



# **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

**Version History:**  
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# ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

## I. Purpose and rationale

At Wyvern College, we are committed to providing a supportive, caring, friendly and safe environment for all our students to promote the value of individuality, to respect diversity, to show tolerance and empathy towards others and to promote equality of opportunity for all.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that:

- All stakeholders (parents, students, staff, Trustees) share an agreed understanding of what bullying is and that **bullying of any kind is unacceptable**;
- All stakeholders are clear what the college policy is and how we deal with bullying;
- All stakeholders are clear how bullying incidents should be reported;
- Students and parents are assured they will be listened to and supported in the event of reporting bullying.

## II. Principles and content

This policy has been written in consultation with trustees, staff, parents and students.

This policy is available on the college website and information on the college's approach to bullying is published in the college logbook. Reference to the policy is made during assemblies on a termly basis, during the taught tutor time curriculum and during assemblies in Anti-Bullying Week in November. Trustees will ensure this policy is reviewed every three years or sooner if the situation changes and bullying is considered to be a critical issue for the college. Refresher training for staff on bullying is incorporated into annual safeguarding training.

## III. Types of negative behaviours

At Wyvern College, we teach our students to recognise the difference between bullying behaviour and other types of negative behaviours, including meanness, unkindness and conflict. Pastoral teams use questions based on the following principles to identify whether a negative behaviour is meanness, unkindness, conflict or bullying:

|                   |                          |                            |  |
|-------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| <b>BULLYING</b>   | Several times on purpose | One person hurts another   | Planned and deliberate                     |
| <b>MEANNESS</b>   | Once on purpose          | One person hurts another   | Planned and deliberate                     |
| <b>UNKINDNESS</b> | Once not on purpose      | One person hurts another   | Unplanned- said in the moment; thoughtless |
| <b>CONFLICT</b>   | Once or more             | Two people hurt each other | Planned or unplanned                       |

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The college is committed to dealing with all four of these behaviours. Pastoral teams have guidance on how to respond (sanctions, education and support etc) to different negative behaviours, but also flexibility and professional autonomy to use their judgement and experience in deciding how best to respond to incidents based on the specific context.

Staff will log and sanction any individual incidents of meanness and unkindness they hear or see. Every three weeks, the senior leadership team (SLT) will review all logged cases to identify which students have had more than one incident of being mean and to therefore determine when this has become bullying. They will then decide the level of consequences for that student, in line with the consequences pathway below.

## IV. Our definition of bullying

For the purposes of this policy, Wyvern College uses the Diana Award definition of bullying:

**“Repeated negative behaviour that is intended to make others feel upset, uncomfortable or unsafe.”**

The Diana Award defines bullying in three ways:

1. Verbal - the repeated negative use of speech, sign language, or verbal gestures to intentionally hurt others. This may include hurtful words, offensive language, swearing and discriminatory language.
2. Indirect - the repeated negative use of actions, which are neither physical nor verbal, to intentionally hurt others. This may include isolating someone, rumours, sharing someone's secrets, cyber-bullying, damaging and/or taking someone's property and physical intimidation
3. Physical - the repeated negative use of body contact to intentionally hurt others. This may include kicking, punching, pinching, spitting and slapping.

## V. Sexual harassment

Wyvern College is committed to the principle of inclusion, and we want everyone to feel included, respected and safe in our college.

In 2021 Ofsted's "Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges" identified a nationwide prevalent issue of sexual harassment and sexual peer-on-peer abuse happening to children both within and outside of school, particularly online. The report recommendations encouraged that "even where school and college leaders do not have specific information that indicates sexual harassment and online sexual abuse are problems for their children and young people, they should act on the assumption that they are".

The college has a culture whereby harmful sexual behaviours such as sexual harassment, (including sexualised language) online sexual abuse and sexual violence (including sexualised language) are unacceptable and are not tolerated.

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Unacceptable, harmful sexual/sexist behaviours include:

- Sexist comments (including name-calling) are those which discriminate based on sex.
- Sexism also includes behaviour or attitudes that create stereotypes of social roles based on sex.
- Sexual harassment means unwanted conduct of a sexual nature – such as sexual comments, sexual jokes or taunting, comments about sexual identity and sexuality, physical behaviour like interfering with clothes, or online harassment such as sexting and the sending of unwanted sexual images.

