

Anti-Bullying Policy

Introduction

All young people have the right to go about their daily lives without the fear of being threatened, assaulted or harassed. No one should underestimate the impact that bullying can have on a person's life. It can cause high levels of distress, affecting young people's well-being, behaviour, academic and social development right through into adulthood.

At Trinity Specialist College, we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere free from oppression and abuse.

Bullying is an anti-social behaviour and affects everyone. All types of bullying are unacceptable at our college and **will not** be tolerated. All students should feel able to tell and when bullying behaviour is brought to our attention, prompt and effective action will be taken.

This means that **anyone** who is aware of any type of bullying that is taking place is expected to tell a member of staff immediately.

What Is Bullying?

"Bullying behaviour abuses an imbalance of power to repeatedly and intentionally cause emotional or physical harm to another person or group of people. Isolated instances of hurtful behaviour, teasing or arguments between individuals would not be seen as bullying" (Torfaen definition 2008)

Bullying generally takes one of four forms:

- Indirect – Being unfriendly, spreading rumours, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding bags or books)
- Physical – Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, slapping or any form of violence
- Verbal – name-calling, teasing, threats, sarcasm
- Cyber – All areas of internet misuse, such as nasty and/or threatening emails, misuse of blogs, gaming websites, internet chat rooms and instant messaging
Mobile threats by text messaging & calls, Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video facilities

Although not an exhaustive list, common examples of bullying include:

Racial bullying

Homophobic bullying

Bullying based on disability, ability, gender, appearance or circumstance

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be bullied.

Everybody has the right to be treated with respect.

Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

Colleges have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Objectives of this Policy

- All teaching and non-teaching staff, students, parents and carers should have an understanding of what bullying is
- All teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the college policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported
- All students and parents/carers should know what the college policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises
- As a college we take bullying seriously. Students and parents/carers should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported
- Bullying will not be tolerated

Implementation

The following steps may be taken when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached
- A clear and precise account of the incident will be recorded and given to the Principal
- The Principal will interview all concerned and will record the incident
- Tutors will be kept informed
- Parents will be kept informed
- Punitive measures will be used as appropriate and in consultation with all parties concerned
- If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted

Students

Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a tutor or a member of staff of their choice
- Reassuring the student
- Offering continuous support
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence

Students who have bullied will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened
- Discovering why the student became involved
- Establishing the wrong doing and the need to change
- Informing parents or carers to help change the attitude and behaviour of the young person
- Continuous staff monitoring to highlight any further wrong doing as it happens

The following disciplinary steps can be taken:

- Official warnings to cease offending
- Exclusion from certain areas of college premises and/or college events
- Minor fixed-term suspension

Within the curriculum the college will raise the awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in tutorial time and subject areas, as appropriate, in an attempt to eradicate such behaviour.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

The college will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the college.

Prevention

We will use some or all of the following to help raise awareness of and prevent bullying as and when appropriate:

- Writing and implementing a set of class rules
- Signing a behaviour contract
- Using Art, Drama or Music to reinforce awareness
- Reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class
- Having regular discussions about bullying and why it matters
- Setting up and sustaining a Student Support Scheme

Signs and Symptoms

Many young people do not speak out when being bullied and may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Parents, carers and staff should all be aware of these possible signs and should investigate if a young person:

- is frightened of walking to or from college
- doesn't want to go on the college minibuss
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to college
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence

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- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- uses excuses to miss college (headache, stomach ache etc)
- begins to suffer academically
- comes home with clothes torn or personal effects damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or " go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- continually 'loses' money
- has unexplained cuts or bruises or shows signs of being in a fight
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other young people or siblings
- changes their eating habits (stops eating or over eats)
- goes to bed earlier than usual
- is unable to sleep
- wets the bed
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives unlikely excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a text message or email is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should always be investigated.