



## **ANTI BULLYING POLICY (STUDENTS)**

### **1. Aims**

The aim of this document is to ensure that all members of the College community have an awareness of the nature of bullying and harassment, its consequences and the procedures we have in place to minimise its occurrence, support victims and to deal with perpetrators.

The policy shows that at Brockenhurst College we take all bullying or harassment allegations seriously and students should be assured that they will be supported if they report these incidents.

### **2. Objectives**

2.1 To clearly state the college's commitment regarding bullying or harassment of students.

2.2 To clarify the meaning and main types of bullying and harassment.

2.3 To support students so that they know what to do if they or a fellow student are suffering bullying or harassment.

2.4 To identify the procedures to be followed by any member of staff receiving an allegation of bullying or harassment.

### **3. The College's commitment regarding bullying or harassment of students**

3.1 Bullying or harassment of any kind is unacceptable. Brockenhurst College is committed to providing a friendly, supportive and safe environment for all of our students to promote relaxed and successful learning. A parallel policy and set of procedures is in place concerning the bullying or harassment of members of staff.

3.2 This policy and its associated procedures apply to all Brockenhurst College students regardless of the level, type and location of their studies.

3.3 While the College is not directly responsible for dealing with bullying or harassment which is perpetrated by people not associated with the college, members of staff will endeavour to provide appropriate support to victims and help them to make referrals to relevant outside agencies. We would strive to address bullying or harassment of students in circumstances generated by the college for example work placements or college visits or by visitors to the college.

### **4. The meaning and main types of bullying and harassment**

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

a. 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.

b. It is intentionally harmful — though occasionally the distress it causes is not consciously intended by all of those who are responsible.

c. It involves an imbalance of power, leaving someone feeling helpless to prevent it or put a stop to it.

d. It causes feelings of distress, fear, loneliness and lack of confidence in those who are at the receiving end. (Source: [www.teachernet.gov.uk](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk))

4.2 Bullying can be:

- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures),
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence,
- Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures,
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments,
- Homophobic - because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality,
- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing,
- Cyber - All areas of internet, such as email, chat room and social media
- Mobile - threats by text messaging & calls, misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities.

(Source: [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk))

4.3 From the perspective of the victim, bullying is when over a period of time, a person or group of people makes you feel:

- 'Badly different', alone, unimportant and/or unvalued,
- Physically and/or mentally hurt or distressed,
- Unsafe and/or frightened,
- Unable to do well and achieve,
- Unable to see a positive future for yourself.

(Source: [www.teachernet.gov.uk](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk))

4.4 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.

## **5. Supporting students to know what to do if they or a fellow student are suffering bullying or harassment**

5.1 A variety of methods will be used to promote the anti-bullying message to College students and to give them confidence to know that they should report any incidents to a member of staff. These methods will include:

- a. Student induction talks and tutorial activities,
- b. Posters, Student Handbooks, The Positive behaviour policy and materials on eBrock including the [safe@brock](mailto:safe@brock) section.
- c. An annual themed event centred around safety.
- d. Participation in and promotion of the annual National Anti-Bullying Week, Safer Internet Day, or other national initiatives.

5.2 If it occurs, all students should be confident to tell a member of staff and to know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and with respect for all involved. Anyone who is aware that bullying or harassment is happening should tell a member of staff.

5.3 The Student Union, via the Planning and Advisory board will be involved in evaluating this policy and the overall approach to the anti-bullying ethos of the College.

5.4 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 Additional Learning Support team should be involved.

5.5 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.

## **6. Procedures to be followed by any member of staff receiving an allegation of bullying or harassment**

6.1 If a student or parent/carer reports a case of bullying or harassment to a member of staff they should note down the information and reassure them that the matter will be dealt with as quickly and as sensitively as possible.

6.2 The member of staff may seek support from their line manager, the Pastoral and Welfare Manager or in the case of a student who has a 'blue star' on Emily the principal link member of staff as indicated on the students ILP.

6.3 The member of staff should outline in general the possible approaches to the situation and ensure that the student understands the options.

6.4 The main approach to dealing with bullying or harassment incidents is to favour mediation and the Restorative Justice methodology. However resort to disciplinary procedures with more punitive outcomes may be necessary. Bullying and harassment are listed in the College's Monitoring and Tracking Policy as examples of possible gross misconduct.

6.5 The detailed procedures to follow are outlined in Appendix 1 of this Policy.

6.6 If an allegation is made against a member of staff or College volunteer, Dominic Chapman, Assistant Principal for Learners, and designated safeguarding lead must be informed. He will investigate any allegations promptly and will engage the Hampshire Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in line with the College's Safeguarding Policy.

