



Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy

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INTRODUCTION

This document sets out Linton Village College's policy in relation to the issue of harassment & bullying. It reflects a belief that harassment and bullying is not acceptable under *any* circumstances and that it is best prevented through the development of a College ethos based on mutual respect, fairness and equality.

The College uses the Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2020 document to inform anti-bullying protocols & education and strives to achieve best practice at all times.

The College is committed to ensuring that positive action is taken to ensure that no imbalance of equality exists. It also challenges all types of anti-discriminatory behaviour which might constitute harassment or bullying, for example:

- unwanted attentions (verbal or physical);
- unwelcome or offensive remarks or suggestions about for example another person's appearance, gender, sex, age, sexuality, character, race or nationality, religion or beliefs, ability or disability.

The College believes that abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up". Such harassment can be deeply hurtful and alienates not only the victim but also other members of the community which can lead to heightened community tension more broadly.

The College will always respond in a manner that is measured, proportionate, pragmatic and non-oppressive. This policy also acknowledges that a perpetrator of harassment and/or bullying is usually deeply unhappy and has need for development as well as sanctions and consequences.

PRINCIPLES

Linton Village College is a place where every person has the right to be themselves and to be included in a safe and happy environment. We believe that everyone in our College is equal and should be treated with respect. Harassment and bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. The College ethos and the attributes attached to a successful Linton Learner involve being respectful, considerate, caring and responsible and this policy encompasses these characteristics

At Linton Village College, the safety, welfare and well-being of all students and staff is a key priority. We take all incidents of harassment and bullying seriously and we believe that it is our duty as a whole school community to take measures to prevent and tackle any harassment, bullying or discrimination.

We actively promote values of respect and equality and work to ensure that difference and diversity is celebrated across the whole College community. The College supports the individuality of all our staff and students, irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity. We actively tackle sexual harassment and sexist language and promote equal opportunities and good relations between and amongst all.

We seek to enable our students to become responsible citizens and to prepare for life in 21st century Britain. The College aims to promote British values of tolerance and mutual respect in order to reflect those that will be expected of our students by society when they leave school and enter the world of work or further study.

We are committed to improving our College's approach to tackling harassment and bullying by regularly monitoring, reviewing and assessing the impact of our preventative measures. A strong, united Safeguarding Team handles all forms of harassment and bullying robustly. We will challenge the status quo if it means all students / staff feel valued and supported.

AIMS

- To fulfil the College's statutory responsibility to respect the rights of children and to safeguard and promote their welfare.
- To clarify the College's responsibility for responding to incidents of harassment and bullying and to emphasise to staff, students and their parents/carers the College's zero tolerance attitude towards harassment, bullying and discrimination.
- To eliminate intimidating behaviour and promote a College ethos in which each student enjoys a sense of belonging, and is safe and able to realise their full potential.
- To address the problem of harassment, bullying and intolerance through the implementation of whole College policy and procedures.
- To reassure parents/carers that the College takes their children's welfare seriously and that they are being educated in a safe and secure environment.

OBJECTIVES

- To develop and implement a policy on harassment and bullying with consistency across the entire College without exception.
- To raise awareness among staff, parents/carers and students of the nine protective characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity) in the Equality Act 2010.
- To raise awareness among staff, parents/carers and students about the seriousness of harassment and bullying and the College's attitude towards it.
- To educate and equip staff and students with the knowledge, understanding, skills and competencies so that we support each other as a community/
- To create an environment in which harassment and bullying is seen as inappropriate and unacceptable.
- To be proactive in the prevention of harassment, bullying and discrimination.
- To make students, parents/carers and staff aware of what steps to take when an incident of harassment, bullying or discrimination has occurred.
- To demonstrate to those who would perpetrate harassment and bullying that their behaviour is unacceptable and to reassure victims that action will be taken to keep them safe.
- To clarify the extent of the problem and ensure that the College allocates a proportionate amount of time and energy to deal with it.
- To accurately record all incidents of harassment and bullying and to monitor the effectiveness of strategies for dealing with it.
- To address with perpetrators their problematic behaviour in a fair and firm, non-oppressive manner, and to provide them with support to enable them to evaluate and change their behaviour.

