

## **POLICY STATEMENT**



## **LEARNER ANTI-BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY**

### **Introduction/Overview**

Bournemouth and Poole College is committed to providing a supportive, friendly, safe and positive environment so that learners can learn in a secure atmosphere and get the most out of their experience of college life.

Bullying or harassment of any kind is unacceptable in this College. If it does occur, learners are urged to voice their grievance in the secure knowledge that incidents will be dealt with promptly and efficiently.

### **Statement**

- All learners and parents/carers should know what The College policy is on bullying and harassment and what they should do if this occurs. Learners and parents/carers should be assured that they will be supported and listened to when bullying and harassment is reported.
- All staff should have an understanding of what bullying and harassment is, and what The College's Anti-bullying and Harassment Policy states. Staff need to know how to deal promptly and effectively with incidents and allegations of bullying or harassment.
- No-one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Individuals who are bullying others need to learn different ways of behaving. Everyone has the right to be treated with respect. This college recognises its responsibility to respond to these issues to ensure a positive learning environment for all.
- All staff when applying this policy must ensure that learners are not discriminated against or disadvantaged as a result of their race, religion, gender or disability. Any such circumstances that may arise must be brought to the attention of The College Equality and Diversity Officer.

### **Guidelines for Learners**

1. If you feel you are being bullied or harassed, TELL SOMEONE. This may be, in the first instance, your personal tutor or lecturer, someone in Student Services or any other member of staff.
2. Once a member of staff has been alerted they will inform a Senior member of staff who will talk to you about the incident. The alleged bully/harasser will be interviewed separately by their Personal Tutor. You will be listened to sympathetically and your concerns taken seriously and all allegations will be thoroughly investigated.
3. If there is a case to answer, the next step may be The College's Shaping Behaviour & Performance Procedure
4. In certain circumstances The College may feel it necessary to involve your parents/carers.
5. At all stages in the above procedure you may bring along someone of your choice for support.

6. Confidential counselling sessions are available for both the bullied and the bully to help individuals to move forward in a more positive and confident way

### **Guidelines for Staff**

1. All complaints about bullying and harassment will be taken seriously and treated sensitively. It is important to discuss possible/desirable strategies with the victim in the first instance and proceed as appropriate.

NB If, in the case of those under 18, child abuse is reported or suspected then the Child Protection Policy and Procedures must be followed.

2. If you are the person to whom the incident is reported or who first discovered the incident, take time to make the situation safe if necessary ie. control of the bully and support for victim. Call on another member of staff if necessary
3. Take time to write a full account of the incident. Give this report to the appropriate Faculty Area Head as soon as possible, preferably the same day.
4. The Faculty Area Manager should ensure that the victim and bully are interviewed separately.
5. Offer counselling support to both victim and bully.
6. Where appropriate write to parents/carers detailing the incident and stating that The College is taking action.
7. Convene a meeting, if this is considered appropriate, whereby conciliation between all parties may be reached. Be sensitive to the needs of the victim here, and make sure there is someone present who can effectively mediate.
8. Disciplinary procedures should be followed where it is found that a learner has failed to observe The College's code of conduct for behaviour.
9. Involve senior members of staff, Student Services Manager, HR Director, Faculty Managers as necessary.
10. Submit a short report to Equality and Diversity Officer. This should include only brief details of the incident. Any direct reference to named individuals should be removed.
11. If appropriate, hold tutor group discussion on bullying and harassment.

**Date Minuted**            6 November 2009

**Designation:** Chair of the Teaching and Learning Group

**Policy Ref/Version Number:** SC15/V3

This policy is to be reviewed by the Teaching and Learning Group by September 2011

## **Appendix 1 - What is bullying / harassment?**

Bullying and harassment occur where one person or a group of people exert their power over a weaker person or group of people. Bullying and harassment can cause the victim serious physical and mental problems and can ruin an individual's chances of success both in College and in their future career.

### **Bullying and harassment can be:**

- Emotional - excluding, tormenting
- Physical - punching, kicking, hitting or any use of violence
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Homophobic - comments about one's sexuality

### **Signs and Symptoms of Bullying:**

- Being frightened of walking to or from The College
- Not wanting to go on The College/public bus
- Change in usual routine
- Becoming anxious or withdrawn
- Attempted or threatened suicide
- Crying
- Nightmares
- Feeling ill
- Truancy
- Doing poorly at College
- Coming home with clothes or books torn
- Possessions "go missing"
- Asking for, or stealing money
- Unexplained cuts or bruises
- Coming home starving (money / lunch as been stolen)
- Becoming aggressive and unreasonable
- Lacking in confidence
- Bullying or harassing other learners or siblings