



# Anti-Bullying Policy and Hate Incidents/Crimes Reporting

## **Introduction**

The Trust and its colleges aim to provide a safe, caring and friendly climate for learning for all our students to allow them to improve their life chances and help them maximise their potential. We would expect students to act safely and feel safe in college, including understanding the issues relating to bullying and having the confidence to seek support from school should they feel unsafe.

Bullying, hate and prejudice based incidents are a major concern for the Trust and is an issue that affects students, parents/ carers, governors, teachers, non-teaching staff and others and can have extreme consequences. The Trust recognises that severe harm may be caused to young people by the abusive and bullying behaviour of their peers. The damage inflicted by bullying is often underestimated and can cause considerable distress. In extreme cases it can cause significant harm, including self-harm.

Young people who bully have often been the victims of bullying or abuse themselves. They need support provided within a clear framework of disciplinary procedures which make it clear that severe and persistent bullying behaviour will normally lead to exclusion. The Trust and its colleges are determined to record and report bullying and prejudice based incidents and act to eliminate all discrimination, prejudice, harassment and victimisation against students, to demonstrate our commitment to anti-discrimination and the Equality Act 2010.

## **Definitions of Bullying and Hate Crime incidents/Crimes**

### **Bullying**

The term bullying refers to a range of harmful behaviour, both physical and psychological. All bullying behaviour usually has the following four features.

1. It is repetitive and persistent — though sometimes a single incident can have the precisely the same impact as persistent behaviour over time, for it can be experienced as part of a continuous pattern and can be extremely threatening and intimidating. This is particularly the case with racist bullying.
2. It is intentionally harmful — though occasionally the distress it causes is not consciously intended by all of those who are responsible.
3. It involves an imbalance of power, leaving someone feeling helpless to prevent it or put a stop to it.
4. It causes feelings of distress, fear, loneliness and lack of confidence in those who are at the receiving end.

### **Bullying can be:**

- Physical - Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use or threat of violence.
- Verbal - eg, name-calling, insulting remarks, racist or homophobic comments.
- Indirect - Excluding someone from social groups, rumouring.
- Cyber - sending threatening or abusive text messages, emails or images. Writing abusive or negative things about people on line.

- Emotional – tormenting, threatening ridicule, humiliation, exclusion from groups or activities.
- Racist – racial abuse, graffiti, gestures.
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact, abusive comments.
- Damage to property or theft - demanding possessions, money, deliberately damaging belongings.
- Homophobic, Bi-phobic, Transphobic - taunts, graffiti, gestures relating to the sexual orientation or gender identity.

### Harassment

Harassment covers a wide range of offensive behaviour. It is commonly understood as behaviour intended to disturb or upset. In the legal sense, it is behaviour which *is* found threatening or disturbing. It is also commonly related to discriminatory behaviour linked to: age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

Bullying or harassment does not have to occur within college itself to be a disciplinary matter. Physical or emotional bullying or harassment of another member of the college community in person or by email, text etc is equally unacceptable outside the college or outside college hours. In such instances, the Trust and its colleges will support the recipient of the bullying/harassment in addressing the issue, providing advice and guidance, including the involvement of the police and/or social services as appropriate.

### Signs and Symptoms of Bullying and Harassment

A student may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Members of staff should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a student:

- is frightened of walking to or from college
- doesn't want to go on the college/public bus
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to college (college phobic)
- begins to miss lessons
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in college work
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber-message is received
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above

These symptoms could be a result of other factors but could be indicators of bullying.

## Hate Incidents/Crime

A *hate incident* is any non-crime incident which is perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person's disability, race, religion, sexual orientation or gender identity or perceived disability, race, religion, sexual orientation or gender identity.

A *hate crime* is any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person's disability, race, religion, sexual orientation or gender identity or perceived disability, race, religion, sexual orientation or gender identity.

A hate crime should be directly reported to the police.

