

Anti-Bullying Policy

Primary position responsible for updates to this policy: Head of College

Last review date: June 2026

Next review date: June 2027

Relevant ISI coding (if applicable)

Circulation: This policy has been adopted by the governors and is available to parents on request. It is addressed to all members of staff and volunteers and applies wherever they are working with children.

'Parents' refers to parents, guardians and carers.

Anti-Bullying Policy

Definitions of terms used in this policy:

Staff = all those employed in any capacity by or on behalf of Abbey College Manchester/Abbey DLD Education Ltd.

Parents = parent, guardians, House parents, Assistant House parents or Host Family

College = the main College building, the college residence, Host family lodgings, the Unitarian Chapel, all venues where enrichment takes place.

Please refer to:

Non-statutory DfE advice Preventing and Tackling Bullying (2017)

Cyberbullying: Advice for head teachers and school staff (2014)

Safeguarding Policy

Behaviour, Discipline and Exclusion Policy

IT Usage Policy

Mobile Phones and Devices, Photographs and Images and Social Media policies

PHSE Schemes of work

Overview

At Abbey College Manchester (ACM) bullying will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Staff, students and parents should be aware of the contents of this policy and ensure that it is observed in every regard at all times. The small community of Abbey College Manchester provides a safe and caring environment for those who may have been bullied elsewhere.

A whole college policy

All members of staff and students are made aware that bullying in any form will not be accepted at ACM.

All students at ACM have the right to feel safe and not tolerate any form of bullying.

Bullying is a specific, unacceptable behaviour which is totally alien to our College ethos and aims because bullying, be it physical or emotional, is a very serious issue which may cause psychological damage

Aims and objectives

We aim to encourage positive support from within the college, encouraging students to realise that they do not have to tolerate bullying and should inform others if they are being bullied. All students should be confident in the knowledge that they will be listened to and believed, and that action will be taken. This action will be prompt and sensitive to their concerns.

Students are encouraged to respect others with due regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

This policy aims to address the following outcomes of the **Every Child Matters Framework**.

1. Be Healthy
2. Stay Safe
3. Enjoy and Achieve
4. Make a Positive Contribution
5. Social and Economic Well-being

Objectives

- All staff, parents and students understand what is meant by bullying.
- All staff know what the college policy is regarding bullying and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All students and parents know what the college policy is regarding bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a college we take bullying seriously. Students and parents are assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Definitions

Bullying is usually a repeated behaviour, intentionally causing an individual to feel uncomfortable or threatened. It is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups and maybe racial, religious, cultural, sexual/sexist, homophobic, disability, linked to special educational needs or learning difficulties or because a child is adopted or a carer and/ or cyber (mobile phones, social websites, text messages, photographs and email) in origin. Bullying may occur directly or indirectly (e.g. through media technology).

There are three main categories of bullying:-

- Emotional e.g. actively excluding students, tormenting, spreading rumours, gesturing.
- Physical e.g. hitting, kicking, punching, taking or hiding belongings, damaging property.
- Verbal e.g. name calling, teasing, insulting, writing unkind notes, threatening.

Cyber Bullying

Cyber bullying is perpetrated via a technological medium, e.g. the internet or mobile phone. It can be an extension of 'face to face' bullying, with technology providing the bully with another route to harass their target. However, it differs in several ways from other kinds of bullying because of *the invasion of home and personal space and the size of the audience*. It takes different forms:-

- threats and intimidation
- harassment
- cyber stalking e.g. repeatedly sending unwanted texts, defamation
- exclusion or peer rejection
- impersonation
- circulation of private information or images and manipulation

Cyber bullying is deliberate and aggressive. Although it leaves no visible scars, cyber bullying is extremely destructive. What is more, bullies can reach a much wider number within a peer group than they can with conventional bullying. Vindictive comments posted on social media, for instance, can be seen by a larger audience, as can video clips sent by mobile

phones. Children are less likely to report the problem through fear of having their Internet access or phone removed. Parents need to be informed of what is happening to their child or what their child is doing. Research into cyber bullying indicates that it is a feature of many young people's lives. Cyber-bullying can affect members of staff and other adults, as staff can be ridiculed, threatened and otherwise abused by pupils.

