ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Person(s) Responsible:	Mr J Cleary
Governors' Committee:	Student Welfare & Community Committee
Last Review Date:	Autumn 2024
Next Review Date:	Autumn 2025
Status:	Statutory

The College recognises and values the good relationships between all of the College community, as fostered by the College, and expects that every allegation of bullying will be taken seriously.

All staff, students and parents should be aware of the negative effect that bullying can have on individuals and the College in general, and should work towards ensuring that all students can work in an environment without fear.

Bullying in the College is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

We therefore take a strong stance against bullying of any type, since it lacks appreciation for the feelings of others. Bullying will not be tolerated and will be addressed in conjunction with the Management of Behaviour Policy, as bullying can cause deep distress, to the extent of the victims refusing to attend College or, in extreme cases, self-harming.

Aims and Objectives

1. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable. The aim of the policy is to ensure that students learn in a supportive environment without fear of being bullied and that staff are free of fear of bullying.

2. The College recognises that bullying can arise from ignorance and a lack of empathy, but also unhappiness and low self-esteem. We endeavour to create a culture and community that respects all students and staff and promotes equality.

3. If bullying does occur, students should be aware of whom to tell or how to inform the College and be confident that the bullying will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who is aware of any bullying occurring should be expected to inform the appropriate staff.

4. There is no hierarchy of bullying and each type of bullying will be treated equally in terms of seriousness and dealt with appropriately.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group, either emotionally or physically, often where it is difficult for the person or group being bullied to defend themselves. Bullying can take many forms including emotional, physical, racist, sexual, religious, homophobic, verbal or online.

Conversely, bullying is **not**:

- One-off teasing and 'banter' between friends where there is no intent to cause harm or distress;
- Falling out between friends after a quarrel or disagreement;
- Behaviour that all parties have enjoyed or agreed to.

Legal Context

The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010 (Schedule 1 part 3 paragraphs 9 and 10) provides that every school must have measures to encourage good behaviour and **prevent all forms of bullying** amongst students.

The Equality Act 2010 states that public bodies must: 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act'.

The Children Act 1989 states that 'a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'.

Criminal Law: although bullying in itself is not a specific offence in the UK some types of harassing or threatening behaviour could be e.g. under the **Malicious Communications Act 2003** it is an offence to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety.

This policy has been devised recognising the importance of addressing bullying in both Keeping Children Safe in Education (Department for Education (DfE 2023) and Behaviour in Schools (DfE, 2022).

Role and responsibility of the Principal, Governors and other staff

The Principal will ensure that:

- The policy is fully implemented.
- Appropriate strategies for prevention are known to all staff and effective staff training provided.
- Disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, taking into account any special educational needs or disabilities.
- Records are kept of incidents and follow up actions.
- Consideration is given to the success of the strategies used and any identified improvements implemented.
- The College takes a proactive approach to the problem of bullying by raising the issues through special events, assemblies, and related curriculum content.
- The College uses appropriate organisations or resources to help with particular issues.
- The policies and procedures are clearly and regularly communicated and understood by students, parents and staff.
- Procedures are in place for students to report bullying in a safe and secure way.

Governors will:

- Approve the policy and support the College in its implementation of the policy.
- Monitor records of incidents and outcomes.
- Suggest any required amendments to policy and procedures.

Teaching and non-teaching staff will:

- Take all incidents of bullying seriously.
- Offer the victim immediate support.
- Take appropriate action against the perpetrator to prevent behaviour reoccurring. A number of sanctions may be used, ranging from a genuine apology to the imposition of a suspension dependent on the circumstances. Where possible the students will be reconciled.
- Report any incidents, in written form or electronic form in the guise of a CPOMS incident when necessary, with an account of the action taken.
- Provide appropriate anti-bullying information through the tutorial programme, Wellbeing assemblies and, where appropriate, subject material.
- Ensure parents are contacted and informed of any incident and subsequent actions.
- Ensure all incidents are logged.
- Ensure that victims are supported and bullies accept responsibility for their behaviour.

