



Richmond upon  
Thames College

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Policy Responsibility:	Head of Student Services
Approved By:	College Management Team
For Action By:	All College staff and students
For Information to:	All College staff, students and parents/carers
Version Control:	

## **Student Anti Bullying Policy Statement**

Richmond upon Thames college believe that all students have the right to live and be educated in an environment which is supportive, caring and safe, and where there is mutual respect, courtesy, kindness and co-operation. Bullying is anti-social behaviour which threatens the fundamental principles of the College, and it will not be tolerated. This policy has been developed with due regard to the duties and obligations under existing legislation and public sector duties for the safeguarding and well-being of all students.

The Education Act 2002 places a duty on colleges to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Safeguarding encompasses bullying and all principals are applicable to the entire student population of the College.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 requires that every school must have measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils. FE Colleges are not subject to this Act; however, this policy has been developed in accordance with the spirit of the Act and following guidelines on Preventing and Tackling Bullying (Department for Education, 2017).

The Equality Act 2010 requires colleges to comply with the public sector equality duty. This policy takes those requirements into account. The College's Equality Policy Statement and Equality Action Plan, RuTC Student E-Safety Policy and Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy (which includes peer-on- peer abuse and sexual violence and harassment) are relevant to this policy.

Bullying is totally unacceptable. The College will challenge bullying in all its forms and take quick, clear and decisive action to protect students.

The College is committed to creating an environment which supports staff and students to report and challenge bullying and which encourages positive intervention to prevent the occurrence of bullying.

## 1. Scope

1.1 This policy is intended to address issues of bullying arising between students, other accusations of bullying are dealt with as follows:

- Staff accused of bullying students are referred through the Complaints Procedure
- Students accused of bullying staff are referred through the Student Disciplinary Policy

This policy applies when students are on college premises, on college transport, or on college related activities off-site. The College will also take action where incidents occur off premises but behaviour can be linked to the College; could bring the College into disrepute and/or could endanger staff and students.

The Anti-Bullying Policy is aimed at the whole college community, staff, students, parents, carers, employers, volunteers and partners so they are aware of what to do if a student is subjected to bullying behaviour.

## 2. Responsibilities

### 2.1 Governors

The College Governing Body is responsible for establishing and implementing the Student Anti-Bullying Policy and for ensuring that it is regularly monitored and reviewed.

### 2.2 Lead Staff

Assistant Principal Student Experience to review, update and implement the policy.

Head of Student Services leads on the implementation of the Anti-Bullying Policy.

Community Liaison Manager to record all complaints of bullying as part of the safeguarding responsibility and monitor for incidents that relate to issues related to protected characteristics, peer on peer abuse or sexual violence and harassment.

Assistant Principal Human Resources and Organisational Development is responsible for ensuring the provision of anti-bullying training for staff.

Deputy CEO Curriculum and Quality, Heads of School and Heads of Service have a responsibility to investigate allegations thoroughly and to seek to resolve conflict.

The Community Liaison Manager, Teacher Tutors, Safeguarding staff and Welfare and Engagement Advisors have particular responsibility to support students through any investigation into an allegation of bullying and / or harassment.

The Community Liaison Manager will record all incidents of bullying to identify trends, patterns or incidents against those with protected characteristics.

### 2.3 All staff

are responsible for:

- Being aware of the Anti-Bullying Policy and the procedures for reporting bullying.
- Taking action in line with this policy should they witness acts of bullying or harassment; or are approached in confidence by students being bullied or harassed; or by students who have witnessed such actions.

- Treating all students with dignity and respect, ensuring their own conduct does not cause offence or misunderstanding; and challenging behaviour or the use of language which could cause offence.
- Role modelling behaviours which promote mutual respect and tolerance.

#### **2.4 Students**

are required to:

- Follow the Student Partnership Agreement including the Disciplinary procedure.
- Be aware of the Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Report incidents of bullying.