DEFINITION

We take as the basis of our definition of harassment, s.2 and s.4 of Protection from Harassment Act 1997;

The law defines harassment as:

A person who pursues a course of conduct which amounts to harassment of another, and which they know or ought to know amounts to harassment of the other.

Harassment is defined by the victim and is generally and objectively evidenced in hurtful or unkind behaviour which is deliberate or repeated. Harassment can be carried out by an individual or a group of people towards another individual or group, where the perpetrators exercise coercive control or influence over their victims, and a power disparity exists.

The nature of harassment can include (but is not limited to):

- physical – such as hitting or causing someone to fear the use of imminent violence. It can also include using inappropriate or unwanted physical contact;
- criminal damage or making threats to cause damage – such as damaging the College environment;
- theft and depriving people of their possessions;
- verbal – such as name calling, spreading rumours about someone, using derogatory or offensive language or threatening someone;
- psychological – such as deliberately excluding, ignoring or isolating people and
- cyber – such as using text, email or other social media to write or say hurtful things that cause a person to feel frightened, intimidated or in danger. There is a level of emotional abuse involved in all types of harassment.

Bullying, harassment and/or discriminations¹ can be based on any of the following things:

- age;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- culture or class;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- sex
- sexual orientation (homophobic or bi-phobic bullying);
- gender identity (transphobic bullying) / reassignment;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- Special Educational Needs (SEN) or disability;
- appearance or health conditions;
- related to home or with a personal situation and
- related to another vulnerable group of people (such as young carers).

¹[Guidance from the Crown Prosecution Service on working definitions of hate crime can be consulted here;](#)

Bullying

Bullying is hurtful or unkind behaviour which is deliberate or repeated. Bullying can be carried out by an individual or a group of people towards another individual or group, where the bully or bullies hold more power than those being bullied.

- physical such as hitting or physically intimidating someone or using inappropriate or unwanted physical contact towards someone;
- attacking property such as damaging, stealing or hiding someone's possessions;
- verbal such as name-calling, spreading rumours about someone, using derogatory or offensive language including misogyny or threatening someone;
- psychological such as deliberately ignoring or excluding people and
- cyber such as text, email or any other social media used to write or say hurtful things about someone online.

No form of harassment will be tolerated and all incidents will be taken seriously.

Derogatory or offensive language is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. This type of language can take any of the forms of harassment listed in our examples above. It will be challenged by staff and recorded and monitored on the local authority database. Follow-up sanctions, where appropriate, will be taken for students and staff found using any such language.

A prejudice-based incident is a one-off incident of unkind or hurtful behaviour that is motivated by prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views towards a protected characteristic or minority group (or anyone perceived to be a member of such). It can be targeted towards an individual or group of people and have a significant impact on those targeted and those witnessing it. All prejudice-related incidents are taken seriously and recorded anonymously on the government's Pride database, and monitored in school. The termly Inclusion Report will present all such data to the College Board of Governors. This not only ensures that all incidents are dealt with accordingly, but also helps to prevent harassment as it enables proactive interventions.

Hate Crime and Criminal Significance

Where it appears that the gravity of an incident represents a hate crime or a matter of criminal significance that exceeds the proportionate jurisdiction and public interest of the school code of conduct, the matter will be referred to an appropriate organisation. This could include the Cambridgeshire Constabulary, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or, Channel (where a young person is deemed to be at risk of being drawn into terrorism).

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both can occur through bullying activity - where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Victims can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. This type of exploitation which derives from bullying, as well as being physical, can be facilitated and/or take place on-line. The College will carry out its Duty of Care in reporting such matters to the police or social care as appropriate.

Peer on Peer Abuse

Children can abuse other children, and this is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- *bullying (including cyberbullying)
- *physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm.
- *sexual violence such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault
- *sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and on-line sexual harassment , which may be stand alone or a broader pattern of abuse
- *upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, causing humiliation, distress and alarm
- *sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery) and
- *initiation/hazing type rituals – where a person is coerced into participating in an act that creates risk or harm.

