere and get the most out of their experience of College life. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable. If it does occur, students are urged to voice their grievance in the secure knowledge that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

- 2.2 All staff and students share the responsibility for supporting students who are affected by bullying and harassment. Part of this responsibility involves encouraging the victim to seek support from their personal tutor or the College's Student Services team.

3.0 Reporting incidents of bullying or harassment

- 3.1 If a report of bullying and/or harassment of a student is brought to the attention of another student, they should inform their personal tutor or another member of staff. If a student is being bullied and/or harassed, they should tell their personal tutor, a member of Student Services staff or any member of staff

4.0 Following up reports of bullying and/or harassment

- 4.1 Once an incident of bullying/harassment has been received, the personal tutor must speak to the student affected as promptly as possible and encourage them to seek help. If the student is reluctant to seek help from the personal tutor, then a referral can be made to Student Services and the counselling provision.
- 4.2 All cases should be reported to Student Services.
- 4.3 A Safeguarding and Wellbeing Officer or another member of staff from the Student Services team will follow up the case and provide a report to the Assistant Principal for Student Services (APSS).
- 4.4 If the offence is considered minor and isolated by the APSS, it might be sufficient to discuss the matter with the perpetrator(s), point out the distress caused and seek assurance that no such incident will recur. The incident will still be recorded.
- 4.5 If stronger action is required, the APSS will decide whether to seek the victim's consent to a meeting where conciliation between the parties might be reached. The outcomes of this meeting will be recorded.
- 4.6 If conciliation is not appropriate, the perpetrator(s) should be subject to a disciplinary procedure at the appropriate level and the involvement of (parents/carers and) other agencies, e.g. Police, should be considered as necessary.
- 4.7 The Safeguarding & Wellbeing Officer or other Student Services staff member will continue to monitor the situation and have further meetings with the affected student. If the situation persists, then further disciplinary action will be considered. Where there is Police involvement, the college will adhere to the required investigation parameters.
- 4.8 If the allegation of bullying/harassment is made by a student against a member of staff, then the matter will be referred to the appropriate head of faculty, who will deal with the matter as a staff disciplinary issue. In the case of more serious allegations against a member of staff the matter will be referred to the Director of Human Resources, the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or the Local Authority Designated Officer.

Annex 1

DEPARTMENT: Student Services

TYPE: Guidelines for Staff

TITLE: Bullying and Harassment

PERSON RESPONSIBLE: Assistant Principal for Student Services and Designated Safeguarding Lead

PURPOSE: These guidelines should be read alongside the College's Bullying and Harassment procedure, which sets out the College's approach to protecting all its learners from the effects of bullying and harassment.

Signs and Symptoms of Bullying:

- Being frightened of walking to or from the College
 - Not wanting to use public transport
 - Change in usual routine
 - Becoming anxious or withdrawn
 - Crying
 - Nightmares
 - Feeling ill
 - Attempted or threatened suicide
 - Truancy
 - Poor attainment at College
 - Possessions "go missing"
 - Asking for, or stealing money
 - Unexplained cuts or bruises
 - Becoming aggressive and unreasonable
 - Lacking in confidence
1. All complaints about bullying should be taken seriously and treated sensitively. It is important to discuss possible/desirable strategies with the victim in the first instance and proceed as appropriate.
 2. If you are the person to whom the incident is reported or who first discovered the incident, take time to make the situation safe if necessary, i.e. control of bully and support for victim.
 3. Gather all the information you can to ensure you have as objective a view as possible about what has taken place. Report the matter to the Personal Tutors of both the victim and the alleged perpetrator(s).

4. If you are the Personal Tutor of any student involved, consult the Personal Tutor of any others who have been named and between you gather as much information about the allegation as you can.
5. If you are the Personal Tutor of a victim or perpetrator, after collecting what evidence you can, you must report the matter to Student Services, where the matter will be dealt with in accordance with the College's agreed procedure.
6. Take time to write an account of the incident so that there is a record of what occurred in case there is any recurrence.
7. Where appropriate, Student Services will contact parents detailing the incident and explaining the action that the College is taking.
8. Where it is found that intervention outlined above has not succeeded or is not appropriate, or where the bullying is sufficiently serious, the College's Student Disciplinary Procedure should be applied.
9. If an incident is perceived by the victim as harassment, then the College is obliged to pursue the matter.
10. In the most serious cases it may be appropriate to involve other external agencies, including the Police, in resolving the matter.

DEPARTMENT: Student Services

TYPE: Guidelines for Students

TITLE: Bullying and Harassment

PERSON RESPONSIBLE: Assistant Principal for Student Services and Designated Safeguarding Lead

PURPOSE: These guidelines should be read alongside the College's Bullying and Harassment procedure, which sets out the College's approach to protecting all its students from the effects of bullying and harassment.

What you should do if you are being bullied or harassed:

1. If you feel you are being bullied or harassed, TELL SOMEONE. This may be, in the first instance, your Personal Tutor, lecturer, someone in Student Services or any other member of staff. If you are worried about doing this, it may help to speak to a friend first.
2. Once a member of staff has been alerted, they will tell your Personal Tutor who will want to discuss with you to see what steps can be taken to avoid the incident recurring. You will be listened to sympathetically and your concerns taken seriously.
3. The matter will then be dealt with by staff in the College's Student Services department, where a record of the event will be made.
4. If you feel the matter cannot be settled informally, then, with your agreement, the alleged bully will be interviewed separately by their Personal Tutor.
5. If this is a situation which cannot be settled through discussion, the College's Disciplinary Procedure may be applied.
6. In the most serious circumstances the College may feel it necessary to involve your parents or other agencies including the Police.
7. At all stages in the procedure you may be accompanied by friend or relative.
8. Student Services can assist in supporting victims of bullying and can arrange confidential counselling to assist with any problems – drop in at any time to make arrangements.

9. If an incident is perceived as harassment by the victim or any other person, the College is obliged to pursue this matter.
10. There are three websites on which you will find further information which might help you if you feel you are being bullied.

Childline.co.uk <http://www.childline.org.uk/explore/bullying/Pages/Bullyinginfo.aspx>

Kidscape.co.uk <http://www.kidscape.org.uk/>

Bullying.co.uk <http://www.bullying.co.uk/>

What will happen to you if you are accused of bullying or harassment?

If you are accused of bullying or harassment, the following courses of action will be followed:

Your Personal Tutor will discuss the allegation with you to find out the full picture. If they think that your behaviour amounts to a minor incident of bullying or harassment you may be asked to apologise to the complainant and to give assurances about your future conduct. You will be required not to repeat the behaviour in the future and NOT to hold this complaint as an issue against the complainant in any way.

If the matter is serious then your Personal Tutor will speak to your Head of Faculty who will assess the severity of the situation and if appropriate will apply the College Disciplinary Procedure. At this point you may be suspended pending a Disciplinary Hearing and if the allegations are found to be true then an appropriate sanction will be given. If your behaviour warrants it, you may be permanently excluded from College.

In the most serious cases it may be appropriate to involve other external agencies, including the Police, in resolving the matter.