Anti Harassment and Bullying (Including Online) Policy

Key Information	
Policy Reference Number	CCSW - HAB
ELT Post Responsible for Updating and Monitoring	Principal/CEO
Published on Website	Yes
Date Approved by ELT	24 August 2021
Date Approved by Governor's Committee (if applicable)	21 October 2021
Date of EIA Review	07 July 2022
Date of Next Review	31 October 2024

1 Aim/Scope

1.1 The College is committed to providing a learning environment which is free from discrimination, harassment or bullying of any kind, whether by learners, staff or other parties. The College expects everyone to be treated with respect, regardless of age, disability, family responsibility, marital status, race, colour, ethnicity, nationality, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation or other characteristics.

1.2 This policy applies to all learners and addresses all forms of bullying and harassment that occur, either face to face, via social media or any other electronic means such as email or encrypted applications.

2 Definition of Terms

2.1 **HARASSMENT** is defined in the Equality Act 2010 and can be described as any conduct which involves unwanted, unreasonable and offensive conduct related to a protected characteristic.

2.2 The relevant protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

2.3 It is a form of discrimination that can include negative attitudes or behaviours connected to a protected characteristic. Examples of such behaviour may include *(and this is not an exhaustive list)*:

    2.3.1 Insensitive jokes, teasing or ridicule;
    2.3.2 unnecessary body contact;
    2.3.3 expression of prejudiced remarks; and
    2.3.4 abuses of positions of authority by a staff member over a learner.

2.4 Such behaviour may not be intended to be harmful, but if it diminishes a person's quality of life or wellbeing or affects their work, that person can claim that they are being harassed.

2.5 **SEXUAL HARASSMENT** means 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a person's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include:

    2.5.1 sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
    2.5.2 sexual "jokes" or taunting;
    2.5.3 physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and
    2.5.4 Online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include:
        2.5.4.1 non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos;
        2.5.4.2 sexualised online bullying; and
        2.5.4.3 unwanted sexual comments and messages, including on social media.

2.6 **BULLYING** is a form of harassment that displays the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to that person.

2.7 The College has signed the Cheshire Anti-Bullying Charter, which identifies three defining features of bullying:

    2.7.1 a victim is targeted by an individual or group on a regular basis *(it is repeated)*;
    2.7.2 there is intention to harm or humiliate physically or emotionally; and
    2.7.3 there is a power imbalance, the victim is fearful of those targeting them

2.8 Bullying can take many forms. Some examples are *(this is not an exhaustive list)*:

    2.8.1 emotional: being unfriendly, excluding someone, tormenting *(e.g. threatening gestures, interfering with personal possessions)*.
    2.8.2 physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of physical violence.

2.8.3   racist: racist bullying can be defined as; a range of hurtful behaviour, both physical and psychological, that makes a person feel unwelcome, marginalised, excluded, powerless or worthless because of their colour, ethnicity, culture, faith, community, national origin or national status- racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.

2.8.4   transphobic bullying refers to bullying because someone is, or is thought to be, transgender or transsexual.

2.8.5   homophobic: homophobic bullying targets someone because of their sexual orientation (or perceived sexual orientation). It can be particularly difficult for a young person to report and is often directed at them at a very sensitive phase of their lives when identity is being developed. Homophobic bullying has been shown to have an extremely damaging impact, with depression, suicidal thoughts and self-harm reported.

2.8.6   verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.

2.8.7   cyber: all areas of internet, such as e-mail and social media misuse. Mobile threats by text messaging and calls or forwarding photographs or images inappropriately. Misuse of associated technology, i.e., camera and video facilities.

2.8.8   disablist: bullying, involving young people with disabilities employs many of the same forms as other types of bullying, with name calling and pushing and shoving being common. Also includes, seemingly 'low level' bullying from which there is no let up.

3   **Objective of this Policy**

3.1   All learners will be able to identify bullying and harassment *(including online)* and should feel able to report incidents of harassment and bullying and know that these will be dealt with promptly, fairly and effectively.

4   **Responsibilities**

4.1   To help ensure this:

4.1.1   all governors, staff, and learners should understand what harassment and bullying are;

4.1.2   all governors and staff should know what the policy is on harassment and bullying, and follow it when incidents are reported; and

4.1.3   all learners should know what the policy is on harassment and bullying, and they should report it if they experience any form of bullying or harassment (including online).

Appendix 1 (Procedure)

1   Providing Information to Learners

1.1   Learners should be made aware of the Equal Opportunities Policy and related policies and procedures during induction.

1.2   Learners will be informed of the College's zero tolerance policy on bullying and harassment *(including online)* during induction and will understand how to report any incidents of bullying or harassment.

1.3   Equality and diversity issues will be included in tutorial programmes and positive attitudes encouraged within the teaching environment.