SCOPE

This policy applies only to incidents of harassment and bullying which take place on College premises. We are guided by caselaw in which several examples of harassment and bullying have confirmed that any school or college cannot be held responsible for harassment and bullying which takes place elsewhere. The nature of cyber bullying particularly means that it can impact on students' well-being beyond the school day. The College will promote positive relationships and behaviours amongst students and staff and aim to create an environment where anti-social behaviours are not tolerated and can be reported anonymously and without fear of reprisal.

However, Linton Village College has an enduring interest in the welfare and conduct of its students and will take seriously any information it receives about harassment and bullying outside the College. We make the following commitment as a consequence:

- if it emerges that a student is responsible for causing harassment and/or bullying to other children/young people outside the College then this matter will be addressed and the perpetrator's parents/carers informed;
- if a child is found to be the victim of harassment and bullying outside Linton Village College, help and support will be offered and advice given on how to deal with the matter safely and appropriately. The victim's parents/carers will be informed;
- if information is received that a child is being victimised by a sibling outside the College this will initially be discussed with the parents/carers; if concerns persist then the matter will be referred to the MASH;
- if the information shared with the College is of a criminal nature in which another person puts a student at risk of harm outside of the College this will initially be discussed with parents/carers and referred to the police;
- if children are being subjected to harassment and bullying by students of another school the Principal of that school will be informed and invited to deal with the matter.

PREVENTION

All staff involved in the education and/or supervision of children will be made aware of the issue of harassment and bullying and the need to apply the College's policy of zero-tolerance consistently when episodes of harassment and/or bullying are witnessed or reported. Staff will reinforce the message to children that harassment and bullying are unacceptable and positive action will be taken to prevent and control these behaviours. Staff will not dismiss such behaviours as merely "banter". Tolerating behaviours like any unwanted touching for example: flicking bras; touching breasts; bottom and genitalia risks normalising them. Upskirting is a criminal offence and the College has a duty to contact the police if there is evidence that this has taken place at the College.

In addition, the issue of harassment and bullying will be raised with students at a number of levels including:

- a student friendly document and poster (“What you need to know about...”) on harassment, bullying and discrimination which ensures all students understand the College’s expectations around this behaviour (see Appendix 1), which will be prominently displayed;
- the PSHE/RSE programme of study which includes opportunities for students to understand about different types of harassment and bullying and what they can do to respond and prevent such actions. We ensure the curriculum contributes to preventing all forms of harassment and bullying by using our PSHE/RSE education curriculum to equip students with the knowledge, understanding, skills and attributes they need to keep themselves and others safe, and to recognise and challenge prejudice in all its forms. Staff will be given appropriate training in order to support the delivery of PSHE/RSE Education which will be aimed at all students and will reflect the backgrounds of different families. All young people need to be given the language and tools they need to enjoy positive and safe relationships;
- the provision of leaflets, posters, PSHE/RSE education lessons, including teaching about how to access support (this information will also be shared with parents/carers as appropriate);
- regular opportunities in tutor time will discuss a range of topics and issues- sometimes tutor-led and sometimes student-led;
- year group and house assemblies will help raise students’ awareness of harassment, bullying and discrimination (including the use of derogatory language);
- in-school monitoring via break/lunch time duties/supervision, learning walks and focus groups;
- difference and diversity celebrated across the College by diverse displays, books and images and
- whole school participation in events such as National Hate Crime Awareness Week, Anti-Bullying Week, Black History Month, Internet Safety Week and Pride activities.

EQUALITY

The College values of equality and respect are embedded across the behaviours and language of staff, students and across the curriculum to ensure that it is as inclusive as possible. To help children and young people learn and develop appropriate responses to others, all staff will lead by example. This includes treating each other (and children, parents and carers) with courtesy and respect and will model appropriate and acceptable behaviour.

