

## Anti Bullying Policy



The Sixth Form College Farnborough is committed to providing a supportive, friendly and safe environment for staff and students. Any form of bullying or harassment will not be tolerated and all students are encouraged to inform the College if they are being bullied or harassed or if they are aware that others are being bullied or harassed. This includes bullying using social networking sites or by mobile phones.

The College recognises its obligations under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to provide measures that encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst students. This includes times when the students are not at College or under the supervision of College staff. This could relate to bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the College premises, such as on public transport.

Under the Equality Act it is the duty of the College to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation within the College community.

### What is Bullying?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

The Anti-Bullying Alliance states that bullying mostly falls into two categories:

- emotionally harmful behaviour, such as taunting, spreading hurtful rumours and excluding people from groups; and
- physically harmful behaviour, such as kicking, hitting, pushing, or other forms of physical abuse.

### Cyber-Bullying

Cyber-Bullying is an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual using electronic forms of contact repeatedly over time against a victim who cannot easily defend him or herself, This includes using ICT, particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else.

### Allegations of Harassment and/or Bullying

Incidents of alleged bullying and harassment may vary from 'teasing' and 'horseplay' to serious violence and intimidation which threaten the life or mental health of the recipient. It is therefore important to select the appropriate level of response.

Informal procedures can be a speedy and amicable way of resolving conflict and should be sought in the first instance, unless the nature and seriousness of the complaint are such that informal action would be inappropriate. In such a case, the Formal Procedure will be followed immediately.

The recipient of any unwanted behaviour should be advised to make notes of any incidents and names of witnesses in case the Formal Procedure should be invoked at a later date. Where cyberbullying is involved, the victim should keep all electronic evidence.

## **Informal Procedures**

### **The alleged bully is a student**

#### **1) Challenge the Behaviour**

Anyone who feels they are being bullied should ask the other person to stop; they should also explain why the other person's behaviour is unacceptable.

All staff and students have a duty to challenge any bullying or harassment as follows:

- make sure that bullying is or was taking place, not merely horseplay in which the recipient is happy to take part;
- make it clear to the alleged bully that his / her behaviour is unacceptable, and explain why;
- encourage and support the recipient.

If a student lacks the confidence to challenge bullying, they should tell an appropriate member of staff (e.g. Personal / Subject Tutor or any member of the Student Services team) and ask for assistance.

When the alleged bully has been challenged and told that his / her behaviour is unacceptable, that may be enough to stop it. S/he may have been unaware that their behaviour is offensive or unwanted. If this does not stop the bullying, then the recipient may wish to seek a resolution via the informal or formal procedures.

#### **2) Mediation (probably with the assistance of the Personal Tutor(s))**

- If harassment or bullying has occurred, and the recipient either feels uncomfortable about challenging the other person, or they have already done so to no effect, they should talk the situation through with a friend or a member of staff such as their Personal Tutor. This can sometimes give the student the confidence to deal with the situation themselves.

If the student still feels intimidated, they may want to ask for the support of one of the above, to mediate: either to accompany them when they speak to the other person, or to speak on their behalf. It may be appropriate to organise a meeting between the parties, mediated by an impartial third party (e.g. Lead Tutor), especially if the alleged bully is making a counter-complaint. It is important to identify the cause of the conflict and to agree a solution. The College will usually

try to encourage a solution via mediation before moving to the formal procedures.

Advice and support is available for as long as the recipient needs it. Counselling is available both for the recipient and for the person whose behaviour is alleged to be unacceptable. This can be organised via the College counsellors.

### **3) Mediation is not wanted by the recipient, refused by the bully or ineffective**

If the recipient does not wish to take part in mediation, then the matter will be dealt with immediately under the normal College Code of Conduct procedures.

If the alleged bully refuses to participate in mediation, or having met, refuses to modify their behaviour (or if having agreed, fails to do so), or if retaliation or victimisation occur, then the matter will be dealt with immediately under the normal College Code of Conduct procedures.

### **The alleged bully is a member of staff**

If the alleged bully is a member of staff, the student should seek assistance from an appropriate (other) member of staff. After an initial discussion with the recipient, that (other) member of staff should decide whether there is 'cause for concern', and ascertain whether the recipient wishes any action to be taken.

If the (other) member of staff decides there is 'cause for concern', s/he should contact the **appropriate Curriculum Manager** who will offer mediation between the student and the alleged bully, if appropriate. If mediation is refused by the alleged bully, or unsuccessful, or if the alleged incident is sufficiently serious, the **Curriculum Manager** will refer the matter to the **Deputy Principal (Curriculum & Innovation)** who may recommend that the Staff Disciplinary Procedure be invoked.

## **Formal Procedures**

### **The alleged bully is another student**

Details of procedures can be found in the College Code of Conduct.

### **The alleged bully is a member of staff**

Details of procedures can be found in the Disciplinary Policy and Procedures (staff).

### **After the Formal Procedure has been concluded:**

- Where a complaint is upheld, it is the responsibility of the bully's Personal Tutor to check that no further bullying takes place and that there is no subsequent victimisation, either by the bully, or the bully's friends.
- Counselling can be arranged via the College counsellors for both or either parties of the complaint, irrespective of the outcome.

## Appendix A

### ***Associated Policies / Procedures:***

- Child Protection Policy and Procedures
- Disciplinary Procedures (Staff)
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Equal Opportunities (Staff)
- Grievance Procedure (Staff)
- Student Disciplinary Policy and Procedures

## **Anti-Bullying: Guidance for Students**

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### **Cyber-Bullying** (cut and paste from slides)

Cyber-Bullying is an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual using electronic forms of contact repeatedly over time against a victim who cannot easily defend him or herself. Cyber-bullying is the use of ICT, particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else.

### **If you believe you are being bullied or harassed:**

Do not retaliate or seek revenge. If you are in immediate danger from bullies, get away, don't try to fight. Find the nearest member of staff, or go to Student Services.

If you cannot resolve the situation on your own, recognise that to stop the bullying, you must do something about it. Tell a member of staff (e.g. Personal/Subject Tutor or any member of the Student Services team) who will help you decide on the best course of action. The College will usually consider mediation to be the most appropriate way of ensuring the bullying / harassment stops.

### **If you see anyone being bullied or harassed:**

Satisfy yourself that bullying or harassment really is occurring.

Encourage and support the person being bullied to take appropriate action to address the situation e.g. by asking the bully to stop.

Tell an appropriate member of staff.

**Remember that the best defense we have against any anti-social behaviour, including bullying, is the respect we have for each other.**

For further information and guidance, look at the College **Anti Bullying Policy** and Procedures document, available on the College Intranet.