Wyvern College will maintain a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment, abuse and violence and we will investigate thoroughly and use escalating and/or our strongest sanctions up to and including permanent expulsion to deal with issues which are reported to us.

## VI. Protected Characteristics

Wyvern College recognises that students with protected characteristics are more likely to experience one of the four negative behaviours: bullying, meanness, unkindness and conflict. The college also recognises that sometimes other students might make an individual or series of comments which are deliberately discriminatory (meanness and bullying respectively) but that they might make comments which are discriminatory without the intent to be discriminatory (unkindness). The college is committed to preventing and tackling all of the four negative behaviours.

Wyvern College has adapted the Protected Characteristics in the Equality Act of 2010 to make them age-and-context dependent for a secondary school environment. Our anti-bullying policy formally recognises the following protected characteristics:

1. Religion and /or belief.
2. Sexual orientation
3. SEND and disability
4. Gender and sex
5. Race.

Reflecting British law, the college sanctions for discrimination begin at a higher level and escalate more quickly than those for non-discriminatory behaviours. Similarly, the college recognises that the need to educate those whose behaviours are discriminatory, either intentionally or unintentionally is greater than the need to educate those for non-discriminatory behaviour. The college consulted with the parental steering group on racial equality on how they would like the college to manage incidents involving protected characteristics and with their help, the college has developed the process included as Appendix 1 in this policy.

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## VII. Prevention of bullying

As a college we aim to prevent bullying using proactive strategies. These include the use of assemblies (including Anti-Bullying Week in November), student voice questionnaires, the role of the tutor and pastoral system, Religious & Personal Studies (RPS) lessons, the 'Behaviour and Attitudes' Tutor Time Curriculum, Prefects and the Anti-Bullying Ambassadors. In addition, we produce and monitor weekly reports of all bullying-type behaviours incidents and review these regularly both with pastoral and learning support teams and the SLT.

An Anti-Bullying Ambassador is someone who has been trained by The Diana Award Anti-Bullying Campaign. Their role is to help educate their peers on bullying, report incidents if they witness bullying, lead on anti-bullying campaigns, promote a culture which celebrates and tolerates difference and help keep their peers safe both online and offline.

Anti-bullying posters are displayed prominently around the college site and cover how to identify bullying, how to report it, what happens if you do report it and why it is important to report it.

In addition, the tutor time curriculum teaches students how to identify, report and prevent bullying. It helps students develop a strong understanding of the following: what bullying is and the devastating effects it can have on the victims; the ways in which good friends differ from toxic friends; how cliques, banter and peer pressure can lead to bullying within friendship groups; the reasons why bullies bully; how students can respond appropriately to it and report it safely without fear of reprisal; how by becoming upstanders rather than bystanders, and how students take away bullies' power and opportunity to bully.

The college's enforcement of the uniform rules are designed to protect students from the peer pressure, bullying and feeling of inadequacy that can arise when a minority of students set fashion trends and to protect them from visible displays of wealth which can highlight their own personal circumstances of disadvantage or deprivation.

## VIII. Reporting bullying

Students are encouraged to report all incidents of bullying, not just as victims, but as upstanders who have seen it or heard about it. However, we also understand why they might be cautious about doing this: bullies usually choose to pick on people who they believe won't speak out. Students are taught how they can report bullying, including:

- through a parent or friend,
- in person,
- via an Anti-Bullying Ambassador,
- by the buttons in Edulink or on the school website
- by email ([bullying@wyvern.hants.sch.uk](mailto:bullying@wyvern.hants.sch.uk)).

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The college provides students with a range of different reporting methods so they can choose the one that they are most comfortable with. If reporting in person, students are encouraged to talk to the member of staff who they feel most comfortable talking to, who will then refer this to the relevant Pastoral Team, or where appropriate, the Safeguarding Team. Teachers won't let the bully know who has reported the bullying and will make clear it could be a witness rather than the victim who has reported it. Through the Tutor Time Curriculum, students are taught that if they believe the bullying has not been taken seriously by the member of staff they reported it to, they should report it directly to the Headteacher.

