

# LVC ANTI-BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY

THIS POLICY WAS APPROVED:	February 2023
POLICY VERSION:	
THIS POLICY WILL BE REVIEWED	February 2025
MEMBER OF STAFF WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR REVIEW	Safeguarding Lead
THIS POLICY WAS CONSULTED WITH:	FGB
THIS POLICY WAS DISTRIBUTED TO:	

## Statement of Intent

At Linton Village College we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so that they learn in a supportive and secure atmosphere. This policy reflects a belief that harassment and bullying are not acceptable under *any* circumstances and that they are best prevented through the development of a college ethos based on mutual respect, fairness and equality. 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, taking into consideration those with protected characteristics as outlined in the Equality Act, 2010. We actively tackle sexual harassment and sexist language and other prejudicial based behaviour and promote equal opportunities and good relations between and amongst all. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to feel confident about the College's procedures, feel secure in informing staff and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

The aim of this policy is to establish clearly what bullying is and the impact it can have on others, detailing how we embed a caring College ethos and the steps the College will take to deal with bullying.

The objectives of this policy are as follows:

- To raise an awareness with staff, parents and students that the College does not tolerate bullying or harassment in any form.
- To raise awareness among staff, parents/carers and students of the nine protected 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 ensure consistency by making students, parents/carers and staff aware of what steps to take when an incident of harassment, bullying or discrimination has occurred.
- To outline how the College accurately records all incidents of harassment and bullying and how we monitor the impact of preventative strategies.
- To outline the College's commitment to providing appropriate support and education for victims and perpetrators of bullying.

## What is bullying?

Bullying is a form of child-on-child abuse as outlined in the DfE statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022'. The Anti-Bullying Alliance defines bullying as 'The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online.' However, bullying can include one-off incidents where similar types of behaviour may be used to hurt another. Bullying and/or 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 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."

All bullying results in pain and distress.

Bullying can include:

- Emotional: being unfriendly to others, excluding, tormenting (e.g., hiding books, making threatening or unpleasant gestures) and could be linked to medical, SEN or disability;
- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, spitting, punching or any use of violence;
- Racial: name calling, inappropriate language, taunts, graffiti or gestures;
- Cultural or religious: including language, taunts, graffiti or gestures;
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact, gestures or sexual language and attitudes;
- Homophobic: upsetting comments, gestures, name calling focusing on the issue of sexuality and/or the use of homophobic or transphobia language;
- Verbal: name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, repeated teasing, undermining the celebration of achievement;
- Cyber: repeated abuse via all areas of the Internet and electronic communication, including email, text, calls, social networking, and misuse of related technologies including images and video;
- Indirect: by having nasty stories told about individuals; being left out, ignored or excluded from groups. Indirect could include types of cyber bullying.

The College is committed to ensuring the protection and support of groups identified under the Equality Act 2010. Bullying, harassment and/or discriminations 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).

## **Sexual violence and harassment**

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex from primary through to secondary stage and into colleges. It can occur through a group of pupils sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable.

The College is committed to creating a working and learning environment that is free from sexual harassment and violence and where all members of the community are treated with courtesy, dignity and respect. Sexual harassment and sexual violence are specific areas of bullying which potentially create an atmosphere that, if not challenged, can normalise inappropriate behaviours and attitudes.

Sexual violence and harassment are not behaviours based on mutual attraction, friendship or respect. If the interaction is consensual, welcomed and reciprocated it is not sexual violence or harassment. Sexual violence and harassment are unlawful and will not be tolerated, and action will be taken against those who commit such acts.

Sexual violence, for the purpose of this policy, is defined as any sexual offence covered under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. For the purpose of this policy when referring to sexual harassment we mean 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child-on-child sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include:

- Sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
- Sexual "jokes" 'banter' or taunting;
- Physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; intimidation by individuals or groups based upon gender;
- Online sexual harassment, which might include: non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos and sharing sexual images and videos (both often referred to as sexting); inappropriate sexual comments on social media; exploitation; coercion and threats. Online sexual harassment may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence.

## **Prejudiced based behaviour**

Prejudice based behaviour is any 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 has a significant impact on those targeted and those witnessing it. All prejudice-related incidents are taken seriously and recorded anonymously on the government's Prejudice Reporting for Education database.

## **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.

## **SCOPE OF THE POLICY**

This policy applies primarily to incidents of harassment and bullying which take place on college premises. At Linton Village College we are committed to the welfare and conduct of all members of the college community. We will take seriously any information received about harassment and bullying outside of the college. We therefore make the following commitment:

- 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 (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub);
- if the information shared with the College is of a criminal nature whereby 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 attending another school, the Principal of that school will be informed and invited to deal with the matter.

### **Preventing bullying**

The following section sets out methods by which the College will aim to prevent all forms of bullying in the College and the wider community.

#### **Raising Awareness**

At Linton Village College we are committed to raising awareness of the issues of bullying and harassment. The college ensures that:

- All teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils, parents, and governors understand what bullying is.
- All teaching and non-teaching staff and governors know what the college policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents are aware of the College policy on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- All stakeholders are clear that bullying will not be tolerated at Linton Village College.
- The college implements curriculum programmes and information and training alongside support procedures to help ensure these outcomes. This can be via the PSHE curriculum, assemblies and the tutor time programme.
- Pastoral staff and the Student Leadership Team work together to raise awareness and to eliminate bullying behaviour through whole-school campaigns and events.
- Anti-bullying week is used as an additional way of raising awareness during tutor time and assemblies.

