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Quality Assurance Policies & Procedures

ANTI-BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all members of the College community feel valued and have the confidence to contribute to the aims and core values of the College.

The College is, therefore, committed to creating and maintaining a working and learning environment that is safe, secure and free from any form of bullying and harassment for all students and staff. Where bullying or harassment does occur, individuals should feel supported in reporting incidents and be clear about the steps they should take.

The College takes bullying and harassment very seriously, any breach of this policy could lead to suspension or exclusion under the College's Student Agreement and Disciplinary Procedures.

The College is not directly responsible for bullying or harassment that takes place outside the learning environment and off-College premises but will take appropriate action if activities out of College have an impact on a student's safety at College.

2. TYPES OF BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

Bullying behaviour is defined as: "Any behaviour that is unwanted, unwelcome, inappropriate, and unacceptable to the person receiving it, causing them unease, stress, distress and a possible loss of self-esteem." It involves persecution of the victim through intimidating, unfair, sarcastic, physical, harassing, provoking, malicious or angry behaviour that causes them to feel uneasy or threatened. This can take place over time or be a one-off incident of deliberately hurtful behaviour. It is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. Bullying is the abuse of power by one person over another and all types of behaviour are unacceptable and will not be tolerated in the College. In this regard there are obvious overlaps with the College's commitment to safeguarding and the procedures and policies we have in place.

There is no legal definition of bullying.

However, it is usually defined as behaviour that is:

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation

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It takes many forms and can include:

- physical assault
- teasing
- making threats
- name calling
- cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (for example email, social networks and instant messenger)

3. SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two students of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of students sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single person or group of people. Sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up.

The College will challenge behaviour (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts.

Sexual violence in the context of child-on-child sexual violence can include

Rape: A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. Assault by Penetration: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. Sexual Assault: A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Sexual Harassment

Refers to sexual harassment we mean 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline, examples include:-

- sexual comments, such as, telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
- sexual "jokes" or taunting;
- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes (schools and colleges should be considering when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence - it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and
- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include:-
- non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and videos. ;
- sexualised online bullying;

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- unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media
- sexual exploitation; coercion and threats; and
- upskirting (now a criminal offence)

4. ANTI- BULLYING & HARRASMENT REPORT PROCEDURE

If students, parents/ guardians or visitors report bullying or harassment they will be taken seriously and treated sensitively. This can be reported to any member of staff including course tutors, heads of school and executive

- Safeguarding team will take the appropriate action to support the victim and resolve the issue with support from the Head of School
- Action will be reported on Pro-Monitor and should include recommendations for a named member of staff, e.g. a tutor, to be responsible for monitoring the situation.
- The incident should be investigated and bullies challenged using the College's UTS disciplinary procedures.
- The student should be kept informed of any action that will be taken to investigate the allegation, through discussion and written communication.
- When a student is under the age of 18 parents should be kept fully informed of any action.
- During and after any investigation the situation should be monitored to ensure that bullying does not recur.
- The student should be made aware of the support services available to them and how to access them, e.g. student services, counselling or tutorial support.

5. ACTION FOLLOWING A REPORT

The College will carefully consider any report of bullying, sexual violence and/or sexual harassment. The designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) will have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the College's initial response. Important considerations will include:

- the wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed. This is especially important in the context of sexual violence and sexual harassment. Victims will be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and any support that they will be offered. This will however need to be balanced with the College's duty and responsibilities to protect other children;
- the nature of the alleged incident(s), including: whether a crime may have been committed and consideration of harmful sexual behaviour ;
- the ages of the students involved;
- the developmental stages of the student involved;
- any power imbalance between the students. For example, is an alleged perpetrator significantly older, more mature or more confident? Does the victim have a disability or learning difficulty?;

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- if the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse (sexual abuse can be accompanied by other forms of abuse and a sustained pattern may not just be of a sexual nature);
- that sexual violence and sexual harassment can take place within intimate personal relationships between peers;
- Assessment of ongoing risks to the victim, other students, adult students or college staff?; and
- other related issues and wider context, including any links to child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation.

6. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

Implementation of this policy will be reviewed by the Leadership Committee. Incidents of bullying and harassment will be monitored throughout the year, and reported to Heads of School, executive and governors. A range of internal and national surveys will be carried out with students and staff throughout the academic year. This information will be used to improve practice and intervention strategies. Student and staff will be involved in a variety of strategies as part of the College's RESPECT campaign and the "Its Never OK" campaign to promote equality, respect and tolerance.

7. PREVENTION OF BULLYING

As outlined in the introduction of this policy successful implementation has a positive effect on student morale, safety and performance. The College's RESPECT and Its Never OK campaigns is integral to this addressing all aspects of equality and diversity. The RESPECT & Its Never OK campaigns are part of College life and is embedded into teaching and learning activities. Taught tutorials involve talking to students about issues of difference.

The College proactively gathers intelligence about issues between pupils which might provoke conflict and develop strategies to prevent issues happening in the first place.

Subjects include:-

- healthy and respectful relationships;
- what respectful behaviour looks like;
- consent;
- stereotyping, equality;
- body confidence and self-esteem;
- prejudiced behaviour;
- that sexual violence and sexual harassment is always wrong; and
- addressing cultures of sexual harassment

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Parents, guardians and carers are involved where required to ensure that they are clear that the college does not tolerate bullying or harassment and are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being victimised.

The College will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issue in a way that protects the young person.

The following procedures are followed to prevent bullying: -

- During Induction all students will be informed of the College's approach and are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders
- The College implements a year plan of awareness raising activities peer mentoring and anti-bullying seminars to promote peer support.
- The college regularly updates the 'acceptable use' policies for computers
- The College's tutorial procedures are followed to ensure consequences of bullying reflect the seriousness of the incident and so that others see that bullying is unacceptable
- Staff training and Anti-bullying policies are promoted to all College staff to ensure they understand the principles and purpose of the Colleges policy and its legal responsibilities regarding bullying, how to resolve problems including those with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGB&TQ) pupils
- The College has an anonymous reporting platform available that underpins the "Its Never Ok" campaign encouraging student to speak up or anonymously report any unwanted behaviours.

Preventing and Tackling bullying Department for Education

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/625ee64cd3bf7f6004339db8/Preventing_and_tackling_bullying_advice.pdf

Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children in Schools and Colleges

https://consult.education.gov.uk/safeguarding-in-schools-team/keeping-children-safe-in-education-schools-and-col/supporting_documents/Proposed%20advice%20for%20sexual%20violence%20and%20sexual%20harassment%20%20for%20consultation.pdf