

# ANTI-BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY– STUDENTS



## INTRODUCTION

### Policy Statement

Coulston Sixth Form College fully recognises its responsibility and duty for protecting young people and promoting their welfare.

The College aims to create and maintain a safe environment for young people and similarly for students who are over eighteen, staff, volunteers, and visitors.

### 1. Policy Statement

The purpose of this policy is to foster a working and learning environment that is free from any form of bullying and harassment for all students. Where bullying or harassment does occur, individuals should feel supported in reporting incidents and be clear about the steps they should take. The College does not tolerate bullying or harassment in any form. Any breach of this policy by students will lead to disciplinary action and could ultimately lead to exclusion from college under the College's Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures. Allegations of bullying or harassment of students by staff will be dealt with under the College's Complaints Procedure.

This Policy needs to be read in conjunction with:

- Student Code of Conduct
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures
- Staff Code and Conduct
- College Complaints Procedure

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all incidents of bullying or harassment of students by students, staff or visitors.

Bullying and harassment by or of students that takes place outside of college premises or outside of college term-times may result in action being taken by the College if the activities improperly interfere with the activities of the College or its staff, students or visitors.

### 3. Definitions

Harassment and bullying can be physical, verbal or non-verbal. Either may take many forms from relative mild banter to abuse or actual physical violence. Students may not always realise that their behaviour constitutes harassment or bullying but must recognise that what is acceptable to one person may not be acceptable to another.

Harassment is a form of discrimination and is defined as unwanted conduct relating to sex, race or ethnic or national origins, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, age or any other protected characteristic which:

- has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person, or
- is reasonably considered by that person to have the effect of violating his or her dignity or of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for him or her even if this effect was not intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

This definition includes harassment based on association or perception. For example, harassment based on a perception that a person holds a religious belief. Any form of harassment creates an atmosphere that, if not challenged, can normalise inappropriate behaviours.

In cases of sexual harassment the key point is that it involves conduct that is unwanted, unreciprocated and offensive to the recipient. It is the effect of the harasser's behaviour that is at issue, the intention or motive is irrelevant. Sexual harassment can include: sexual comments and "jokes", such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names; physical behaviour, and online sexual harassment, which might include: non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos and sharing sexual images and videos (both often referred to as sexting); inappropriate sexual comments on social media; exploitation; coercion and threats. Online sexual harassment may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence.

The perceptions of the recipient of the harassment are very important and harassment can be deemed to have occurred even if the intention was not present, but the recipient felt they were being harassed. A person can also make a complaint of harassment even if it is not directed at them.

Bullying is defined as: offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power which undermines, humiliates or intimidates the person on the receiving end. Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

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 & internet chat room misuse  
Mobile threats by text messaging & calls  
Misuse of associated technology , i.e. camera & video facilities.

The Student Code of Conduct states clearly that bullying and harassment are regarded as gross misconduct.

#### **4. Legislation**

The Equality Act 2010

Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, Sept 2016)

Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools and Colleges (DfE Dec 2017)

#### **5. Policy Approval History**

First approved by Executive 21 February 2012

Revised Policy approved by SLT on 9 November 2016

This Revised Policy approved by SLT on 8 January 2018

#### **6. Prevention of bullying and harassment**

The College will discourage bullying and harassment by fostering an atmosphere where staff and students have a clear and shared understanding of what constitutes bullying or harassment; where these behaviours are seen as inappropriate and wrong; and where all members of the college take responsibility for combatting bullying and know what to do when it happens.

Students will be made aware of the College's attitude towards bullying and harassment during their initial induction and the issue will be regularly reinforced throughout the academic year.

#### **7. Protocol for dealing with allegations of bullying or harassment**

Any allegations of bullying of students by students will be investigated by the Associate Principal (Students), who can delegate the investigation or part thereof to a Senior Tutor, where possible the Senior Tutor of the student or of the alleged perpetrator. All investigations are carried out with fairness, respecting confidentiality. All documentation is kept confidential.

Parents/guardians of the student(s) making the allegation and of the alleged perpetrator(s) are informed of the allegation and investigation and of the outcome. If the student(s) making the allegation does not want parents/ guardians to be informed (e.g. in the event of homophobic bullying of a student whose parents are not aware of their sexuality) the student's confidentiality must be respected.

If a student reports bullying or harassment to a member of staff, the member of staff must take the issues seriously and deal with the student sensitively. The member of staff must refer the incident/ allegation to the Associate Principal (Students).

The Associate Principal (Students) meets with the student(s) making the allegation and with the alleged perpetrator(s) to explain the allegation and process. During the investigation, evidence is collected. Any evidence is treated with confidentiality.

If more than one student reports an incident of bullying or harassment and/or if the allegation is against more than one student, each student will be seen separately and each case will be investigated separately.

Once the investigation has been completed, the Associate Principal (Students) will make a decision about the seriousness of the case and will decide which disciplinary and remedial actions need to be taken.

If the allegation is deemed to be unfounded, the Associate Principal (Students) will meet with the student(s) who has/have made the allegation and, if appropriate, respective parent/guardian to explain the decision. If the student/parent/guardian is not satisfied with this, they will need to provide further evidence for the case to be investigated again. If they are satisfied with the decision that the allegation is unfounded, the Associate Principal (Students) will meet the alleged perpetrator(s) and, if appropriate respective parent/ guardian and the decision is explained. It may be deemed appropriate to bring both parties together in a subsequent conciliatory meeting. In any case, there will be a review after two weeks to ensure that the situation has not arisen again.

If there is evidence of bullying/harassment, the Associate Principal (Students) will meet with the perpetrator(s) and explain the disciplinary action, which follows the College disciplinary procedures, as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct states that bullying and harassment are regarded as gross misconduct.

During and after any investigation the situation will be monitored by the Associate Principal (Students) to ensure that bullying does not recur. The student(s) involved should be made aware of relevant support services available inside and outside the college (e.g. College Counsellor).

Any child protection concerns that emerge in connection with bullying or harassment must be reported immediately to the Associate Principal (Students) or one of the College Safeguarding Officers. These issues will be dealt with under the College's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

## **8. Allegation of Bullying or Harassment against a Member of Staff**

If a student makes an allegation of bullying and harassment against a member of staff allegations, this will be investigated and dealt with by the Head of College. The policy and procedures which will be applied in this case are laid out in the Staff Code and Conduct and the Complaints Procedure.

## **9. Information for parents**

Parents will be made aware of this policy via an anti-bullying and harassment statement within the Welcome Letter and through reference in the Student Code of Conduct. The full policy will be published on the College's website.

## **10. Monitoring, evaluation and review**

Implementation of this policy will be reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team. Incidents of bullying and harassment will be monitored throughout the year and reported annually by the Associate Principal (Students). The report will be presented to the Senior Leadership Team. The policy will be reviewed annually.

Date of Review	Reviewed and amended previous policy: Nov 2016 Review of this policy: January 2018	Did you make changes?	Y
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Questions for all Policies	Enter Y / N
Is it likely that the Policy Revision could have a negative impact:-	
Due to ethnic group?	N
Due to gender?	N
Due to disability?	N
Due to sexual orientation?	N
Due to their religious beliefs (or none)?	N
Due to pregnancy	N
On people due to them being transgender or transsexual?	N
Additional questions for Policies relating to Staff	N/A
Is it likely that the Policy Revision could have a negative impact:-	
On people due to their age?	N
On people due to their marital or civil partnership status?	N
On people with dependants/caring responsibilities?	N

If YES please speak with the Assistant Principal (Quality) as a full Equality Analysis may be required.