



Groby Community College

Achieving Excellence Together

ANTI BULLYING POLICY 2014 -16

Policy Reviewed by: Assistant Principal, Student Wellbeing

Policy Agreed at: Student Wellbeing Committee June 2014

Next Review: June 2016

Signed (Chair of Governors) Date.....

Anti-Bullying Policy

Introduction

We believe that every student has the right to come to Groby Community College without fear of being bullied. Although Ofsted and other monitoring suggest that bullying is infrequent in the college, like all schools, it does happen. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at the college and therefore we have a robust response system in place. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We always consider all complaints connected with bullying seriously, no matter what the circumstances. If an incident of bullying outside of college is reported to the college, this will be investigated and appropriate action taken.

Aims

We aim to create a calm, secure and caring atmosphere for all of our students to allow them to learn effectively, improve their life chances and help them maximise their potential. We want all of our students to feel safe in college and to be confident enough to seek support from staff should they feel unsafe.

Objectives of this policy

- All students, parents, teaching and non-teaching staff and governors to have an understanding of what bullying is
- All teaching and non-teaching staff and governors to know what the college policy is on bullying, and follow it through when bullying is reported
- All students and parents to know what the college policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises
- As a college we take bullying seriously. Students and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported

What is bullying?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts, threatens or frightens another individual or group. "The hurting of someone physically, emotionally or psychologically in a repetitive and sustained way that makes them feel bad about themselves" Definition used by the College Big Brothers and Sisters.

Bullying differs from teasing/falling out between friends or other types of aggressive behaviour when:

- There is a deliberate intention to hurt or humiliate
- There is a power imbalance that makes it hard for the victim to defend themselves
- It is persistent

Bullying can be:

- **Physical** The harming of someone using their body: e.g. pushing, punching, hitting or any use of violence
- **Verbal** Using words to inflict hurt: e.g. spreading rumours, name-calling, teasing or threatening
- **Indirect** Bullying other than the above: e.g. the isolation of the victim by ignoring him or her by excluding him or her from group activities
- **Cyber** All areas of internet, such as email and internet chat room misuse. Mobile threats by text messaging and calls. Misuse of associated technology i.e. camera and video facilities

Occasionally an incident may be deemed to be bullying even if the behaviour has not been repeated over time, but still fulfils all other descriptions of bullying. For example early intervention may be required in cases of sexual, sexist, racist or homophobic bullying; when students with disabilities are involved; or if the victim is considered to be in immediate danger.

There is no hierarchy of bullying, all forms are taken equally seriously. Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. Bullying can be motivated by actual differences between students or perceived differences.

Why it is important to respond to bullying

Bullying affects everyone, not just the bullies and the victims, but others who can see what is happening and all who come into contact with them. Bullying is not a necessary part of growing up and unfortunately rarely sorts itself out. Everyone has the right to be treated with respect; no one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Students who are bullying need to be supported to learn different ways of behaving and need to understand that it is not the bully as a person of whom we disapprove, but his/her actions. We all have a responsibility to prevent bullying occurring and should respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Signs and symptoms

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

- Is unwilling to come to college
- Begins to truant
- Feels ill in the morning or before a particular lesson, or claims to feel ill
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Stops eating

- Suddenly starts getting low marks
- Becomes very emotional and tearful
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Has unexplained cuts and bruises
- Is frightened to say what's wrong
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received

These signs and behaviours may indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered as a possibility and explored.

Dealing with bullying

The college will continue to raise awareness of bullying and be proactive in preventing bullying through:

- Encouraging non-aggressive relationships between all who use the college
- Organising college in order to minimise the opportunities for bullying to take place – eg lunchtime provision for vulnerable students
- Including bullying in the PSHE and assembly programmes and using teaching and learning throughout the year to promote difference and diversity.
- Making sure that every student is aware of the college policy on bullying, and our expectation that they should talk about any incidents of bullying that they are aware of and use the 'I Care' cards to support another student who is being bullied
- Dealing quickly and firmly with any incidents that occur and applying appropriate behaviour sanctions; taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities that the students may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable students.
- Involving parents to ensure that they are clear that the college does not tolerate bullying and are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe their child is being bullied.
- Contacting the police if a criminal offence has been committed
- Considering the motivations behind bullying behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator and providing opportunities for them to modify their behaviour
- Recording, monitoring and following up on bullying incidents to prevent reoccurrence. If bullying persists following college interventions, a bully may be excluded from the college.
- Regularly evaluating and updating our approach to take account of developments in technology
- Providing anti-bullying training for staff.

The first point of contact at the college in the event of a student or parent needing advice on bullying may vary according to the student. All of the following will help:

- Any adult
- The Anti-Bullying Coordinator (Zoe Meadowcroft)
- A Big Brother or Sister
- Head/Assistant Head of House
- College Counsellor
- Viv Evans, Assistant Principal Student wellbeing and Child Protection Officer
- Michelle Wood, Post 16 Student Adviser (Post-16 issues)

A student who is being bullied is encouraged to talk to their tutor, Head /Assistant Head of House or any other member of staff as soon as possible. They will be advised to:

Try not to show that you are upset

Stay with a group of people; there is safety in numbers

Try to be assertive – say NO – walk away confidently

Don't fight back – generally this makes things worse

Talk to an adult in whom you have trust. You will be taken seriously and the best course of action can be considered. If you are bullied, keep records of WHO is involved, WHAT happened, WHERE it happened and WHEN. Alternatively you can always talk to one of the Big Sisters or Brothers (posters around college)

Never remain silent – this is the bully's greatest weapon

A student who is aware that bullying is happening is encouraged to:

Take Action when someone is being bullied or is in distress. Watching or doing nothing makes it look as though you are on the side of the bully

If you cannot or do not wish to be involved **tell an adult or Big Sister or Brother immediately**

Fill out an **'I Care'** card in the LRC

You will not be named and the bully or bullies will have no knowledge of your involvement

Parents are encouraged to:

- Watch for any signs of distress in your children. For instance, are they unwilling to attend college, regularly feel unwell, have missing equipment or possessions?
- Take an active Interest in your child's social life, who their friends are, what they do at lunch time, how they travel to and from college.
- Inform the college immediately if you think your child may be the victim of bullying. Your communication will be taken seriously and every possible course of action will be taken to solve the problem.

- Keep written records if incidents persist: WHO is involved, WHAT happened, WHERE it happened and WHEN.
- Do not encourage your child to hit back, this often makes matters worse.
- Make sure your son or daughter knows that there is nothing wrong with them, it's not their fault.
- Many children bully at some point. If you or the College have reason to suspect that your child is involved we will need to support each other to overcome the problem.

Staff who are bullied

Any member of staff who is subjected to bullying should speak to their line manager or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. See separate policies on 'Harassment and Discrimination' and the 'Dignity at Work' policy; both of which have been fully adopted by the college. Also refer to the college complaints procedure

How this policy is monitored

The Anti-Bullying Coordinator coordinates the recording system

- Analysis of records of incidences of bullying, including racist and hate incidents, logged as part of our behaviour management process and shared with SLT and Governors
- Racist incidents are reported to the Governing Body and Local Authority.
- Questions on student voice questionnaire relating to bullying
- Questions on parents questionnaires relating to bullying

Links to other college policies

Behaviour

Safeguarding/Child Protection

Equality

E-safety

Whistleblowing