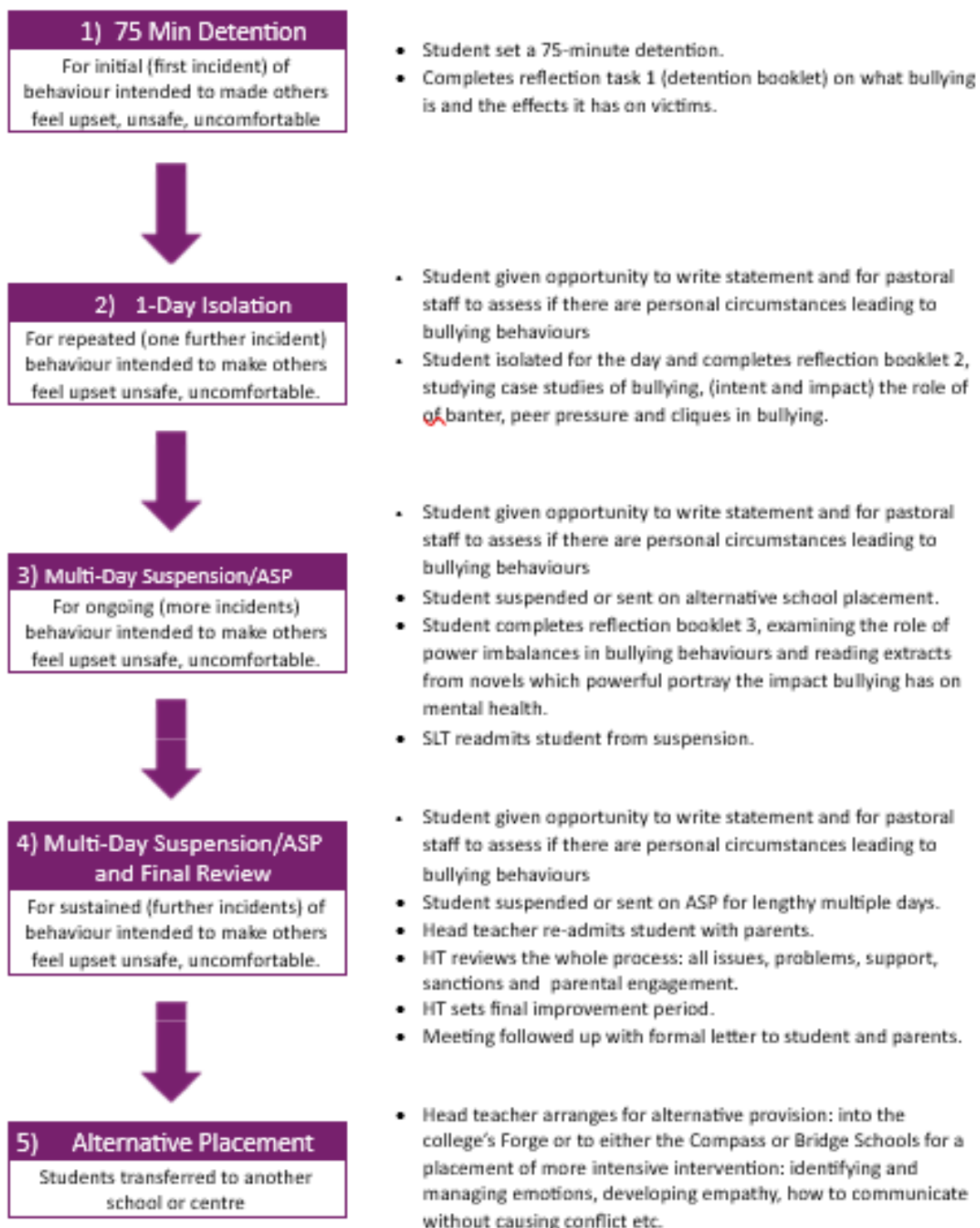
## **IX. Response to bullying**

To get bullying to stop as quickly as possible it is important that the school, the student and the parents/carers all work together with a common strategy, actions and messages. The following explains the expectations of the school, the student and parents/carers.