## Increasing Awareness of Anti-Bullying

All students, staff, volunteers and governors need to be aware of this policy, what constitutes bullying/harassment and what hate crime and incidents are and the Trust's approach to the reporting of bullying and harassment. The Trust and its colleges will endeavour to address these requirements through:

- Appropriate information and regular training for staff, volunteers and governors.
- Information provided for students through induction, the electronic student handbook, and through tutorials.
- Annual events to coincide with National Anti-Bullying Week in November each year as well as during the college themed weeks.
- By encouraging staff and students to challenge bullying behaviour where it arises and to intervene to support victims where evidence of bullying is proven.

## Procedures for Dealing with Incidents

### **Parents**

- If you or your son or daughter is being bullied or you know of someone else who is being bullied, you should tell a member of staff, usually the student's Progress Tutor or member of their teaching staff.
- Provide as much detail as possible, who is being bullied, by whom, with details of any incidents.

### **Students**

- Report the concerns to a member of staff.
- If the bullying involves threatening behaviour, intimidations, or violence, tell a member of staff as quickly as you can. If you cannot find one of your teachers or your tutor, tell the nearest member of staff immediately.

## **What Subject Teachers / Progress Tutors should do if they are informed that a student is being bullied/harassed**

*If a student or parent/carer reports a case of bullying to you, the below guidance should be followed:*

- Stay calm and reassure the student/parent/carer that the matter will be dealt with as quickly and sensitively as possible.
- Talk to the student/parent and find out what has happened – keep notes of this conversation. Gather as much information from the staff member/student /parent/carer as possible. Try to find out **when** (dates/times), **where** (places) and **who** (names of the bully/bullies). Students/parents/carers are not always keen to give this information as they are concerned about the repercussions if the bully/bullies find(s) out. Please reassure them – we cannot deal with specific cases of bullying if we do not have this information.
- Deal with the situation if it is straightforward (incidents of minor bullying), and you feel that you are able eg, name-calling in a classroom situation.
- Contact a member of the Safeguarding Team if there are any safeguarding issues relating to the bullying.
- Ensure the incident is recorded on Cedar, through a safeguarding pastoral log – Reports of bullying are fed through by the Trust Safeguarding Lead to the trust Equality and Diversity Committee and also to the Trust Board of Directors.
- Ensure when the bullying/harassment involves more than one alleged perpetrator it is important to question those accused without allowing any further discussion between them. Students must be seen separately so that they are not able to collude. The investigation must not assume blame or be prejudiced. There should be no more than two members of staff involved in discussing the matter with students.
- Ensure that students who are involved in the allegations are encouraged to gather as much supporting evidence of bullying as possible, eg, saved and printed pages from social networking sites, copies of notes passed or text messages that have been saved.
- If there is not enough evidence to uphold the accusations, the matter will be deemed to have been resolved and all parties should be asked if they wish their parents/carers to be informed.
- Where the offense is judged to be proven, but did not include violence, racial or sexual bullying/harassment then the matter will be discussed with the students by their subject teachers/Progress Tutors/Senior Progress Tutor/SLT as appropriate. Parents may also be telephoned and asked if they wish to come into college to discuss the matter.
- The usual outcome would be to warn the student(s) as to their future behaviour and the student(s) performing the bullying/harassment may be placed on Stage 3 of the college's Formal Interventions Procedures. Outcomes may also involve apologies, changed behaviour and the seeking of support to modify behaviour, eg, anger management or counselling.
- If parent/carers do not accept the decision of the college then they will be advised to appeal to the Principal.
- The members of staff involved in repetitive or more serious incidents of bullying are most likely to be Senior Progress Tutors or a member of SLT.
- In cases where staff are convinced that the allegations are justified, and they include violence, racial or sexual bullying and/or harassment, or that where a student has already

been warned, as above, that they must not continue to bully a student, then the case should be referred to the Principal.

