



HARROW INDEPENDENT COLLEGE  
*School of Mathematics, Science & Economics*

## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

### **Introduction**

Every student at Harrow Independent College has the right to enjoy learning, free from intimidation both in college and the surrounding community. The college community will not tolerate bullying behaviour of any kind including unkind actions or remarks, verbal taunting and exclusion from groups, under any circumstances. This ethos will be communicated throughout the college by the attitudes and actions of all members of the college community.

### **Aims of Policy**

- To be aware of the quantity and particular nature of bullying that takes place in the college
- To be aware of areas of the college that pose a threat to students and to take appropriate action to reduce those threats
- To effect all changes to the college environment which may be necessary to negate bullying
- To create a caring community where no student need fear intimidation by promoting an "open,-listening" ethos and encouraging students to support one another by reporting all instances of bullying
- To further the social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of the individual and the community.

### **The Nature of Bullying**

A number of different definitions of bullying exist, but most include reference to it being:

- Deliberately hurtful (including aggression)
- Repeated often over a period of time, and
- Difficult for victims to defend themselves against

Bullying exists in many different forms, but three main types are :

- Physical – hitting, kicking and taking belongings
- Verbal – name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks
- Indirect – spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours, sending malicious emails or text messages on mobile phones

Name-calling is considered to be the most common direct form. This may be the result of individual characteristics, but students can be called nasty names because of their ethnic origin, nationality or colour, sexual orientation, or because of some form of disability.

### **Factors contributing to Bullying**

A number of factors are thought to make bullying more likely. These include :

- Lacking close friends in college
- Being shy
- An over-protective family environment
- Being from a different racial or ethnic group to the majority
- Being different in some obvious respect – such as stammering
- Having Special Educational Needs or a disability
- Behaving inappropriately, intruding or being a “nuisance”
- Possessing expensive accessories such as mobile phones or computer games

### **Bullying by Race, Gender, Sexual Orientation or**

#### **Disability Racist Bullying**

In racist bullying, a child is targeted for representing a group, and attacking the individual sends a message to that group. Racist bullying is therefore likely to hurt not only the victim, but also other students from the same group, and their families.

#### **Sexual Bullying**

Sexual bullying impacts on both genders. Boys are also victims – of girls and other boys. It is characterized by abusive name calling, looks and comments about appearance, attractiveness, emerging puberty, inappropriate and uninvited touching, sexual innuendoes and propositions, pornographic material, graffiti with sexual content and, in its most extreme form, sexual assault or rape.

## **Bullying as a result of having Special Educational Needs or Disabilities**

Students with Special Educational Needs or disabilities may not be able to articulate experiences as well as other students. They are, however, often at greater risk of being bullied, both directly and indirectly, and usually about their specific difficulties or disability.

## **The role of the College's Personal, Social and Health Education Programme**

The College's PSHE programme includes anti-bullying issues both directly and indirectly. The content of the programme covers the nature of bullying behaviour and related areas such as self-assertiveness and responsibility towards others.

A variety of different teaching and learning styles are used in these classes, including group work and role-play to assist students in developing their self-awareness, responsibility towards others and respect for others. The development of these skills is considered as crucial to the anti-bullying ethos of the college and to fostering a strong community atmosphere.

## **Courses of Action in Response to Bullying**

- Anyone can and should report any bullying incident – whether they are a passer-by, a victim or a bully.
- At the beginning of each academic year students will be informed that someone wishing to report an incident of bullying can approach any member of staff with whom they feel comfortable. If the matter is urgent, a student should approach the first adult they see.
- All staff are expected to be willing and ready to deal with any incident that is brought to their attention. If appropriate, a member of staff will handle the situation on their own. If circumstances dictate, a member of the Senior Management Team will be consulted. The latter will take responsibility for deciding who is best equipped to deal with the situation.
- When consulted about a bullying incident the member of staff dealing with the incident will interview separately the victim, the bully and any witnesses in order to establish an accurate account of events. Written reports by those involved will be asked for.
- Sanctions for bullying will remain at the discretion of the Senior Management Team following full briefing on the incident. Such decisions will be made in conjunction with the staff member(s) involved. There will be a uniform but flexible approach to deciding on the sanctions for bullying. All factors will be considered

including the nature of the incident and any previous involvement in similar offensive acts. While all sanctions for bullying will be seriously imposed it may, on occasions, be more appropriate for the perpetrator to attend counselling instead.

## **Curricular Approaches to Bullying**

Teaching staff are encouraged to use the curriculum to:

- Raise awareness about bullying and the Anti-Bullying Policy
- Increase understanding for victims, and help foster an anti-bullying ethos
- Teach students how to constructively manage their relationships with others

The college's PSHE programme has an important role in this regard.

## **Partnership with Parents and Guardians**

If a parent or guardian thinks their child is being bullied they should contact the college immediately. They should, in the first instance, approach the child's personal tutor or the Director of Studies. In the event that neither is available, they should ask to speak with the Principal. Parents and guardians should also encourage their child to talk to a trusted teacher about the bullying incidents. The college's normal course of action can be followed from this point.

## **Staffing**

All staff in the college, including administrative staff, play an important role in communicating the anti-bullying ethos of the college community. Internal staff training is provided to all staff for learning basic counseling techniques and counseling skills so that staff can handle reports of bullying efficiently and sympathetically.

## **Key points to remember about dealing with suspected bullying**

All staff are reminded to:

- Never ignore suspected bullying
- Never make premature assumptions
- Always listen carefully to all accounts – several students saying the same thing does not necessarily mean they are telling the truth.

- a problem-solving approach which moves students on from justifying themselves.

Follow-up repeatedly, checking that bullying has not resumed

### **Suggested Key Resources for Staff**

Bullying – Don't Suffer in Silence – an anti-bullying pack for schools ( DfES)



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