### **1. School response to bullying incidents**

Wyvern's response to bullying is multi-faceted and combines the following key elements: sanctions to deter bullies and to reassure victims that justice has been done; reflection work to help those who have bullied to change their behaviours by understanding the impact of their words or actions, as well as by identifying the reasons why they are bullying; partnership work with parents. The bullying consequences pathway, shown by the diagram below, shows how these build up if a student's bullying behaviour continues:

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## Out of college incidents and advice on social media use in bullying-related incidents

All social media apps have minimum age limits. In general, these are typically 13+ except for WhatsApp which is 16+. The minimum age limits are set for multiple reasons, including the following stated by the 'Family Online Safety Institute':

1. They correspond with the stage of children's cognitive development where they can engage in abstract thinking which is a prerequisite for ethical thinking. Before this age it is difficult for a child to fully grasp the impact of their actions upon others, online or otherwise
2. It helps protect children's personal information. GDPR legislation requires that consent from a parent or legal guardian must be provided before a company collects personal data for children under 13. If a child uses a social media app whilst being under the minimum age limit the data protection laws cannot protect their personal information from being collected and shared with third parties. Bypassing these protective laws can give marketers access to the names and addresses of your children, and in many cases, it allows them to observe how/where they play, what they say, and who they hang out with

Wyvern expects parents/carers to follow the minimum age limit for social media relating to their child's online use as it supports children's healthy development and ensures that the laws that are there to protect them can do so.

It is not possible for college staff to monitor and regulate the online activity that takes place on the social media accounts of all Wyvern students throughout the year; it is not reasonable for parents to expect staff to do so. It is therefore important for the college to clarify its responsibilities for negative behaviours that take place online.

The college will fully investigate and sanction in line with the consequences pathway instances of online meanness, unkindness, bullying or conflict which take place during the college day or on the college site. To prevent these from happening, the college has restricted student use of all electronic devices on site. Students are expected to have their devices switched off and placed in their bags from the moment they set foot on the college site to until the end of the college day when the final bell rings at 2.55pm, except where they have staff permission and supervision to use them.

The college would like out-of-school incidents related to bullying to be reported to us. It is important that we have as full a picture of the issues as possible. This will allow us to risk assess the likelihood of the incident continuing into college and we will make decisions to pre-empt and prevent this if reasonably possible to do so.

There are times when we can issue sanctions for out-of-school issues and times when we cannot. Typically, if students are in school uniform and the incident is on the way to or from school then we can often issue sanctions if we have sufficient evidence.

Where online or offline bullying, meanness, unkindness or conflict are an extension or continuation of incidents that have taken place in college, or where they involve the threat of

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being brought into college, the college will acknowledge and respond to these with a focus on risk assessing to keep students safe or to take necessary safeguarding actions if we have safeguarding concerns. Actions taken could include, but are not limited to, measures to separate the students in school and/or discussions with students to de-escalate the issues and if possible, prevent them from happening again.

The college will not investigate or sanction instances of online meanness, unkindness, bullying or conflict which are unrelated to events in college. Where unpleasant behaviour does not constitute a crime, parents should report the incident to the social media provider and block accounts that have made their child feel upset, uncomfortable or unsafe and they should remove apps that are making their child feel like this. Parents are reminded that if online posts amount to malicious communication, harassment, abuse, hate crime or sexual harassment (including the sharing of naked images) then they need to report these to the police, as well as the social media provider. The same is true for online behaviour where adults are grooming, exploiting or radicalising children. College staff will get involved in incidents where safeguarding issues such as these are present and parents should report them to us. However, this will not be to investigate and sanction those responsible – that it is the responsibility of the police and the social media provider. Instead, college involvement will be to provide safeguarding guidance, pastoral support and appropriate re-education work to either students, whether they are the target or the perpetrator.

## **Separation strategy- behaviour contracts**

Behaviour contracts are a strategy which is used in some bullying or conflict-related incidents if it is appropriate to separate the students involved. Behaviour contracts are a separation strategy used to get bullying to stop; they are not a punishment or sanction. The intention is to provide an environment in which all involved students remain separated during out-of-lesson times during the school day. The behaviour contracts are based on a strategy of separation and thus provide 'zones' which students are expected to adhere to in order to maintain their separation.