Staff will set clear ground to prevent and eliminate harassment and bullying in all lessons and especially lessons which tackle harassment, bullying and discrimination issues. These will include taking a non-judgmental approach; listening to one another; making no assumptions; avoiding offensive language; and keeping the conversation “in the classroom”. The College does this by doing the following:

- challenging stereotypes;
- offering support to all students;
- providing restorative approaches and support to victims of harassment and bullying and those affected by harassment, bullying and discrimination, and those who perpetrate such offences;
- leading whole school initiatives through student leadership;

- students being actively involved in developing school-wide anti-prejudice/discrimination/harassment;
- working with parents/carers, and in partnership with community organisations to tackle harassment and bullying where appropriate;
- using mentoring and small group intervention to teach students to be caring and responsible and reflective;
- offering additional support and guidance to children who have suffered from harassment and bullying;
- advising and guiding students who have victimised others with support and education;
- recruiting a team of peer mentors annually (8M8s);
- recognising that there are particular times when children may be more vulnerable to harassment and bullying, for example lunch / break times, the beginning / end of the school day and whilst travelling on buses;
- recognising that there are locations around the College in which incidents of harassment and bullying are more likely to occur and making arrangements to ensure that these are properly supervised;
- encouraging students to talk to staff about incidents of harassment and bullying which they experience or of which they may be aware. In these circumstances staff will respond consistently and positively, take the expression of concern seriously, ensure that the matter is fully investigated, and report the incident to the appropriate person;
- keeping a central data base of all harassment and bullying incidents to allow for cross referencing (kept by the Inclusion Manager);
- reporting the matter to the police or other authority and seeking support from specialist services such as IDSVA (Independent Domestic and sexual Violence Advocacy Service).
- encouraging parents / carers to share concerns with the College as early as possible so they can be addressed and a plan agreed to prevent further incidents and the perpetrator helped to change and address their behaviours and mindset;
- during Covid students have been advised to use thinkpink@lvc.org to raise any concerns. However, as we come out of lockdown the College will revert to having a “Concerns Box” for Peer Postcards in the Support Hub which will be monitored daily by a member of the College Safeguarding team.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The College is firmly committed to working in partnership with parents/carers and believes that the best outcomes emerge when professionals and parents/carers are able to work together with students when bullying, harassment or discrimination occurs.

The College recognises the important influence that parents and carers have on their children and would wish, through use of the Home / College Agreement, to enlist their support when their child is involved in harassment and/or bullying– either as victim or a perpetrator.

Parents and carers remain vigilant for the potential signs of harassment and bullying, such as distress, lack of concentration, feigning illness or other unusual behaviour. Parents and carers should teach their child not to retaliate and must support and encourage them to report any forms of bullying and/or harassment. Parents and carers can report an incident of harassment and bullying to the College by appointment, by phoning or emailing reception or thinkpink@lvc.org.

If a child is involved:

- a) in anti-discriminatory language and/or behaviour; or
- b) there is evidence that the same child is involved repeatedly in a less serious course of conduct (either as a victim or a perpetrator)

the College will inform parents and carers and invite them to become involved in the management of the issue and the subsequent prevention of further incidents.

Isolated and less serious incidents will be dealt with by College staff, and parents/carers will be informed promptly.

REPORTING HARASSMENT/BULLYING

Students who are being subjected to harassment and/or bullying

If a student is being victimised, they are encouraged to take the following steps:

- a) not to retaliate;
- b) to confide in someone they trust (ideally a family member, trusted adult or member of LVC staff);
- c) to keep an accurate log of any incidents;
- d) to report any incidents in school, students and their parents/carers can email thinkpink@lvc.org or telephone (01223 891233 extension 335). Post Covid the anonymous concern boxes will return in social areas for student use.
- e) Call Childline to speak with someone in confidence 08001111

Reporting – roles and responsibilities

Staff

All staff, both teaching and non-teaching have a duty to report harassment and bullying, to be vigilant to the signs and symptoms of harassment and bullying, and to play an active role in the College's efforts to prevent bullying incidents and behaviours. If staff are aware of harassment and bullying, they should reassure the students involved and inform a member of staff from the Support Hub or Head of House.