Types of Bullying

Bullying can be:

1. Physical – pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
2. Emotional – being unfriendly, excluding or tormenting e.g. hiding property, gesturing.
3. Racist – racial taunts, graffiti or gestures.
4. Sexual – unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
5. Homophobic - bullying of or focusing on the issue of sexuality.
6. Gender/Sex/Identity – negative comments attributed to gender identity or gender transition.
7. Verbal – name-calling, teasing, sarcasm or spreading a rumour.
8. Identity-based – negative attitudes towards a sub-group and their 'identity', including those with Special Educational Needs or other protected characteristics.
9. Online – all areas of the internet, such as email and social media misuse. Mobile threats by calls or messages. Misuse of technology e.g. use of video/photographic facilities ('sexting').

Responding to Reports of Bullying

The College will take the following steps when dealing with bullying occurring within College:

1. If bullying is suspected or reported it will be dealt with promptly by the member of staff who has been made aware of it. This can be done in person or electronically via the ReportIt@ email account.
2. A clear account of the concern will be taken and given to the Year Managers relevant to the individuals involved and, where applicable, their form tutors. In some cases (reoccurrences) referral may be made to the Progress Leader, Joint Senior Assistant Principal (Behaviour and Personal Development), Head of Upper College (Progress and Intervention) and the Principal.
3. The Year Manager will interview those concerned and take statements where necessary. Records will be kept in accordance with the College's data protection policy.
4. Parents will be informed.
5. Where bullying also occurs outside the College, any other relevant schools/colleges or agencies will be informed (e.g. youth clubs, sports teams) and told of actions taken.

Disciplinary Measures

The College will sanction when this act occurs within the College day or when students can be identified as Collingwood Students; for example, when in uniform or when using College IT systems but outside of College hours. The College will assist parents in the management of the situation when it occurs outside of College hours and not within the College's jurisdiction. The following measures can be taken in accordance with the College's Management of Behaviour Policy.

a) Official warnings
b) Detentions
c) Removal from areas of the College, or from periods of the College day (e.g. lunchtimes)
d) Confiscation of mobile phones (on recommendation of the Police Community Support Officer where distribution of material may affect the safety of an individual)
e) Inclusions
f) Fixed-Term Suspensions
g) Permanent Exclusion

Preventative Measures

The College will actively undertake the following measures to prevent forms of bullying:

- Raise awareness of the nature of bullying through Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) form time discussion, assemblies, subject areas and informal discussions in an attempt to eradicate bullying completely.
- Recognise the vulnerability of particular groups of students - Special Educational Needs (SEN)/Free School Meals (FSM)/Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ+), ethnic or other minority groups and regularly monitor accordingly.
- Closely supervise students who have been the victim of bullying or who are easy to target and monitor regularly.
- Provide activities at break and lunchtime to act as supervised 'safe-havens'.
- Utilise student leaders/prefects to reinforce the College message through their leadership roles and to assist with other strategies, such as peer-mentoring or well-being ambassadors, which provide listening opportunities.
- Be alert to requirements of staff training to deal with incidents or their prejudices, which may give the wrong impressions to students.
- Involve the College Council and all other stakeholders in discussing the Anti-Bullying Policy in response to the need.
- Provide advice and guidance to parents via multiple platforms – e.g. Internet Safety Evenings, use of Edulink, College Newsletters etc.
- Promote an anti-bullying ethos through College-wide engagement in nationally recognised days/weeks/events e.g. Anti-Bullying Week, Mental-Health Awareness Day.
- Promote student led Support Groups – a LGBTQ+ educational and support group run by students under supervision to raise awareness of LGBTQ+ issues as well as a group that represents the different ethnic groups within the College community.
- Promote the Accelerated Learning Centre (ALC), Student Support, ReportIt and the Pastoral Hubs to our most vulnerable students as places/platforms they can share their concerns.

Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation

The Governing Board and the Senior Leadership Team will monitor the pattern and frequency of bullying with reference to records of incidents, sanctions and outcomes. Any action points arising from these monitoring activities will be implemented immediately.

Relationship with other policies

The Anti-Bullying Policy is linked to the Management of Behaviour Policy, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Diversity, Equity and Inclusiveness Policy and Transgender Policy.