



## **Principles - Aims and Objectives:**

The aim of the anti-bullying policy is to ensure that students learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will students be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available at the College. Bullying is defined as deliberately harmful or hurtful behaviour, often but not always repeated over a period of time.

Bullying includes but is not restricted to: name-calling; taunting; mocking; making offensive comments; kicking; hitting; pushing; taking belongings; inappropriate text messaging and emailing; sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet; producing offensive graffiti; gossiping; excluding people from groups; and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours'.

Bullying may occur in person, through others, or makes use of texts, emails, messaging, social media and other forms of information technology.

As part of our Behaviour Policy our College believes that all children and adults have the right to live in a supportive, caring environment in which students feel safe and free from bullying and harassment. Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour. It is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups. For example, this may include cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying on the grounds of race, culture, sex, sexual orientation, homophobia, gender reassignment, special educational needs or disability (as defined in the Equality Act 2010), the use of discriminatory language, religion and belief, or because a child is adopted or is a carer.

Bullying in any form will not be tolerated and cannot be excused as banter or part of growing up. We treat all our students and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff and the College. We aim to create an environment that is happy and encourages good behaviour and respect for teachers, peers and everyone around the students.

## **Bullying – Child Protection Related Issues**

A bullying incident is treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

In such cases the College reports its concerns to the Coventry Safeguarding Children's Board by telephone on 02476294704 during office hours or the out of hours Duty Team (evenings and weekends) on 02476832222. Any kind of bullying is unacceptable. However, external support can be given to students whether or not it is deemed a child protection concern.

## **Definition of Bullying:**

Bullying can be defined as 'behaviour by an individual or group, which may be repeated over time but may occur on a single occasion which intentionally hurts or threatens to harm another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or

gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is our College's first priority, but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; the College will make judgements about each specific case. Bullying also 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.

Low-level disruption and the use of offensive language can in itself have a significant impact on its target. If left unchallenged or dismissed as banter or horseplay it can also lead to reluctance to report other behaviour. The National Mathematics and Science College ensures early intervention to help set clear expectations of the behaviour that is and isn't acceptable and help stop negative behaviours escalating. *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (2016) defines bullying as a form of abuse or 'peer-on-peer abuse': further information is provided in the Safeguarding Policy.

#### **Bullying can be:**

- *Emotional (indirect bullying) including isolation of others by a refusal to co-operate with them and exclusion* - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures), deliberately excluding from social groups or an activity by refusal to sit next to/ talk to/ work/ co-operate with others and refusal to follow staff instructions to do the above, or malicious rumours, e-mails or text messages, and also exclusion from play/discussions etc. with those whom they believe to be their friends.
- *Physical harm or its threat including the abuse of personal property* – jostling, serious fighting, pushing, kicking, hitting, taking or hiding belongings, punching or any use of violence; deliberately destroying or damaging work or possessions or removing personal property, use of weapons/threatening use of weapon (or any object which could be used as a weapon), intimidation through physical gestures and actions.
- *Cyber* – not occurring face to face but rather through electronic means including, but not limited to, social networking sites, internet and intranet sites, email, instant messaging, by mobile phone including through text messages and phone calls, photographs both real and manipulated and so on.
- *Racist* - Bullying directed at individuals of a certain race, culture, ethnicity, language, faith, community, national origin or national status. The distinctive feature of racist bullying is that the victim is attacked not as an individual but as the representative of a family, community or group. This is an area where Colleges are required to keep statistics about incidents.
- *Cultural* – focusing on and/or playing off perceived cultural differences or similar.
- *Sexist* – covers a wide range of behaviour from name calling to physical sexual assault. It is the use of sexual language or negative stereotyping on the basis of gender.
- *Sexual* – is inappropriate physical contact or sexual innuendo, which may include 'upskirting' or threats of upskirting.