Zoning is an effective strategy as it not only provides a safe environment for both students, but a clear framework of accountability too. They make monitoring of any breaches of the behaviour contract straightforward as any student deliberately entering another's zone shows clear intent to breach the contract and thus sanctions can be issued faster.

Behaviour contracts and zones are not sanctions; college implementation of these is not a judgement about students' culpability in the events that led up to their need. Equitable contracts are used as it is not possible to achieve the aims of the behaviour contract by zoning one student and not the other. In the case of bullying, the target needs to adhere to their zone to be provided with a safe environment away from the perpetrator and the perpetrator needs to adhere to their zone in order for the bullying of the target to stop.

## **Separation strategy- seating plan changes and class changes**

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A common first step taken regarding separating students in lesson time is to make teachers aware of issues and to ask them to separate the students on their seating plan and then to monitor for any further issues.

Another separation strategy used is class changes to separate students involved in conflict or bullying incidents. Timetable changes are made, where possible, to ensure that the students involved are no longer in any of the same classes.

In the case of bullying, the school will endeavour to move a perpetrator classes rather than a target, but this is often not exclusively possible for many reasons and in these cases a combination of both students moving classes will be arranged, weighted as much as reasonably possible towards the perpetrator moving.

## **Restorative Meetings**

Where appropriate, restorative meetings between perpetrator and victim or between the two students in a conflict will be offered and facilitated to resolve the tensions that led to negative behaviours being shown.

## **Reporting crimes to the police**

Where negative behaviours could be/are a crime, the college will advise parents of their right to report them to the police. Behaviours which could constitute a crime include:

- Physically assaulting someone
- Harassing someone especially if the harassment is based on a Protected Characteristic
- Making violent threats
- Making death threats
- Making obscene and harassing phone calls and texts
- Sexting
- Sextortion which is sexual exploitation
- Child pornography
- Stalking someone
- Committing hate crimes
- Taking a photo of someone in a place where they expect privacy
- Extortion

## **Safeguarding Team involvement**

Should the member of staff involved in managing negative behaviours have a safeguarding concern they will report this to the Safeguarding Team and be advised on them as to the

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## 2. Student response to bullying incidents

Students are taught through assemblies to follow specific advice should they experience bullying. This includes:

1. Report it to us
2. Keep a record (diary) of who, what, where, when and witnesses
3. It is not your fault if you are bullied
4. Surround yourself with people who make you feel good
5. Don't retaliate as this is then conflict, not bullying:
  - a. If you want to 'stand up for yourself' then you can say, "Stop, I don't like it when you do that". If it doesn't stop and it's causing one of the '3 Us' (upset, uncomfortable or unsafe), report it
  - b. There is no excuse for doing negative behaviours- even if you are being bullied
  - c. The school will sanction both students for conflict

## 3. Parent response to bullying incidents

To ensure a consistent approach and messages for their child, the school expects parents to respond to bullying incidents involving their child in the following way:

1. Report incidents to us (including conflict incidents too)
2. Support your child in maintaining their record (diary) and report additions to it when there are new incidents
3. Support your child in focussing on new/other healthy friendships and activities which can help your child in not focussing solely on the bullying issues for extended periods of time
4. Follow our advice on social media use
5. Support and emphasise with your child our expectation of non-retaliation and encourage a similar de-escalatory approach to out-of-school incidents
6. Adhere to the Parental Code of Conduct in all communication with the school

## X. Responsibility for implementation

It is the responsibility of all staff in college to be aware of this policy and to ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up by the relevant staff which may include the tutor, individual class teacher or the pastoral office.

### 1. Accountability

This policy is written by the designated senior leader responsible for bullying. It is the responsibility this person to ensure that the policy is available on the college website for parents and other stakeholders and that information on the college's approach to bullying is

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published in the college logbook. They will also be responsible for ensuring that Pastoral Leaders refer to the policy and educate students about the college's approach to dealing with bullying during assemblies each year.