- The student will then be seen by a member of the Senior Leadership Team and the Principal will be informed. Each case will be judged on its individual merits, but serious aggravated sexual, physical or racial abuse will usually merit suspension or exclusion. Parents/carers will be invited to attend the meeting with the student. If the parents/carers do not agree with the decision of the college they will be invited to appeal to the **Chair of the Advisory Group**, who will investigate the allegations and make a ruling as to the correctness of the Principal's decision.
- In extreme circumstances the college may involve the police. Where the police are involved the matter must first have involved a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- If safeguarding issues are involved, advice should be sought from the Safeguarding Team.
- A record will be kept of all bullying and hate incidents.
- If a hate incident occurs, the Assistant Principal/Vice Principall will record this and it will be reported anonymously to the LA within 7 days of the incident.
- If a hate crime is reported to staff members this will be reported immediately to the appropriate police force.

### **Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities**

Some learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities may be especially vulnerable to bullying or harassment. Any indication of bullying/harassment of these students should be reported in the same way as for other students. Where appropriate, the Study Support Team should be involved.

Where bullying or harassment is suspected, students and vulnerable adults who have difficulties in communicating should be given the chance to express themselves to a member of staff with appropriate communication skills and/or be provided with an advocate.

### **Restorative Practice**

A restorative college is one which takes a restorative approach to resolving conflict and preventing harm. Progress Tutors within the Trust are trained in restorative practice and actively use this method in dealing with conflict.

Restorative approaches enable those who have been harmed to convey the impact of the harm to those responsible, and for those responsible to acknowledge this impact and take steps to put it right.

Restorative approaches refer to a range of methods and strategies which can be used both to prevent relationship-damaging incidents from happening and to resolve them if they do happen.

## **External Support**

- If you need urgent assistance with regards to a hate crime call 101 or 999.
- If you find it difficult to talk to anyone at the college or at home, ring ChildLine on Freephone 0800 1111, or email [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk). The phone call or email is free and it is a confidential helpline.

### **Mental Health**

- [www.youngminds.org.uk/vsbullying](http://www.youngminds.org.uk/vsbullying) - Bullying support for young people and advice about positive mental health - Telephone: 0808 802 5544.
- [www.getconnected.org.uk](http://www.getconnected.org.uk) - Bullying support and advice, support and guidance about wellbeing, mental health, practical advice and other issues affecting young people - Bullying Telephone: 0808 808 4994.
- NSPCC - <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuseand-neglect/bullying-and-cyberbullying/>

### **Cyber Bullying and online safety**

- Think you Know – Advice and information about social networking, E-Safety and reporting online abuse - <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>
- Bullying UK - <http://www.bullying.co.uk/>
- Young Minds - <http://www.youngminds.org.uk/>
- [www.digizen.org](http://www.digizen.org) - Provide online safety information for educators, parents, carers and young people.
- [www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com) - Specialist resources for young people to raise awareness of online safety and how to protect themselves.

### **Race Religion and Ethnicity**

- [www.stophate.uk.org](http://www.stophate.uk.org) - Advice with regards to hate incidents and crimes.
- [www.tellmamauk.org](http://www.tellmamauk.org) – Website which allows people from across England to report any form of anti-muslim abuse.

### **LGBTQ+**

- [www.stonewall.co.uk](http://www.stonewall.co.uk) - An LGBTQ+ equality organisation with considerable expertise in LGBTQ+ bullying and also a dedicated youth site.
- [www.theproudtrust.org](http://www.theproudtrust.org) - helps young people empower themselves to make a positive change for themselves and their communities through youth groups, peer support, delivering of training and events, campaigns, undertaking research and creating resources

### **Specialist Organisations**

- [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk) - Charity established to prevent bullying and promote child protection providing advice for young people, professionals and parents about different types of bullying and how to tackle it. They also offer specialist training and support for school staff, and assertiveness training for young people.

## **Local Links**

Doncaster Education Safeguarding Anti- Bullying and Online Protection -  
<http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/schools/doncaster-education-safeguarding-anti-bullying-and-online-protection>

Wakefield & District Safeguarding Children Board  
[www.wakefieldscb.org.uk/children-and-young-people/bullying/](http://www.wakefieldscb.org.uk/children-and-young-people/bullying/)

Bradford Safeguarding Children Board – Information for Children and Young People  
[http://bradfordscb.org.uk/?page\\_id=440](http://bradfordscb.org.uk/?page_id=440)