#### **2.6 Parents / Carers**

The College expects parents and carers to contact College if they know or suspect their son / daughter is being bullied or is bullying others. It is also expected that parents / carers will work with college staff to resolve conflicts between students.

### **3. Definition of Bullying**

- 3.1 Bullying is deliberate behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. It usually occurs where there is an imbalance of power which leads to intimidation.

Bullying can take many forms, is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups and can cause stress and have psychological and emotional impacts.

Bullying can be:

- Direct – physical, verbal, non-verbal
- Indirect – cyber-bullying, e-bullying, texting, sexting (which can include images and video)

- 3.2 Bullying often relates to differences, real or perceived (see Appendix 1). Specific areas of bullying can include:

- Race / Religion
- Culture
- Appearance
- Ability
- Special Educational needs
- Disability
- Health (including mental health)
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and parent hood
- Family / Home Circumstances
- Sexual bullying and harassment
- Social Class

### **4. Increasing awareness of anti-bullying**

- 4.1 All staff, students and Governors need to be aware of the Anti-Bullying Policy, what constitutes bullying, how it should be prevented and how it must be reported and dealt with.

Richmond upon Thames College will endeavour to address these requirements through:

- Appropriate information and training for staff and Governors
- Information for students to increase their awareness and understanding of the inappropriateness of bullying through:
  - Information during the Induction period
  - Tutorial sessions throughout the academic year
  - Contact information on student ID card
  - Advice and information through the plasma screens/posters/leaflets
  - Advice available on Moodle for students and staff
  - Support and advice from the Student Union
  - Topic-specific events across college e.g. Anti-bullying Week, Safer Internet Day
  - Dedicated email addresses for students and staff to communicate with Student Support in order to raise concerns and seek advice
- Reinforcing the need for students to understand their rights and responsibilities under the Student Partnership Agreement.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Forms of Bullying**

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour to someone as a single incident or over a period of time. It can be either physical, verbal or indirect or a combination of any of these forms. Often it includes one or more of the following: intimidation, exclusion, rumour-spreading, name-calling, anonymous messages, damage to or theft of personal property. The victim may react by becoming silent or withdrawn, feigning illness, missing lessons, not eating, or not working. The potential serious consequences of bullying, both physical and emotional, should not be underestimated. Bullying can lead to psychological damage and in extreme cases, suicide.

### **Cyberbullying**

Cyberbullying includes the use of ICT in the following ways:

- Texting or emailing unpleasant, scary or rude mobile phone messages.
- ‘Sexting’, where sexually inappropriate mobile phone pictures of one person are used by another person to upset, harass or demean the person in the pictures.
- Posting abusive or demeaning comments on social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter, or in chat rooms.
- Deleting or ignoring a person’s messages on social networking sites or in chat rooms.

### **Sexual and sexist bullying**

Sexual harassment and sexist bullying includes:

- Making any offensive, derogatory or demeaning comment or innuendo to a person linked to their gender, sexuality or sexual activity.
- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
  - sexual “jokes” or taunting;
- behaviour (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia and flicking bras and lifting up skirts
- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone’s clothes and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and
- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence.<sup>18</sup> It may include:
  - non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos. (UKCCIS sexting advice provides detailed advice for schools and colleges);
  - sexualised online bullying;
  - unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media with intent to insult, demean or harass another person; and
  - sexual exploitation; coercion and threats.
- Displaying sexual or pornographic pictures on any electronic device Any unwanted physical conduct or coercion into a sexual act.

**Racist and religious bullying**

Racist and religious bullying includes making any offensive, derogatory or demeaning comment to a person linked to their race, nationality, ethnicity, religion or belief, or cultural practices.

**Homophobic bullying**

Homophobic bullying includes making any offensive, derogatory or demeaning comment or innuendo to a person linked to their sexuality to upset, harass, humiliate or isolate that person.

**Disability bullying**

Disability bullying who has a mental or physical disability or a learning difficulty, whereby that disability or learning difficulty is exploited with the intent to upset, harass, humiliate or isolate that person.

