

# Anti-Harassment and Anti-Bullying Policy

**Relating to:** Safeguarding

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## **Introduction**

The purpose of this policy is to outline to staff and students the ethos of “*Respect*” in the College and to strive to prevent harassment and bullying from occurring.

## **Scope of the Policy**

This policy applies to all staff and all student cohorts.

## **1. Definition of Harassment and Bullying**

### **1.1 Harassment**

1.1.1 Harassment occurs when an individual is subjected to unwanted conduct which has the purpose (intentional) or effect (unintentional) of:

- Violating a person’s dignity, or
- Creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.

1.1.2 Harassment is unlawful when it is on the grounds of sex, race, gender reassignment, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation, age, religion/ belief, or for a reason relating to a person’s disability. It is also unlawful to subject an individual to sexual harassment.

1.1.3 The College will not tolerate harassment or bullying in any form.

### **1.2 Bullying**

1.2.1 Bullying although not defined legally, is described as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate, or injure the recipient.

1.2.2 Bullying generally occurs when a person or a group of people exert their power over another person or group of people. It can cause the victim serious physical and mental problems and can ruin the individual’s chances of success both in College and in their future career.

### **1.3 Examples of forms of harassment and bullying**

1.3.1 Harassment and bullying can take many forms. Examples of unacceptable behaviour include:

- Offensive songs, remarks, jokes, emails, or gestures
- Display of offensive posters, publications, and graffiti
- Unwanted physical contact or advances
- Offensive remarks about a person's dress or appearance
- Offensive remarks about a person's race, gender, marital status, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender identity or age.
- Shouting, abusive, or intimidating language
- Spreading malicious rumours, allegations, or gossip
- Excluding or ignoring someone
- Intrusion by pestering, spying, or stalking
- Punching, kicking or any use of violence
- Cyber-bullying; that is, the sending or posting of harmful, cruel, or offensive text or images by email, internet, social media websites or other digital communication devices.

1.3.2 The above list is intended to give a clear impression of the types of behaviour that the College considers to be unacceptable; however, it only contains examples and is not exhaustive.

### **1.4 Signs and symptoms of someone being bullied**

1.4.1 Signs and symptoms of someone being bullied can include:

- Becoming anxious or withdrawn
- Crying
- Nightmares
- Poor attendance or performance in College
- Being frightened of walking to or from College
- Not wanting to go on the College/public bus
- Change in usual routine
- Possessions going 'missing'
- Stealing or asking for money as a result of threats or victimisation
- Unexplained cuts or bruises
- Becoming aggressive or unreasonable
- Lacking in confidence
- Bullying other students and siblings
- Threatened or attempted suicide
- Changes in eating patterns

- Loss of motivation

## **2. Aims and Objectives**

2.1 St Helens College is committed to providing a supportive, friendly, safe, and positive learning environment in which bullying, or harassment is not acceptable. All staff and students have the right to be treated with respect and must not be discriminated against or disadvantaged as a result of their race, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation, or personal circumstances. The aim of the College's policy is to support and promote the ethos and to strive to prevent bullying and harassment from occurring.

2.2 Bullying of any kind is not tolerated at St Helens College. If it does occur, students are urged to report their grievance so that incidents can be dealt with promptly and effectively according to the procedures below. Students will be supported and listened to when bullying is reported.

2.3 Students who are being bullied or aware of another student being bullied should follow the College procedures set out below. Staff who are aware of a student being bullied should also follow the College procedures set out below.

## **3. Procedures**

### **3.1 For Students**

1. If you feel you are being bullied or harassed, tell a Personal Tutor or a member of Safeguarding, Mental Health and Wellbeing team or any other member of staff.
2. The member of staff will ask you for details of the incident and may take a written statement from you or refer you to a College manager to handle the complaint. The College has a disciplinary procedure which may be used against the alleged bully, depending on what action you want to take.
3. If action is to be taken against the alleged bully, he or she will be interviewed separately.
4. If you are under 18 years old or a vulnerable adult, the College would normally notify your parents/carer of what has happened and what action is to be taken.
5. Confidential counselling sessions are available through Safeguarding , Mental Health and Wellbeing team if you would like additional support to help you through the incident.

### **3.2 For Staff**

1. All complaints about bullying should be taken seriously and treated sensitively..
2. We encourage students to report any incidents of bullying to any member of staff in college
3. Staff will deal with the incident as promptly and sensitively as possible; we

strive to create an environment where all students can discuss any concerns with staff and feel listened to and supported.

4. In the first instance it is not a requirement for a member of the college to investigate whether bullying is occurring but rather to accept the student's perception and jointly agree a way to go forwards with them, which will reduce and ultimately eliminate their difficulties
5. It is important that any issues of concern are dealt with promptly. Failure to do so may lead to further and possibly more serious forms of abuse taking place.
6. Report the concern via the CPOMs
7. Make the victim and bully aware of the Counselling Service in Safeguarding, Mental Health and Wellbeing and refer them for appointments, if appropriate.

## **Prevention**

As a college we take bullying seriously; bullying has no place at St Helens College. We use a range of proactive strategies to prevent bullying. These include:

- Effective school leadership that promotes an open and honest anti-bullying ethos;
- Improved supervision in potential problem areas;
- Bullying is talked open openly and is everyone's responsibility;
- Use of curriculum opportunities, in particular tutorial session where issues of diversity are discussed and anti-bullying messages are drawn out;
- Use of opportunities throughout the college calendar and at certain times of the college day to raise awareness of the negative consequences of bullying e.g. Anti-Bullying Week in November of each year.

## **4. Monitoring**

4.1 All incidents of student bullying will be recorded centrally by the Vice Principal (Student Experience and kept for 3 years and staff incidents by the Director of HR. The effectiveness of the Bullying Policy will be monitored on a regular basis, recommending changes where necessary

## **5. Associated Policies and Procedures**

- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Student Behaviour Policy
- Student Complaint Procedure

## **6. Access to the Policy:**

This policy will be held on the College Intranet and the College Website

## **7. Post-Holders to Contact**

Vice Principal Student Experience

## **8. Impact Measures**

8.1 Data from monitoring and feedback will be reviewed annually and used to update the policy if necessary. This policy will be supported by a series of impact measures and is monitored to ensure:

- Prevention activities are regularly implemented as and when appropriate
- Staff are more vigilant and responsive to bullying/harassment;
- Fewer students report being bullied/harassed;
- Fewer students bully others;
- Fewer incidents recorded of bullying.