Senior staff

The Senior Leadership Team and Principal have overall responsibility for ensuring that the Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy is followed by all members of staff and that the College upholds its duty to promote the safety and well-being of all young people. In addition, the designated safeguarding team is Shahla Matarazzo (Lead), Nichola Addley (Deputy), Danielle Darvill (Deputy) and Louise Keen (Deputy).

Students

Students must not participate in any harassment and/or bullying and should remain vigilant for any signs of bullying, including alienation among their peers. They must never be bystanders to incidents of harassment or bullying.

If students witness an incident they should support the victim by reporting the matter and encourage the victim to accompany them. The College will not tolerate the use of the terms

snitch, grass and/or snake in relation to matters of harassment and/or bullying. The College believes that such phrases allow a culture of bullying to exist. The College asks and expects that parents and carers will support this policy by reporting any behaviours which are affecting their own child/ren and that which may also impact on others. The sharing of information will greatly affect the College's ability to implement this policy and carry out its duty of care to all students.

RESPONDING TO HARASSMENT AND/OR BULLYING

When harassment and/or bullying has been evidenced the following action will be taken:

- staff will log/record the event on MyConcern and also (if there is evidence of anti-discriminatory behaviour) centrally on www.pride.learn-together.org.uk;
- designated school staff will monitor incident reporting forms and information recorded on www.pride.learn-together.org.uk analysing and evaluating the results;
- designated school staff will produce termly reports summarising the information, which will be reported to the governing body;
- support will be offered to those who are the target of harassment and/or bullying
- Support Hub/Head of House/Tutor will respond expeditiously, who may use restorative approaches to help resolve any ongoing issues;
- members of staff will engage with the perpetrator promptly, who may require support from the staff in the Student Support Hub/Head of House/Tutor, who may use restorative approaches and sanctions to help resolve any ongoing issues;
- members of staff will always contact parents/carers;
- senior staff (SLT) will assess whether any authorities (such as police) need to be involved, particularly where actions take place outside of College. Parents/carers will always be made aware of information of this nature is shared with the College.

IMPLEMENTATION

The College is committed to creating a harassment and bullying-free environment and will ensure that its zero-tolerance policy is applied rigorously. All staff involved in the teaching and/or supervision of children will take responsibility for addressing incidents which fall within the College's definition of harassment and bullying.

They will take five steps as soon as practicable:

1. Ensure that the victim receives appropriate support;
2. The perpetrator is informed of the unacceptability of his/her behaviour;
3. The perpetrator receives appropriate support;
4. Parents/carers of both victim and perpetrator are informed;
5. A record is made of the incident before the end of the same school day;

Pastoral staff will support with investigations of incidents where there is an identified victim and /or perpetrator.

POST INCIDENT RESPONSES FOR THE VICTIM

When any member of staff receives information, either directly or indirectly, that a child may have been the victim of harassment and / or bullying, this report will be taken seriously, recorded and passed on to a member of staff from the Support Hub for further investigation.

The College will offer a swift, sympathetic and supportive response to children who are the victims of harassment and / or bullying. The exact nature of the response will be determined by the particular child's individual needs and the effect the bullying has had on them. This is likely to include consideration of the following:

- Immediate action to stop the incident and secure the child's safety;
- Positive reinforcement that demonstrates that reporting the incident was the correct thing to do;
- *Reassurance that the victim is not responsible for the behaviour of the perpetrator;
- *Strategies to prevent further incidents;
- *Sympathy and empathy;
- *Counselling;
- *Befriending by supporting with a, "peer buddy" as appropriate
- *Providing assertiveness training; to help a victim to, "stand-up" to bullying behaviours
- *Extra supervision/monitoring;
- *Informing/involving parents;
- *Restorative work between the perpetrator and the victim (provided this does not increase the victim's vulnerability);
- *Arrangements to review progress;

The staff from the Support Hub will be responsible for managing post incident responses in order to support the victim.

