



Anti-Bullying Policy

Review Period:	Annual	Date approved:	July 2016
Approved by:	SMT or Designated Person	Date to be reviewed:	July 2017

1. Definition

Bullying can be defined as:

Behaviour which is unwelcome or unacceptable and which results in the creation of a stressful or intimidating environment for the recipient.

This could be one isolated incident or be repetitive. The perception of bullying varies from person to person, but the perception of the person feeling bullied is central to the consideration of any complaint of bullying.

2. Forms of Bullying

Bullying can take many forms including:

- Oral and verbal abuse
- Physical abuse/attack, unwanted physical contact
- Unfair treatment/victimisation
- Jokes/spreading of rumours
- Graffiti
- Embarrassing and/or insensitive comments
- Taking and damaging belongings
- Unwanted sexual advances/conduct/innuendos
- Abusive e-mails, text messages and comments on social networking sites
- Offensive screen savers

3. College Policy

The College will not permit or tolerate bullying under **any** circumstances or in **any** form. Bullying can have devastating effects on the individual concerned and be severely detrimental to the student's progress.

3.1 The College is committed to tackling bullying in all its forms

3.2 All complaints will be taken seriously and fully investigated

- 3.3 If the investigation shows that bullying has taken place, it is considered to be an act of gross misconduct and the appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.
- 3.4 Allegations of bullying are very serious. If it is considered that allegations have been made maliciously then the complainant may be subject to disciplinary action.
- 3.5 Bullying policy is referred to in the Student Code of Conduct issued to all students

4. What to do if you feel you are being bullied

- 4.1 In the first instance the person suffering bullying should inform the perpetrator that his/her behaviour is causing offence and to ask for it to stop. Sometimes students generally do not realise that their behaviour is causing offence and are unaware of the distress caused by their behaviour and the offensive behaviour often ceases.
- 4.2 **If you do not feel confident to undertake this first step** or if you find the circumstances too difficult or embarrassing for you to do this on your own you should speak to your Personal Tutor, or other member of staff, who may deal with the matter informally in liaison with Senior Management.
- 4.3 If these informal steps do not resolve the issue, or if there is a single serious incident of bullying which means that the informal approach is not appropriate, then **formal** procedures will need to be followed. The member of staff will record a clear account of the incident and notify the Senior Achievement Tutor who will involve the Director – Student Guidance & Support or Vice Principal.
- 4.4 Even though the College is committed to maintaining confidentiality at all stages, a thorough investigation into the whole situation will be conducted by the Senior Achievement Tutor or Director – Student Guidance & Support or Vice Principal and, if necessary, a disciplinary interview held in accordance with the College's Disciplinary procedure will be convened. Suspension of the perpetrator will be considered, where appropriate, while this process is gone through, although it must be stressed that suspension is a neutral act until the investigation is completed.

5. Dealing with Parents (where students are under 19)

- 5.1 Whilst the College recognises the concern and interest parents have in their children, staff will always place the best interest of the victim first.
- 5.2 The responsibility for contacting parents will lie with the Director – Student Guidance & Support or Vice Principal.
- 5.3 Any decision to contact parents will be negotiated with the victim and done on his/her approval.
- 5.4 All encouragement should be given at this stage to the student to tell the parents him/herself.
Support should be provided to do this, even if it requires the prior involvement of a third party, e.g. Counsellor.
- 5.5 Consideration should be given to the most appropriate manner of communicating with the parents. Writing, phoning or inviting parents into the College are options to be used at the discretion of the Director – Student Guidance & Support or Vice Principal.

6. Monitoring and Evaluation

- 6.1 Students who have been bullied will be supported by
 - i) Offering an immediate opportunity to access the College Counselling Service for professional help.
 - ii) Offering continuous support from their Personal Tutor and subject tutors.

iii) Restoring self-esteem and confidence.

6.2 Students who have bullied will have the opportunity to

- i) Discuss why they became involved in the incident.
- ii) Establish the wrong doing and the need to change their attitude.
- iii) Access the College Counselling Service for professional help.