



# Okehampton College

## Anti-Bullying Policy

Document control			
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V1.0	01/03/2011	First published version	
V2.0	17/11/2017	Second version	
V3.0	19/05/2022	Third version – to amend and update our procedures, responsibilities and support contacts	

### Public Sector Equality Duty

This policy is written with due regard for the public sector equality duty that is placed on all schools. Okehampton College will make reasonable adjustments for members of the school community with SEND and protected characteristics and guard against discriminatory practices and victimisation to ensure no-one is treated unfairly.

### Our Pledge

The aim of our anti-bullying policy is to ensure that students learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Everyone has the right to feel safe and to a high-quality education. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable. 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. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively without fear of comeback from other students.

### Why do we need an Anti-Bullying Policy?

Persistent bullying can severely inhibit a student's ability to learn effectively. The negative effects of bullying can have an impact on a person for their entire life severely affecting their mental health.

Okehampton College wishes to promote a secure and happy environment free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying behaviour. Therefore, this policy promotes practices within the school to reinforce our vision, and to remove or discourage practices that negate them.

We actively encourage all our students and their friends to report bullying in schools to any member of staff who they feel they can talk to. Equally we encourage parents to voice concerns with their child's tutor or Head of year as soon as possible. It is important to make the procedure for dealing with bullying so that those who bully, those who are bullied and the parents/carers of both are clear about what will happen.

## 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.

Bullying can take many forms including:

- **Physical** bullying which can include kicking, hitting, pushing and taking away belongings.
- **Verbal** bullying which includes name calling, mocking and making offensive comments either directly or to others within earshot of the individual.
- **Emotional** bullying which includes isolating an individual or spreading rumours about them.
- **Cyber-bullying** where technology, specifically mobile phone technology, is used to hurt an individual – for instance text messaging or posting messages/images on the internet or any form of social media
- **Racist** bullying occurs when bullying is motivated by racial, ethnic or cultural prejudice
- **Sexual Abuse** bullying is where someone makes unwanted physical contact or makes sexually abusive comments.
- **Homophobic and Biphobic** bullying occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay or bisexual people.
- **Transphobic** bullying occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against people who identify as trans
- **Disablist** bullying occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against people with any form of disability.
- **Sexist** bullying occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against someone because of their gender.
- **Peer on Peer abuse** is bullying by an individual or group, intending to physically, sexually or emotionally hurt others.

With the advance in new technologies, Okehampton College is aware there is an increased risk of cyber bullying using e-mails, instant messenger, social networking sites, and public websites inappropriately. Therefore, our school has an ICT user's policy which all students and parents are aware of. This includes the use of firewalls to block social media and malicious and potentially dangerous websites. Online activity can be logged and misuse investigated.

We implement a relational practice to encourage strong professional relationships based around trust. Although everyone is a safeguarder, students are likely to report bullying to tutors, their teachers or the Safeguarding team. This information can then be followed up.

### Some warning signs that a student is being bullied -

- Changes in academic performance
- Appears anxious
- Regularly feeling sick or unwell. Wanting to visit the First Aid regularly
- Reluctance to come to school
- Clothes/bags torn or damaged
- Money/possessions going missing
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Unexplained behaviour changes, e.g. moody, bad-tempered, tearful, poor behaviour
- Unhappiness
- Loss of appetite. Not sleeping. Loss of weight
- Seen alone a lot
- Not very talkative
- Mental health issues (including anxiety, depression and suicide).
- Change of friendship groups

## **Some reasons why people bully -**

- Desire to appear powerful
- Unhappiness
- Feelings of inadequacy
- Difficulties at home
- Learned behaviour (They too have been bullied)

## **How to get help?**

Who students can talk to if they have any concerns about bullying?

- Form tutor
- Head of Year
- Subject teacher
- Pastoral Support Officer
- Any Member of Staff
- Assistant Teacher
- Education Welfare Officer
- Early help Coordinator
- Wellbeing Team
- Pastoral Support Officers (PSO's)
- Designated Safeguarding Lead or Team
- Senior Leadership Team
- Parents
- Kooth
- Young Devon
- [nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk](http://nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk)

Students can feel confident that any of the above will listen to their problem. Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

1. Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a form tutor or member of staff
2. Reassuring the pupil
3. Offering continuous support
4. Restoring self-esteem and confidence
5. Restorative conversations with mediation.