Cyber bullying, as all other forms of bullying, is taken very seriously. It is never acceptable.

Staff guidelines

Delivery of anti-bullying information

- Formally in PSHE/tutorial lessons/registrations/assemblies e.g. through activities, talks, in discussion activities, in watching and responding to media resources, through debate or issues raised by students
- Formally by dealing with any bullying allegations promptly, effectively and efficiently
- Informally during the delivery of any academic subject lesson where the content relates to issues which may be linked to bullying e.g. migration topics in Geography where potentially racism issues may arise and in Ethics where gender issues are discussed.
- Informally through discussion in the home, homestays, the college residence
- Through discussion around moral/spiritual, Fundamental British Values

Training

Staff are involved in appropriate training as to how to respond to bullying as part of our countering bullying and safeguarding strategy. Training is updated on the summer compliance training day and as part of the January CPD day. Any other updates or information are shared via staff briefings or emails.

Any member of staff who has any concerns or is unsure about anything should seek advice from their line manager, the appropriate HoY, a member of the SLT or the DSL.

Students will be made aware of:

- The rights of the individual
- Tolerance of individual differences
- Social responsibility (i.e. caring for all members of the community)
- Appropriate reporting of rule breaking
- The difference between good and bad secrets
- Who to report any problems or incidents to

As such bullying will be set within the context of social behaviour as a whole and specifically with reference to Fundamental British values.

The above will be reinforced in tutorial and whenever such issues arise within the wider curriculum.

Students should know to always report incidents of bullying or of observed distress.

Members of staff should:

- Set an example of respect, kindness, courtesy and good manners.

- Ensure that standards of behaviour are maintained in a quiet, controlled and caring atmosphere.
- Ensure adequate supervision and surveillance within college and be prepared to identify potential danger areas.
- Be prepared to challenge any harassment or threatening behaviour
- Report all **incidents** of bullying to the appropriate person. A report via MyConcern should be made so that information can be readily shared. Depending on the severity this could be a Tutor, Head of Year, Houseparents, Director of Accommodation and/or a member of SLT.
- ***Any bullying (including cyber bullying or bullying outside college) should be treated at a Child Protection Concern where there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. In this instance it should be referred to the DSL or directly to Children's Social Care as per the safeguarding Policy.***
- Report any **actions taken** to the appropriate person
- Ensure that all incidents of bullying are dealt with **promptly and effectively**
- **Record** all incidents for the student file

An overview of bullying incidents is maintained by SLT to ensure that any patterns can be identified.

The Victim should be treated as follows:-

- Listen to and reassure the victim that staff will do everything to help them.
- Give them the confidence to tell you exactly what happened.
- Do not promise to keep anything secret.
- Deal with the incident itself or refer to the Head of Year/appropriate person immediately.
- Inform the victim that bullies feed on fear. Advise them not to show fear or take personal revenge.
- The victim should be reassured that it is not their fault, and that this has happened to others. There is nothing wrong with them
- Give continued support to the victim and check at later dates to see that bullying is not reoccurring
- Encourage the victim to talk about the incident.

The Bully should be treated as follows:-

- Ensure the bully has the opportunity to explain their behaviour
- Make the bully aware that their behaviour is unacceptable.
- Explain clearly and precisely what behaviour is causing distress to the victim.
- Discuss the difference between assertive and aggressive behaviour.
- Make the bully aware of the consequences if bullying continues.
- Discuss ways by which the bully must change their behaviour.
- Monitor the bully's behaviour over the forthcoming weeks.
- Whatever the cause, bullying is usually a signal that the bully also needs help.
- Any actions taken must be reported to the Head of Year (who should consult with the Deputy Principal/Head of College)
- Depending on the seriousness of the incident the HOY should be consulted before any action is taken

Parents, Homestay hosts and Houseparents should:

- Give specific support for the College policy on bullying.
- Report bullying incidents to the appropriate Head of Year in the first instance after which the HOY must notify the Head of College

Anti-bullying reporting and disciplinary procedure

All members of staff and students are responsible for the implementation of the Anti-Bullying policy. The procedure for reporting and imposing sanctions in relation to bullying follows that of the disciplinary procedure. The sanctions imposed will depend on the seriousness of the case, but temporary or permanent exclusions may be applied.