- *Homophobic and LGBTQ+* – this is bullying which is directed towards people who are openly gay, bisexual, transexual or transgender, non-binary, etc., or who may be perceived as belonging to this category. Heterosexual young people subject to homophobic bullying are less reluctant to report it as this may enforce the stereotypical way that they are already viewed by others so sensitivity and positive support is required for victims.
- *Religious* – Attacking faith, belief, religious practice or custom.
- *Special Educational Needs and Disability* – remarking upon, drawing attention to, or discriminating against persons with physical disabilities or learning difficulties or other identified special educational needs such as emotional and behavioural disabilities (EBD) and Specific Learning Difficulties (SLD) – (Dyslexia, Dyscalculia and Dyspraxia, noting that those with SEND may be especially vulnerable.
- *Oral* – name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, making snide comments, teasing, humiliating others, threatening others, inciting others to humiliate and threaten others and
- *Written* – spreading rumours, writing, printing unkind or malicious on paper or in any other form.
- *Social* – excluding someone from social groups or requiring initiation into societies, clubs or groups.

Bullying can take place between student and student, staff and staff, and staff and student. We consider the pastoral care of the students and staff to be of prime importance.

In class, this role largely rests with the class teacher. It is College policy that any misdemeanour will be dealt with by the member of staff present when it occurs, whether in the common areas, classroom, boarding or any part of the College.

A common code of behaviour is expected from everyone at The National Science and Mathematics College (please refer to our Behaviour Policy).

All staff and volunteers at The National Science and Mathematics College are expected to treat each other with a professional level of respect.

### **Signs of Bullying**

The term 'bullying' is commonly associated with acts of violence, but non-physical bullying is experienced by most students at some period during their College career. All staff must be alert to the signs of bullying. These may include:

- unwillingness to return to College;
- displays of excessive anxiety, lacking concentration, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet;
- failure to produce work, or producing unusually bad work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others;
- books, bags and other belongings suddenly go missing, or are damaged;
- a change in established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary)
- psychological damage and diminished levels of self-confidence;
- feigning illness, with frequent visits to reception with symptoms such as stomach pains, headaches and so on;
- unexplained cuts and bruises;

- frequent absences, erratic attendance and late arrivals to class;
- nervousness and jumpy when an electronic-message is received;
- asking for extra pocket money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- choosing the company of adults
- displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact, difficulty in sleeping, experiences nightmares;
- verbal taunts;
- students sitting on their own and students left out of activity groups during lessons or play activities and
- talking of suicide, self-harm, or running away.

Although there may be other causes for some of the above symptoms, a repetition of, or a combination of these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents and teachers. Students who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting from College. Students must be encouraged to report bullying in Colleges. All College staff must be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with college policy.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

### **At our college 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 account of the incident will be recorded and given to the Assistant Principal (Pastoral) of College.
- The Assistant Principal (Pastoral) will record the incident and if appropriate interview all concerned.
- Teachers will be kept informed.
- Parents will be kept informed.
- Punitive measures will be used as appropriate and in consultation with all parties concerned.

### **Students who have been bullied will be supported by:**

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff of their choice
- Reassuring the student
- Offering continuous support
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence.
- Discussing what happened
- Discovering why the student became involved
- Establishing the wrong-doing and need to change
- Informing parents or guardians to help change the attitude of the student

### **The following disciplinary steps may be taken:**

- Official warnings to cease offending

- Loss of free time
- Reflection sheet
- Exclusion from certain areas of college premises
- Minor fixed-term exclusion
- Major fixed-term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion

In the event of bullying taking place among the staff, the Principal should be informed and appropriate decisions made with possible reference to the relevant College Employment Policies and Procedures. Accusations of bullying of a student(s) by members of staff will be investigated thoroughly. Each student is treated fairly and with respect. Members of staff to whom disclosures are made should initiate the following procedures themselves and/or consult with the relevant staff as appropriate. All disclosures, whether from a student, a parent, a member of staff or a volunteer should be taken seriously and treated with sensitivity. The victim(s) should be made aware that their safety is considered to be of paramount importance.

#### **Good Practice for Staff:**

- Be continually aware, watchful and available promoting good behaviour and encourage the care of others.
- Ensure students are appropriately supervised.
- Report all cases of bullying to the Head and if deemed necessary, to external agencies such as police/children's social care.
- Parents' involvement and cooperation may be sought and parents of students involved will be kept informed.
- Be aware that in your conduct to other members of staff and adults within the College community you act as a role model for students.