Students who have bullied will be helped by:

1. Discussing what happened
2. Discovering why the student became involved
3. Establishing the wrong doing and need to change
4. Informing parents or guardians to help change the attitude of the pupil

Responses will vary depending on the nature of the incident, but may include:

1. Counselling
2. Help for bullies to address issues & change behaviour
3. Involvement of external agencies
4. Monitoring by Tutor/Head of Year
5. Peer support/peer mentoring

6. Formal recording (racism, BPHI)
7. Use of Relational Support Plan
8. Liaison with parents/carers
9. Internal exclusion
10. Fixed term exclusion
11. Managed moves (through DMAT)
12. Permanent exclusion

### **Anti-Bullying Procedures**

It is made clear that bullying in any form is unacceptable. It will be taken seriously and dealt with promptly.

### **Staff Responsibilities**

- To implement procedures to confront bullying in any form
- To listen to all parties involved in incidents
- To investigate incidents promptly and as fully as possible.
- Evidence gathered thoroughly through written statements or need to talk email. All filed and secured to identification persistent bullying
- To take appropriate action or to refer to Tutor/Head of Year/SLT as appropriate.
- To offer support and strategies for students who are victims of bullying
- To record in the appropriate students' files, on CPOMS and on the BPHI record if appropriate
- To share with parents of the victim and bully, incidents of persistent and/or serious bullying
- To implement appropriate procedures
- To promote the use of a range of learning styles and strategies which challenge bullying behaviour
- To promote open management styles which facilitate communication and consultation within the school and relevant outside agencies when appropriate
- To model our CORE values and our DMAT Cooperative values.
  - To promote our Character habits
- To promote the use of interventions which are least intrusive yet most effective.

### **Anti-bullying Strategies**

- Regular promotion of anti-bullying in assemblies and tutor programmes. Informing students of the need to be kind, work hard, be nice!
- Use of CCTV within the school grounds to help with the prevention of bullying.
- A duty rota for staff so they patrol key areas before school, break, lunchtime and after school
- Annual questionnaires to research student views on how safe they feel in school. You said, we did through student and staff voice.
- Anti-bullying training for the Pastoral and Senior Leaders
- PSHE lessons on anti-bullying. Interweaved into the curriculum, both PSHE and wider curriculum.
- A special e-mail address to report any incidents of bullying – need to talk@okehamptoncollege.devon.sch.uk
- One to one mentoring from trained peers
- Strong teacher-student relationships so students feel comfortable in reporting any issues
- Information talks from the School Police Liaison Officer CEOP training for staff (Child exploitation online protection)
- Information leaflet for students and parents about E-Safety
- Identification of vulnerable students at our feeder primary schools and be proactive about support education around reporting and bullying.
- Parental meeting to support parents around bullying such as early identification, what is bullying the different types and how to report it.

- Provide information on support agencies such as Childline, Kidscape, Beatbullying, Headstart and Kooth.
- Continue to work towards School Mental Health Awards.
- Develop the student voice through Student Council and Anti Bullying ambassadors as part of the review process.
- Encourage all students to treat everyone with respect, adhering to our college core values and character habits.

### **Anti-bullying advice to Parents / Carers – ‘Talk, Listen, Encourage’**

- A great deal of bullying is CYBER-BULLYING. Please regularly monitor your child’s use and be aware of age restrictions of texting, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tik Toc and other social media sites. Access to these is out of the school’s control when your child is not in school and not using our WiFi
- TALK to your child on a regular basis, so any problem is easier to share
- LISTEN to what they say
- ENCOURAGE your child to feel good about themselves, realising that we are all different and equally important
- If you believe your child is being bullied, or is a bully, talk to other adults at home or at school and explore the options. DON’T STAY SILENT
- If your child is a victim assure them that it is not their fault and that you are going to do something to help
- Be realistic in your expectations, sometimes on-going problems can take time to resolve
- TRY to be co-operative with our school and not be aggressive.  
Without a good working relationship between parents and the school the situation could deteriorate, which won’t help you or them
- ALWAYS remember that children can’t solve bullying on their own.  
They NEED the support of parents/carers and our school

### **Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

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