

## **ANTI- BULLYING PROCEDURE**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 All students have a right to be treated with dignity and respect. There is no legal definition of bullying, however, it's usually defined as behaviour that is:

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- often aimed at certain groups, for example because of a protected characteristic, race, religion, gender identification or sexual orientation

It takes many forms and can include:

- physical assault
- teasing
- making threats
- name calling
- cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (for example email, social networks and instant messenger)

1.2 Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, including child-on-child and peer on peer repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or because a student is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between students, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is the College's first priority but it is important to remember that emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical.

1.3 Bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship, which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

## **Cyber-bullying**

- 1.4 The rapid development of and widespread access to technology has provided a new medium for bullying, which can occur in or outside College. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day with a potentially bigger audience and more accessories as people forward on content at a click.
- 1.5 The procedure applies to all students at College, and includes bullying that happens anywhere off the College premises, for example on public transport or in the town centre. This policy focuses on the bullying of students by students.
- 1.6 This procedure links to the 'Student Behaviour Policy and Procedure' and 'Safeguarding Policy'.
- 1.7. This procedure has been revised following a review of the 'Safeguarding Policy' and the subsequent decision of the Safeguarding Committee to have a separate 'Anti-Bullying Policy'.

## **2. THE PROCEDURE**

### **Preventing and responding to bullying**

- 2.1 In order for the College to be successful, this policy is in place to enable staff to respond effectively and deal with bullying and poor behaviour, so that when incidents do occur they are dealt with quickly.

### **Prevention**

- 2.2 The College's approach and response to bullying should not start at the point at which a student has been bullied. Prevention enables a more sophisticated approach where College staff are vigilant, aware of incidents and proactively obtain intelligence about issues between students which might provoke conflict and develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place. This might involve talking to students about issues of difference in tutorial, restorative approaches and guidance sessions and reviews, through dedicated events/projects or through targeted interventions with particular groups or centres. Staff themselves are able to determine what will work best for their students depending on the particular issues they need to address.
- 2.3 The College promotes an ethos of good behaviour where students treat one another and the College staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave. Values of respect for staff and other students, an understanding of the value of education and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others permeate the whole College environment and are reinforced by staff and students who set a good example to the rest. Inappropriate behaviour should always be challenged.

## **Intervention**

2.4 When bullying occurs, disciplinary measures must be put in place to students who bully in order to show clearly that their behaviour is wrong. Disciplinary measures must be applied fairly, consistently and reasonably taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities the students may have and consider the needs of vulnerable students. It is also important to consider the motivations behind bullying behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator. Where this is the case the student engaging in bullying may need support themselves.

2.5 To be successful the College will:

- Involve parents/carers (where appropriate) – to ensure that they are clear that the College does not tolerate bullying and are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that the student is being bullied.
- Involve students — all students understand the College's approach and are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders.
- Regularly evaluate and update our approach to take account of developments in technology for instance updating 'acceptable use' policies for computers.
- Implement disciplinary sanctions in line with the 'Student Disciplinary Procedure'.
- Openly discuss differences between students — e.g. such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexuality during tutorial sessions and in curriculum when appropriate and relevant.
- Adopt a restorative approach to dealing with low level conflict to support understanding of others and repairing relationships between students.
- Use specific organisations or resources for help with particular issues.
- Provide effective staff training, that adopts a connect before you correct approach to engaging with students and managing student behaviour.
- Work with the wider community such as the police where bullying is particularly serious or persistent and where a criminal offence may have been committed.
- Make it easy for students to report bullying so that they are assured that they will be listened to and incidents acted on.
- Create an inclusive environment where students can openly discuss the cause of their bullying, without fear of further bullying or discrimination.
- Celebrate success to promote a positive culture and College community.

## **What to do if a student discloses abuse or bullying**

2.6 It takes a lot of courage for a young person to disclose that they are being abused, this includes bullying.

2.7 If a student talks to a member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing the staff member will need to let the student know that they must pass the information on — staff are not allowed to agree to keep secrets. The point at which they tell the student this is a matter for professional judgement. If they

jump in immediately the student may think that they do not want to listen. If left until the very end of the conversation the student may feel that they have been misled into revealing more than they would have otherwise.