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

#### **Behaviour Management Policy**

National Mathematics and Science College's Anti-bullying Policy is dovetailed with the Behaviour Management Policy (with support for the victim and the bully) and makes it clear what the sanctions are for bullying. At The National Science and Mathematics College we implement disciplinary sanctions that reflect the seriousness of an incident and convey a deterrent effect. If necessary, strong sanctions, such as exclusion, would be used in cases of severe and persistent bullying.

It is incumbent on The National Science and Mathematics College to have clear policies that are communicated to parents, students and staff, along with creating an environment of good behaviour and respect, with helpful examples set by staff and older students. Integral to our policy is involving parents and making sure students are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders. Handling of a bullying incident is given much thought to ensure that the facts are fully known, agreed and understood by the bully/ies and the victim(s).

Bullying instances are reported and recorded so that patterns can be identified. Records are also kept to evaluate the effectiveness of the approach The National Science and Mathematics College has adopted. As always, our management of personal data is in line with statutory requirements.

## **E-safety: Cyber-Bullying Preventative Measures Please refer to the E-safety policy**

In accordance with legislative requirements we have a whole College approach to e-safety including online radicalisation. This includes annual update training for staff regarding e-safety. The College also organises annually an awareness session for parents with regards to e-safety. We expect all students to adhere to the safe use of the internet as detailed in our ICT-Based Forms of Abuse (including Cyber-Bullying) Policy. The active management of hardware, software and connectivity and vigilance of teachers and parents has an active part to play in the protection of students from Cyber-Bullying incidents.

Students will have access to technologies that have both positive and negative potential. Our policy of the use of technology within the College setting and beyond is understood and respected by staff and it is important the students and the wider College community also respect this policy. Within our e-safety policy, we have clearly defined roles and responsibilities for online safety as part of the College's wider safeguarding strategy and how this links with the College's Safeguarding Policy.

There is clear guidance on the use of technology in the classroom and beyond for all users within the College's e-safety policy (please refer to e-safety policy including ICT acceptable use policy). The College's e-safety policy also delineates detail into the College's technical provision and infrastructure, including the safeguards in place to filter and monitor inappropriate content and alert the College to safeguarding issues (please refer to e-safety policy).

Our staff receive training into the professional development of safeguarding techniques that include online safety (please refer to e-safety and safeguarding policies).

The Education Act 2011 amended the power in the Education Act 1996 to provide that when an electronic device, such as a mobile phone, has been seized by a member of staff who has been formally authorised by the Principal, that staff member can examine data or files, and delete these, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all Colleges and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone.

If an electronic device that is prohibited by the College rules has been seized and the member of staff has reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, they must give the device to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable.

Material on the device that is suspected to be evidence relevant to an offence, or that is a pornographic image of a child or an extreme pornographic image, should not be deleted prior to giving the device to the police.<sup>1</sup> If a staff member finds material that they do not suspect contains evidence in relation to an offence, they can decide whether it is appropriate to delete or retain the material as evidence of a breach of College discipline.

**Involvement of Parents (including clear policies communicated to parents):** We have clear policies communicated to parents, students and staff to create a helpful environment of integrity and respect. This will be achieved through staff members communicating with parents regularly and setting a good example for the students. The College will involve parents to ensure they are clear the College does not tolerate bullying and are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being bullied. We want parents to feel confident that the College will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issue in a way that protects the child, and they reinforce the value of good behaviour at home.

Parents have a responsibility to:

- Support the College's anti-bullying policy, actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the College;
- Contact their child's class teacher immediately if they are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying;
- Contact the Principal if they are not satisfied that their concerns have not been dealt with appropriately. Parents will be asked to come to a meeting to discuss the problem;
- Allow the College to resolve the problem with the bully/ies and their parents;
- Encourage their child to behave responsibly and punctually on entering and leaving the College site. The College strongly urges parents not to incite their child to defend themselves through the use of inappropriate language or behaviour;
- Be aware that bullies have often been victims themselves;
- In the case of cyber bullying, e.g messages on social media, emails & texts, students should be encouraged to keep a record of the date and time of any offensive message(s), save it and bring it to the Assistant Principal (Pastoral).

### **Staff Training**

We raise awareness of staff through training, so that the principles of the anti-bullying policy are understood, legal responsibilities are known, action is defined to resolve and prevent problems and sources of support are available. Where appropriate we can invest in specialised skills to understand the needs of the students, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, non-binary and other LGBTQ+ students.