**Gender bullying**

Bullying that occurs in relation to the person's gender. This includes making any offensive comment or physical interference towards another based on their assigned or chosen gender.

## Appendix 2

### Signs of Bullying

Bullying involves an imbalance of power; the person on the receiving end feels like they can't defend themselves. When students are bullied their lives are made miserable, they may suffer injury and will certainly lose confidence and self-esteem. In extreme cases they may even contemplate suicide. A student's change of behaviour or appearance may be an indicator that they are being bullied.

- Attendance: a student may become frightened of walking to College, unwilling to use public transport, there may be increased absence, changes to their usual routine, improbable excuses given for absence.
- Changes in character: being bullied can cause a student to become withdrawn, anxious, aggressive, disruptive, unreasonable, nervous and jumpy when a cyber-message has been received. They may start bullying siblings, stop using the internet or mobile phone, cry for no apparent reason or become tearful, lose things, ask for more money than usual and steal.
- Changes in appearance: young people often change their appearance. However sometimes this is a sign of being bullied especially if the student seems to be covering up cuts or bruises. Sometimes there is rapid weight loss, or weight gain, or the person stops eating. More obvious signs are torn clothes.
- Displaying increasing lack of confidence and self-esteem, asking for, or stealing money, being excluded from group activities by other students

Often bullying goes unreported as victims may feel they are either somehow to blame or that the repercussions will make matters worse. It is important therefore for all staff, students and parents/ carers to work together to ensure students feel able to report bullying and to be supported when they do so.

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



## Appendix 3

### Procedures for Dealing with Bullying

Any student or parent who reports a case of bullying to a member of staff at Richmond upon Thames College should feel confident that the case will be dealt with promptly, sensitively and appropriately.

If a student or parent reports a case of bullying to you, you must:

- Stay calm and reassure the student/parent that the matter will be dealt with as quickly and sensitively as possible but do not guarantee confidentiality as this information must be shared in order to be dealt with effectively.
- Talk to the student/parent and find out what has happened - keep notes of this conversation. (*please explain to the student/parent why you need to do this and assure them that this information will be shared on an essential need to know basis only*)
- Try to find out **when** (dates/times), **where** (places) and **who** (names of the bully/bullies). Students/parents are not always keen to give this information as they are concerned about the repercussions if the bully/bullies find(s) out. Please reassure them - we cannot deal with specific cases of bullying if we do not have this information and it must be stopped.
- Deal with the situation if it is straightforward and you feel you are able e.g. name-calling in a classroom/group activity situation. If you feel that it is a more complex case which is outside your area of expertise and/or involves students outside your area, refer the case on to the Tutor of the student(s) involved, your Manager or the Day Duty Officer. They can investigate the situation and invoke Safeguarding or Disciplinary proceedings in conjunction with the Safeguarding Team. [Please refer to the Child & Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and Procedures and the Student Disciplinary Policy & Procedures]
- Make notes of the incident on Pro-monitor. If it is of a sensitive nature, liaise with the Tutor or Safeguarding Team, including the Welfare and Engagement Advisers, who can add the comment to 'Confidential Comments'. Do not refer to the other parties concerned by name when making notes on Pro-monitor – refer to them as 'another student.'

#### If you are a Tutor, Teacher or Manager

The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly. You must:

- Collect all details from the member of staff who has reported the case to you
- Discuss fully how the case will be dealt with; seeking advice from your line manager or the Head of Student Services and a member of the Safeguarding Team
- In every case the incident should be logged with the Safeguarding Team so events and students can be monitored and supported
- Together with safeguarding team, support the student to contact/consult with the Police if necessary and appropriate, e.g. where serious assault or serious Cyberbullying may have occurred or cases which occurred outside the College's jurisdiction.
- It may be necessary to inform parents about serious cases of bullying and ask them to attend a meeting to discuss the issue. The parents may be unaware of the bullying and the student may need their support. The Assistant Principal Student Experience and Head of Student Services should lead on this with assistance from the Safeguarding Team and the Community Liaison Manager (***However, it is important to make sure that the student who is being bullied wants this to happen***)
- Attempt to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour. This may involve referral to a College Counsellor for support.