Victim and Perpetrator Support

How can the college help?

In the event in which there has been a recognisable bullying incident, there is a need to protect and assist the victim in line with our statutory obligations. This might be because the victim is identifiable through evidence or has passed on information that made the college aware of behaviours that are against the college's policies or ethos. This is also true of the perpetrator.

In both scenarios it is important that the victim and/or perpetrator are not subjected to further harm. In some situations, a perpetrator may have been withdrawn or excluded from college, but it is important that the college is mindful that such action may not end the matter. The college would need to look at a number of scenarios in order to ensure the victim can continue with their studies whilst feeling safe and secure.

Practical Measures

- It may be necessary for a student(s) to be moved from an existing class or group in order to protect the victim(s). This can be logistically difficult but can allow a victim(s) to be freed from a tense or possibly toxic environment.
- Access to mobile devices can be further curtailed, this might involve having specific devices set aside for an individual to use. It must be remembered that Abbey College Manchester does not permit the use of mobile phones in any part of the college premises, other than for a designated space (Common Room) for Year 12 and 13.
- Monitoring of activity through reporting. This might be within the lesson or a restriction of movement or communication either in college or outside of college during those deemed to be college hours.

Tailored measures to help the victim and/or perpetrator.

1. This might involve asking whether s/he might wish to access the college counsellor. The counsellor is in college one day a week.
2. Making the student aware of external routes of support (see appendix).

3. Meetings and/or correspondence with HoY/Tutor. It might be that this might require sensitivity regarding timing and place, however this ongoing dialogue is vital. At present the designated place for this to happen is the Royal Exchange Theatre.
4. MyConcern logged and a team established to monitor the student(s). Review of progress should be part of the established Safeguarding meeting cycle.
5. DSL/HoY set up a correspondence trail to monitor the student and to pass on concerns.

Parents.

It is the wish of the college that the parent or legal guardian of the student be made aware of the student being the victim of bullying, even in the cases when the parent is not in the country and/or English is not the first language. The same is true of the perpetrator

In cases in which physical and emotional harm are evidenced this can be communicated more readily than a situation in which the evidence is more circumstantial, or the victim is being ostracised. However, in all cases the college will attempt to be as transparent as possible in detailing the actions taken. In all instances, however, it is important that parents are aware of the measures that are being put in place and that they feel their child is being supported.

Through these measures it is the desire of the college that the student is able to feel safe and secure and is able to access the level of support necessary to assist in their achieving their academic potential.

Appendix

Helplines

- ChildLine: ChildLine is the UK's free, confidential helpline for children and young people. They offer advice and support, by phone and online, 24 hours a day. Whenever and wherever you need them, they'll be there. Call 0800 1111. They have a designated page for bullying issues that includes a new video about building up your confidence after bullying.
- Direct Gov: Information for young people on cyberbullying, bullying on social networks, Internet and email bullying, bullying on mobile phones, bullying at school, what to do about bullying, and information and advice for people who are bullying others and want to stop.
- EACH : EACH has a freephone Helpline for children experiencing homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying or harassment: 0808 1000 143. It's open Monday to Friday 10am-5pm.
- Victim Support: They offer support to young people affected by crime. Their Children and Young People's (CYP) Service also deals with cases of bullying; offering advice and working with professionals to ensure young people get the support they need. You can call their Supportline for free on 08 08 16 89 111.

Websites

The websites below have lots of information and advice for anyone who has experienced bullying.

- The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) maintains a website for children and young people, and parents and carers about staying safe online: Think U Know
- ChildLine: <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/>
- Kidscape: <https://www.kidscape.org.uk/advice/advice-for-young-people/dealing-with-bullying/>

Reporting cyberbullying

- If someone makes you feel uncomfortable or upset online, talk to an adult you can trust, such as a relative or a teacher. If you would prefer to talk to someone in confidence you can contact Childline (0800 1111)
- If someone has acted inappropriately online towards you, or someone you know, you can report directly to the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP). It could be sexual or threatening chat, or being asked to do something that makes you feel uncomfortable or someone asking to meet up.