## **XI. Supporting documents**

### **1. Related documents**

This policy was drawn up using a range of national and local documents including:

- Hampshire anti bullying guidance and anti-bullying documentation
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of a child – articles 12 (freedom from interference), 19 (freedom of speech) and 29 (duties to community)
- The Education Inspection Framework (Ofsted 2021)
- Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges (Ofsted 2021)
- The Diana Award Anti-Bullying Programme
- Equality Act 2010

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Behaviour policy
- Safeguarding policy
- Inclusion and Exclusion policy
- The Equalities Policy

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## XII. Appendices

### 1. Managing Incident Involving Protected Characteristics

| Low Intent   | High Intent   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Behaviour Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using a term or stereotype without knowing its origin or offensive nature.</li> <li>Repeating jokes or phrases involving biased language in a casual way, not directed at a specific person.</li> <li>Making offhand remarks that reveal unconscious bias (e.g., comments about someone's background or ability based on stereotypes), with no conscious desire to discriminate.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student's behaviour is not driven by hostility or explicit prejudice.</li> <li>The harm is still real for anyone affected, but it remains more contained (for example, a small circle of students becomes aware).</li> <li>The student often shows surprise or lack of understanding when the prejudicial nature of the behaviour is explained.</li> <li>Typically an isolated or first-time occurrence with no established pattern of prejudice.</li> <li>Has not yet had assemblies or RPS lessons on this issue so might not know any difference.</li> <li>Clearly shows remorse and shock at the impact their actions or words have had or at the meaning of what they have said when it is explained to them.</li> <li>Said in self defence against a student who has used prejudicial language against them first.</li> </ul> | <p><b>Behaviour Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliberate use of slurs, insults, or demeaning language reflecting a biased attitude, though the scope of harm remains more localised (e.g., aimed at one person or a small group).</li> <li>Directed jokes or comments about a protected characteristic intended to mock or offend a person or group, but not widely circulated.</li> <li>Social media posts or direct messages explicitly referencing hateful or stereotypical content, yet shared in a limited context.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The behaviour clearly demonstrates a conscious or intentional use of prejudice.</li> <li>The immediate effect is serious for those who are directly targeted and can cause distress, but does not lead to widespread fear or disruption across the school.</li> <li>The student's words or actions suggest a desire to denigrate or single out others based on identity.</li> <li>There may be signs of repeated bias or prejudice, even if the overall impact is still contained.</li> <li>Leading role in a group action.</li> <li>Have been given assembly'/ RPS lessons on this issue so cannot argue ignorance.</li> <li>Repeated or sustained</li> <li>High risk of a further, repeated attack.</li> <li>High levels of victimisation - targeted personally at students</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Sanctions and Follow Up</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low intent – IER plus reflection work - students should complete the reflection booklet on the prejudice they have demonstrated: homophobia, misogyny, racism, ablism.</li> <li>For the second offence, suspension and students should be referred to the behaviour support team to undertake an intervention on prejudice.</li> <li>For the third incident, longer, multiple day suspension; parents and students will meet with the head teacher for a review the sanctions and support in place.</li> <li>The victim and the victim's parent should each be given the opportunity to write an impact statement for the perpetrator and their parents to read.</li> <li>Where appropriate, mediation should be offered to students to resolve issues if ongoing conflict.</li> </ul>  |   |

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## 2. Managing Bullying Toolkit

Pastoral teams are issued an updated version of the “Managing Bullying Toolkit” at the start of each academic year. This document provides guidance and support on managing bullying and aims to provide consistency of response across the pastoral teams.

## 3. Signs and symptoms of bullying

A child may display signs or behaviour that indicate he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs or behaviours:

- Frightened walking to and from college
- Doesn't want to go to college on a public bus
- Asks to be driven to college
- Is unwilling to go to college
- Begins to truant
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Feels ill or feigns illness in the morning
- There is a decline in school work
- Comes home with clothes torn or damaged property
- Has possessions which are damaged or 'go missing'
- Appears to 'lose' money
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the bully)
- Has unexplained cuts, bruises or marks
- Becomes suddenly aggressive or disruptive at home or in college
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Is afraid or reluctant to use their mobile phone or social media
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what's wrong
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above

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

## 4. Support

The following services provide support to children who are being bullied:

- Kooth- <https://www.kooth.com/>
- National Bullying Helpline- <https://www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk/contact.html>
- NSPCC- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/bullying-and-cyberbullying/>
- Anti-Bullying Alliance- <https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/advice-and-support/if-youre-being-bullied/find-help-and-support>