Every incident of harassment and bullying is an opportunity to learn and improve policy and response. The College will consider whether procedures need to change in the light of harassment activity in order to ensure a similar event does not happen again.

FOR THE PERPETRATOR

Linton Village College takes harassment and bullying very seriously and will adopt a supportive, pragmatic, problem-solving approach to enable perpetrators to reflect and to behave in a more acceptable way. The College believes that the positive use of sanctions can be effective in demonstrating that the behaviour is unacceptable and in order to promote change.

The College will respond to incidents of harassment and bullying in a proportionate way – the more serious the cause for concern the more serious the response. When sanctions are felt to be necessary they will be applied consistently and fairly. The following options will be considered:

- immediate action to stop an incident of harassment and/or bullying and curtail future conduct;
- rewards/positive reinforcement for children in order to promote change and bring unacceptable behaviour under control;

- engagement with the perpetrator to reinforce the message that their behaviour is a breach of College rules and is unacceptable;
- loss of lunch/break-time privileges;
- detention;
- parents/carers informed;
- electronic, “report card”
- removal from class/group;
- withholding participation in sports or out of College activity (if not an essential part of curriculum);
- counselling/instruction in alternative ways of behaving;
- Restorative work between the perpetrator and the victim (provided this is safe for the victim);
- fixed periods of exclusion;
- permanent exclusion (in extreme cases which may involve violence or sexual misconduct);

The Inclusion Manager, in consultation with, the Form Tutor, Head of House and the appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team will be responsible for responding to incidents of harassment and/or bullying in a proportionate way.

MONITORING AND EVALUATING

Each incident of harassment and bullying falling within the College definition will be recorded by staff using MyConcern. Any incidents which could be construed within the definition of a hate incident will be identified and logged on the PRIDE website and if we believe that a criminal offence has occurred the police will be informed.

Termly safeguarding reports will be made to the Governing Body including bullying incidents and trends that have been identified. An action plan will also accompany this report.

LAST POLICY REVIEW – MAY 2021

Staff responsible for review: Shahla Matarazzo, Acting Deputy Principal & DSL

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT BULLYING

There are many definitions of bullying, but most consider it to be:

- deliberately hurtful (including aggression)
- repeated often over a period of time
- difficult for victims to defend themselves against



Bullying can take many forms, but the main types are:

- physical hitting, kicking, taking or damaging belongings
- verbal name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks
- indirect spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours
- Cyber sending malicious messages on devices or over social networks

Name calling is the most common direct form.

This may be because of individual characteristics, but students can be called nasty names because of their appearance, age, race, ethnic origin, nationality or colour; sex or sexual orientation; gender reassignment, religion or belief; or some form of disability.

What to look out for, if a friend may be being bullied?

Behaviour changes; someone unusually withdrawn from your friendship group; absence from school; non-specific illness; belongings go missing; bruising or other signs of physical harm; torn clothes. *Check-in with them to see if they are okay. **Reporting bullying** is the right thing to do. You are not being a, "snitch." This is a word bullies and others use to make sure no-one reports bullying behaviour. **Do the right thing.** You will be taking a big step in making life better for yourself or someone else. You can email thinkpink@lvc.org - or speak to any member of college staff.*

The College is committed to creating a bully-free environment and will ensure that its zero-tolerance policy is applied rigorously. All staff involved in the teaching and/or supervision of children will take responsibility for addressing incidents which fall within the College's definition of bullying and harassment, and ensure that the victim receives the support that is required, that the bully is made aware of the unacceptability of his/her behaviour and a record is made of the incident.

Staff will constantly reinforce the message to children that bullying is unacceptable and will take positive action to prevent and control it.

Please talk to any member of staff about incidents of bullying which you experience or of which you may be aware. Staff will respond consistently and positively, take your expression of concern seriously and ensure that the matter is recorded and passed on to the Safeguarding Team for further investigation. The College will offer a proactive, sympathetic and supportive response to children and adults who are the victims of bullying.

May 2021