- 2.8 The entire process from complaint to conclusion should be recorded appropriately on ProMonitor and should be recorded under the 'Safeguarding Issues' tab, 'Safeguarding Initial Alert', 'Confidentiality Level 1' and 'All Staff'.
- 2.9 The Safeguarding Team will make a decision if they need to be involved following conversations with all parties involved and signpost to support services if required along with offering their support. This will be recorded on CPOMS by a member of the safeguarding team.
- 2.10 Once next steps have been agreed between the staff member and the Safeguarding Team, the 'Behaviour Policy and Procedure' should be followed if necessary for dealing with the consequences.
- 2.11 The 'Behaviour Policy and Procedure' should be followed when dealing with any accusations of bullying and the severity is determined as minor, serious or gross misconduct.
- 2.12 See the flow chart in 'Appendix A' for dealing with behaviour and the process for discipline and recording on ProMonitor.

### **3. MONITORING AND REVIEWING**

- 3.1 Quarterly monitoring will be undertaken by the Director: Student Support and Experience (College Designated Safeguarding Lead) and reported to the Safeguarding Committee and Corporation Board.
- 3.2 The Anti-Bullying Procedure will be subject to an annual review.

### **4. RELATED POLICIES/PROCEDURES/CODES AND GUIDANCE**

- 4.1
  - Safeguarding Policy
  - Student Behaviour Policy and Procedure

### **5. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1 Blackburn College is committed to the promotion of equality, diversity and providing a supportive environment for all members of our community. Our commitment means that this policy has been reviewed to ensure that it does not discriminate (either intentionally or unintentionally) any of the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender (including gender identity), race, religion or sexual orientation and meets our obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

Therefore, this policy has no adverse impact on any of the above protected groups.

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| <b>Author:</b>             | <i>Rachel Birleson, Head of Student Experience</i>                 |
| <b>Owner:</b>              | <i>Matthew Robinson Director of Student Support and Experience</i> |
| <b>Date last approved:</b> | <i>October 2023</i>  |
| <b>Date of review:</b>     | <i>August 2024</i>   |
| <b>Consulted with:</b>     |  |
| <b>Consultation date/s</b> |  |
| <b>Date of approval:</b>   | <i>3 October 2024</i>  |
| <b>Approved by:</b>        | <i>Policies and Procedures Committee</i>                           |
| <b>Next Review date:</b>   | <i>October 2025</i>  |

# Appendix A

## Student behaviour ProMonitor Recording Process

To link with the Student Disciplinary and Behaviour Process



### Cause for Concern (Stage 1)

Any member of staff can raise a concern regarding a student. To do this they must:

- Discuss their concerns with the student and explain why their behaviour is unacceptable
- Provide the Personal Tutor with a record of the discussion on ProMonitor



### Verbal Warning (Stage 2)

Any member of staff can issue a formal verbal warning to a student. Immediately following the warning, the member of staff must inform the Personal Tutor of the issue so that it can be discussed during progress review meetings.

The verbal warning must be recorded on ProMonitor by selecting comment type disciplinary procedure and start comment with \*\*\*\* VERBAL WARNING ISSUED \*\*\*\*

If behaviour fails to improve then the student should be made subject to Stage 3 of the procedure.



### Written Warning (Stage 3)

Stage 3 will be commenced following an alleged single serious incident **or** failing to comply with the decision/s of previous warning/s issued at Stage 2.

A formal meeting will take place within 5 working days of the reported incident or unacceptable behaviour. The meeting will be chaired by the Head of School/Curriculum Manager and attended by the student and their Personal Tutor.

Parents/carers may be invited to attend the meeting, if appropriate. Students may request Student Union representation. Where appropriate, parents/carers will receive a written outcome of the meeting.

Following the meeting a written warning will be issued by the Head of School/Curriculum Manager and noted on the student's record.

A Behaviour Improvement Contract may be issued, stipulating conditions for conduct and behaviour and signed by the student. It must be made clear to all students undergoing this stage of the process that continued poor behaviour could result in their permanent exclusion from College.



### **Formal Investigation (Stage 4)**

Following continuing or persistent poor behaviour or alleged gross misconduct, a thorough disciplinary investigation will be conducted by a member of the Student Support and Experience Management Team.