### **Classroom Management**

Teachers' classroom management will link strongly to the College Behaviour Policy. This includes a positive ethos with emphasis on the dignity of each student, on praise and reward, rather than punishment. The skills of self-discipline must be learnt early in life. All students will know that their teacher is the person to whom they can talk in confidence. Students will be given the opportunity in class to discuss bullying and how to deal with it. Students will be encouraged to discuss how they get on with others and how to form positive attitudes towards them. This includes a review of what friendship really is and how to treat everyone with dignity and respect. Teachers will be aware that they can radically affect the incidence of bullying and that it must always be taken seriously.

### **Bullying which occurs outside College premises**

Staff at The National Mathematics and Science College have the power to discipline students for misbehaving outside the College premises. Sections 90 and 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 direct that a College's disciplinary powers can be used to address students' conduct when they are not on College premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of College staff, but only if it would be reasonable for the College to regulate students' behaviour in those circumstances. This may include bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the College premises, such as on College or public transport, outside local shops, or in a city centre.

Where bullying outside College is reported to College staff, it should be investigated and acted on. The Principal should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator in their local authority of the action taken against a student.

If the misconduct could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed. While College staff members have the power to discipline students for bullying that occurs outside College, they will only impose the disciplinary sanction and implement that sanction on the College premises or when the student is under the lawful control of College staff, for instance on a College trip.

### **Vulnerable students**

Bullying can happen to all children and young people and it can affect their social, mental and emotional health. College staff will support all students who are bullied.

This means being alert to the effect any form of bullying can have and being especially alert to where it may have a severe impact. Evidence suggests students that are badly bullied in College are more likely to be bullied out of College, for instance either on their way to or from College or through cyberbullying.

Some students are more likely to be the target of bullying because of the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves. For example, those with special educational needs or disabilities, those who are adopted, those who are suffering from a health problem or those with caring responsibilities may be more likely to experience bullying because of difference.

Children in care that are frequently on the move may also be vulnerable because they are always the newcomer. These young people are often the same young people who might need greater support to deal with the impact of bullying, for example those who are going through a personal or family crisis. In addition, children with special educational needs or disabilities can often lack the social or communication skills to report such incidents and our staff are alert to the potential bullying this group faces and that their mechanisms for reporting are accessible to all.

There will also be a range of other local or individual factors that result in some children being more vulnerable to bullying and its impact than others. Being aware of this helps us to develop strategies to prevent bullying from happening. It will also help the College be alert to those children who may be severely affected when it does occur. The impact of bullying can be severe because of the nature and extent of the bullying or because it is combined with other factors such as those mentioned above that also affect the social, mental and emotional health of the student.

### **External Agencies and the Wider Community**

The College works with the wider community such as the police and children's services to agree a clearly understood approach to cases where bullying is particularly serious or persistent and where a criminal offence may have been committed. We also work with other agencies and the wider community to tackle bullying that is happening outside College.

### **Legal Status**

- Complies with The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations currently in force
- Prepared with reference to: [Preventing and Tackling Bullying \(July 2017\)](#), [Cyberbullying: Advice for Principals and school staff \(DfE- November 2014\)](#), [Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying \(DfE- November 2014\)](#) and [School support for children and young people who are bullied \(DfE- March 2014\)](#), [Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- Has regard to the [Equality Act 2010](#) and the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#)

## **Related documents**

- Anti-Bullying: Parents and Students Information Sheets, Anti-Bullying Code, The School Rules;
- e-Safety Policy including ICT-Based Forms of Abuse (including Cyber-Bullying) Policy and ICT Acceptable Use;
- Personal, Social, Health, Economic (PSHEE) and Citizenship;
- Positive Behaviour Management Policy (including Sanctions, Rewards, and Exclusions);
- Safeguarding Policy And Procedures including Child Protection;
- Single Equalities Policy;
- Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural Education (SMSC)

**Bullying in any form will not be tolerated.**

**We treat all our students and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff and the College.**

**Any kind of bullying is unacceptable.**

**Students should report instances of bullying or suspected bullying and we shall always listen to them.**

*Assistant Principal (Pastoral)*

*Date Reviewed: January 2021*

*Date of Next Review: September 2022*