6.7 In all cases the student who is making the allegation will be helped with personal strategies to enhance their feeling of safety.

Linked Policies:

- Equality Scheme and Policy
- Monitoring and Tracking Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

## **Appendix 1: Guidance and Procedures**

### **1. Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying and Harassment?**

Bullying/harassment hurts. No one deserves to be a victim. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect.

Students who are bullying or harassing others need to learn different ways of behaving. Brockenhurst College has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to allegations of bullying and harassment.

### **2. What is Bullying/Harassment?**

Precise definitions are difficult but examples of the main types of bullying and harassment are contained in section 4 of the Policy above (sources: Kidscape and Teachernet)

Whilst some students may make staff aware of incidents quickly and as soon as they have happened, others have suffered on a long term basis and /or have suffered from primary or secondary school. Such cases may have been dealt with satisfactorily by the school, others may not and the student may still be dealing internally with the outcomes, in which case they may require some specialised support from the College Counsellors. The bully and the bullied may have gone their separate ways at school but find themselves together once again in Brockenhurst College. Bullying and harassment can be brought in from neighbourhoods and is not restricted to younger students.

### **3. Signs and Symptoms**

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 & jumpy when a cyber message is received
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above

(Source: [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk) )

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

### **4. Dealing with allegations of bullying or harassment**

Any student or parent/carer who reports a case of bullying needs to know that the allegation will be taken seriously and investigated promptly. They should not be made promises about the outcome.

It is common but not always the case that counter allegations are made by the alleged perpetrator. These will also be investigated so that a full picture is obtained. The student or parent initially reporting the bullying should be made aware of this possibility and sensitively asked whether they are aware of any claims that the alleged perpetrator might make. They should be re-assured that this would not condone the behaviour they are reporting and that an investigation will still go ahead.

## **5. Procedures**

### Reporting and Investigation

If a student or parent/carer reports a case of bullying to you, you should:

- a) Stay calm and reassure the student/parent that the matter will be dealt with as quickly and sensitively as possible.
- b) Talk to the student/parent and find out what has happened – keep notes of this conversation. 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.
- c) Ask the student to check, sign and date your notes.
- d) Deal with the situation if it is straightforward and you feel that you are able e.g. name-calling in a classroom situation.
- e) In other situations outline the possible options so that the student understands them eg:
  - i. A full investigation involving interviewing alleged perpetrators and any witnesses, collection of evidence such as text or email messages and potentially leading to a disciplinary hearing,
  - ii. A request to the personal tutor (or equivalent) of the alleged perpetrator to discuss the reported behaviours and request that they stop,
  - iii. A mediated discussion between those involved to seek an agreed outcome,
  - iv. No further investigation but a note is kept should there be any continuation.
- f) It may be appropriate to give the student time to consider the options presented and to return to see you at a later date with their preferred option.
- g) Refer the case on to your Line Manager if you feel that it is a more complex case and outside your area of expertise or involves students outside your area.
- h) Managers may invite parents to discuss the problem and in extreme circumstances may involve the police.
- i) If Safeguarding issues are involved seek advice from a Safeguarding Officer.
- j) In all cases inform the Pastoral and Welfare Manager so that the incident and any outcomes can be added to the central record.

## **6. Outcomes from Investigation**

Part of the discussion with the student being bullied should involve asking him/her “What would you like the outcome to be?” A number of different alternatives can be discussed:

- The College will generally use an approach linked to the principles of Restorative Justice. This will involve a facilitated meeting between both parties (sometimes including parents or other supporters). Staff undertaking this approach should have undertaken some training to ensure it is carried out effectively. The intention is to achieve some reconciliation to allow for students to co-exist and be successful in College.
- Outcomes are likely to involve apologies; changed behaviour and perhaps some support to achieve changed behaviour e.g. anger management or other skill improvements.
- The restorative justice approach cannot always replace a disciplinary approach and student perpetrators may be placed on behaviour contracts or in more extreme or repeated cases be excluded using the College Disciplinary Procedures.
- The outcomes of all investigations should be recorded on the perpetrators student record and provided to the Health and Welfare Manager to update the central record.

**RECORD OF ALLEGED BULLYING INCIDENT (AB1)**

DETAILS OF THE ALLEGATION (continue on separate sheet if necessary)

Student(s) making the report -----

Student ID No.(s) -----

Member of staff receiving the report -----

Date the report was made -----

Student(s) allegedly being bullied -----

Student ID No.(s) -----

Individuals allegedly doing the bullying -----

Is there any link to discriminatory behaviour eg. Homophobic, sexist, racist bullying etc. Yes/No

Details – including dates, times, places, witnesses, nature and extent, result of actions, and any other useful information.