## Appendix 4

### Outcomes

Part of the discussion with the student being bullied should involve asking him/her "What would you like the outcome to be?"

A number of different alternatives can be discussed:

- The student who has been bullied may ask to meet with the bully to tell him/her how they feel about the behaviour. The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Such a meeting should be well structured and supported and both parties will need appropriate preparation.
- In serious cases, suspension, disciplinary warnings or even exclusion of the bully (bullies) may be considered in accordance with the Disciplinary Policy. Disciplinary action may take place in addition to any apology which has been issued.
- If possible, the students should be reconciled after the incident has been investigated and dealt with, *however, it is important to remember that a 'restorative' approach or reconciliation is not always possible and should not be advocated if inappropriate.* Each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

## Appendix 5

Further information, advice and support:

### Specialist organisations

The following organisations provide support for schools and parents dealing with specific bullying issues including the social, mental or emotional affects caused by bullying.

The Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA): Founded in 2002 by NSPCC and National Children's Bureau, the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) brings together over 100 organisations into one network to develop and share good practice across the whole range of bullying issues.

The ABA has also put together a fact sheet outlining the range of support that is available to schools and young people from the anti-bullying sector which can be accessed here, including specific guidance in relation to supporting young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

The Diana Award: Anti-Bullying Ambassadors programme to empower young people to take responsibility for changing the attitudes and behaviour of their peers towards bullying. It will achieve this by identifying, training and supporting school anti-bullying ambassadors.

Kidscape: Charity established to prevent bullying and promote child protection providing advice for young people, professionals and parents about different types of bullying and how to tackle it.

Restorative Justice Council: Includes best practice guidance for practitioners 2011.

ChildLine <http://www.childline.org.uk>

NSPCC <http://www.nspcc.org.uk>

### Cyber-bullying and online safety

ChildNet International: Specialist resources for young people to raise awareness of online safety and how to protect themselves. Website specifically includes new cyberbullying guidance. a

Digizen: provides online safety information for educators, parents, carers and young people.

Think U Know: resources provided by Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) for children and young people, parents, carers and teachers.

The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) has produced a range of resources for schools, colleges and parents about how to keep children safe online, this includes advice for schools and colleges on responding to incidents of 'sexting.'

### LGBT

Barnardos: through its LGBTQ Hub, offers guidance to young people, parents and teachers on how to support LGBT students and tackle LGBT prejudice-based bullying

Stonewall: An LGB equality organisation with considerable expertise in LGB bullying in schools, a dedicated youth site, resources for schools, and specialist training for teachers.

### SEND

Mencap: Represents people with learning disabilities, with specific advice and information for people who work with children and young people.

Changing Faces: Provide online resources and training to schools on bullying because of physical difference.

Information, Advice and Support Service Network: Every Local area has an information, advice and support service, providing information, advice and support to disabled children and young people, and those with SEN, and their parents.

### Mental health

MindEd: It provides simple, clear guidance on mental health and includes information on identifying, understanding and supporting children who are bullied.

### Race, religion and nationality

Educate Against Hate: provides teachers, parents and school leaders practical advice and information on protecting children from extremism and radicalisation.

Show Racism the Red Card: Provide resources and workshops for schools to educate young people, often using the high profile of football, about racism.

### Sexual harrassment and sexual bullying

Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAW): A Guide for Schools. This guide from the End Violence

Against Women Coalition sets out the different forms of abuse to support education staff to understand violence and abuse of girls, warning signs to look for, and how to get your whole school working towards preventing abuse.

Disrespect No Body: a Home Office led campaign which helps young people understand what a healthy relationship is. This website includes teaching materials to be used in the classroom.

**Students can also seek advice and support via the Safeguarding email: [safeguarding@rutc.ac.uk](mailto:safeguarding@rutc.ac.uk) or by visiting the Advice Hub in C12 or C15**