1.4   Learners will be made aware of the different options available to them to report an incident or concern, which include reporting directly to a member of staff, using the Be Safe email address or the 'I need help with…' facility located on the learners MyDay area.

2   Reporting Incidents to Staff

2.1   A learner who is being harassed or bullied within college by other learners, staff or someone from outside college should report this to a member of staff immediately. This could be their:

   2.1.1   personal Development Tutor (PDT);
   2.1.2   a member of the Learner Services Team; or
   2.1.3   a member of the teaching staff.

2.2   In such instances the member of staff will ensure the learner feels safe and will then record the details of the concern on the Bullying and Harassment Form, which can be found on the Be Safe area of MyDay or here.

2.3   The Bullying/Harassment form will be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) who will review the form and assess what further action may be required.

2.4   Where no further action is required, the record will be updated by the DSL or DDSL, who will also ask the PDT and appropriate Assistant Director (AD) to offer support and monitor the situation.

2.5   Where further action is required the DSL or DDSL will liaise with the relevant AD and identify further actions.

3   Reports Received Through Online Reporting Options

3.1   If a learner reports the concern through the Be Safe email an email will be sent to all members of the Be Safe Team.

3.2   A member of the Be Safe team will communicate with the learner and then complete the Bullying and Harassment Form.

3.3   The DSL and DDSL monitor the emails coming into the Be Safe inbox and assign the concern to a specific member of the Be Safe Team or Assistant Director if appropriate.

3.4   Referrals through the 'I need help with….' Function will be monitored by the Student Liaison Officers (SLO), who will complete the Bullying and Harassment form and inform the relevant staff members.

3.5   The DSL and DDSL will receive notification of the form and will follow steps from 2.3 above

4   Investigating the Complaint

4.1   An identified staff member will investigate the incident and take appropriate action, with the learner's consent. In the majority of cases this will be the member of staff who the concern is being reported to.

4.2   In complex situations or where those involved come from different curriculum areas, the investigating member of staff will refer to the relevant AD for each respective curriculum areas concerned, who will meet for a case conference and agree the best way to investigate and handle the incidents with those involved and agree a consistent approach in taking action.

4.3   All reports of bullying and harassment will be recorded on the Bullying and Harassment form, located on the Be Safe area on MyDay. Recommendations could include mediation, training for the person(s) harassing or bullying, or disciplinary action.

4.4   Any required follow up support for the victim will be identified and recorded on the Bullying and Harassment form.

5   Using the Disciplinary Code

5.1   Where serious misconduct is involved or where mediation or training fail, then disciplinary procedures should follow. Very serious incidents may result in expulsion.

6   Consulting the Police

6.1   If necessary and appropriate, the College will consult the police or advise the learner to do so. For example, if the learner is being 'stalked' or is subject to similar anti-social behaviour, or if they have been sexually assaulted, they may choose to report this. In this situation the Be Safe Team will have been informed and would record the details as a safeguarding record.

6.2   Also, a third party who is offended by a racist or homophobic incident may report this to the police, without the consent of the person being harassed or attacked. In addition, the College is recognised as a hate crime reporting centre and a learner may wish to report such an incident under the umbrella term of hate crime in which case, they should be referred to the DSL or DDSL.

7   Recording the Incident and Options Decided

7.1   The information given by the learner should be recorded only with his or her consent. It should be shared with others only by consent. All information relating to the incident should then be kept confidential and not form part of the learner's general record.

7.2   The electronic form to use to report the incident is available on the Be Safe tile on MyDay. On submission of the electronic form, the record is stored by the Director of Learning and Learner Services and used for monitoring and impact assessments and reports.

8   Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

8.1   A young person may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. All college staff should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a young person demonstrates or suggests that they:

        8.1.1   are frightened of walking to or from College;
        8.1.2   don't want to go on the usual mode of transport and asks/begs to be driven to College;
        8.1.3   change their usual routine;
        8.1.4   are unwilling to go to College;
        8.1.5   begin to have a poor attendance record;
        8.1.6   become withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence;

8.1.7   start stammering;

8.1.8   attempt or threatens suicide or runs away;

8.1.9   have difficulty sleeping, cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares;

8.1.10   feel ill in the morning;

8.1.11   begin to do poorly in college work;

8.1.12   have possessions which are damaged or 'go missing';

8.1.13   ask for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully);

8.1.14   have unexplained cuts or bruises;

8.1.15   are hungry (money/lunch has been stolen);

8.1.16   become aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable;

8.1.17   are bullying other learners or siblings;

8.1.18   stop eating;

8.1.19   are frightened to say what's wrong;

8.1.20   give improbable excuses for any of the above;

8.1.21   are afraid to use the internet or mobile phone; or

8.1.22   are nervous and jumpy when a cyber-message is received.