#### **Modelling respectful relationships**

At Linton Village College we help children and young people to learn and to develop appropriate responses to others. One way in which we do this is by modelling respectful behaviour and communication to our young people. This includes treating all members of the college community with courtesy and respect. It is the responsibility of all members of the College community to model and actively promote caring and respectful behaviour. This includes never turning a blind eye to disrespectful or hurtful behaviour and never disregarding this behaviour as merely *'banter'* or *'part of growing up'*.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

Linton Village College is committed to stopping bullying behaviour and to do this requires everybody's involvement. The following are what every member of the school community can expect from the college and the responsibilities that are expected from each member.

### **All Pupils**

As part of the school community, pupils have a responsibility to help combat bullying by supporting other pupils when they are vulnerable.

- Pupils should not gang up against another pupil in a vulnerable position; try to help him/her feel less vulnerable.
- Pupils should not join in with making fun of them, even if they do not feel able to challenge the bullying behaviour themselves.
- Pupils should not turn a blind eye to bullying and victimisation – they should be prepared to be a defender rather than a bystander.
- Pupils should not use *'banter'* as an excuse for bullying behaviours. This will not be tolerated.
- If pupils know another pupil is being bullied (this could be a friend, someone in one of their classes, or someone that they just see around the school and have never spoken to and where the bullying could be happening at school, or on the way to and from school), pupils must let a member of staff know.

When staff know about bullying, pupils can expect what is said to be taken seriously and that action will be taken to stop the bullying behaviour.

If pupils are ever worried for their own or another pupil's physical safety (including if a pupil is afraid that a pupil may harm himself/herself), pupils should not hesitate to tell a member of staff so that they can take immediate action to keep the pupil safe.

Pupils reporting bullying between two other individuals may be worried about reprisals and will wish to give information anonymously. The College will seek to ensure that any pupil *'whistleblowing'* will have their anonymity protected during and after any investigation has taken place.

### ***Pupils who are being bullied***

If a pupil is being bullied or is perceived to be being bullied, it is expected that a safeguarding concern be raised on My Concern:

- pupils will be listened to and taken seriously;
- action will be taken to help a pupil stop the bullying;
- pupils will be given the opportunity to talk about the way that the bullying has made them feel and to use strategies to deal with these feelings and to understand and cope with bullying behaviour. This means:
  - the Form Tutor/Head of Year and other relevant members of staff will be told about the situation so that they can help to support the pupil;
  - pupils will be offered the chance to work with a member of the Pastoral Team to help them to find strategies to deal with bullying and to talk about any feelings and worries that they may have;
  - pupils will be offered the chance to talk with staff from other agencies as well, if appropriate;
  - the Form Tutor/ Head of Year will let parent(s)/carer(s) know what is happening and what actions have been taken. In addition, they will offer parent(s)/carer(s) strategies to help support their son/daughter where appropriate;
  - pupils will have regular meetings with staff to make sure that the action taken to stop the bullying is really working;

### ***Pupils who are bullying***

***If a pupil is bullying or is perceived to be bullying, it is expected that a safeguarding concern be raised on My Concern.***

Bullying has no place at Linton Village College. If pupils are involved in bullying they can expect that:

- bullying behaviour will be challenged;
- they will be treated fairly;
- they will be given the opportunity to change their behaviour and encouraged and supported in doing so. This means:
  - the bullying pupil will be expected to work with members of staff to look at the reasons that have led to their bullying behaviour and to find and put into practice other ways of behaving;
  - the Form Tutor/Head of Year will let the parent(s)/carer(s) know what is going on, and will offer them the chance to help support their son/daughter in changing the bullying behaviour;
  - pupils may be asked to acknowledge their bullying behaviour with the person(s) that they have been bullying through an agreed restorative approach with the victim and an adult and provide assurances that these behaviours will cease;
  - if pupils do not work at changing bullying behaviour, then staff will have to take more serious action. These sanctions may include restrictions on lunchtimes, restrictions on where the pupil is allowed to go around the school site, detentions, isolation or suspension;
  - the College is obliged to report all discriminatory behaviour to the Local Authority and a record remains on the pupil's school history indefinitely. Discriminatory behaviour and

cyber-bullying are criminal offences and are likely to involve significant sanctions being imposed by the College or the victim's parent(s)/carer(s).

Ultimately, the College will take all necessary steps to ensure that all pupils can exercise their rights to attend Linton Village College and achieve to the best of their potential, in a kind, happy and safe environment.

### ***College staff***

All staff can expect to be properly trained and supported in dealing with bullying by:

- promoting an environment that is constructive and safe for all pupils through their own teaching practice, the language they use towards one another and their actions;
- following the procedures set out in this policy when they are dealing with bullying;
- work in cooperation with colleagues, pupils, parent(s)/carer(s).

### ***Parent(s) / Carer(s)***

All parents and carers can expect to be kept informed of the school's anti-bullying work via Think Pink messages.

Staff will do their best to address any concerns that parents may have about bullying and parents will be asked to co-operate with the school in supporting their child in order to promote the message that bullying behaviour is not acceptable.

If a child is being bullied, parents can expect that:

- they and their child will be listened to;
- staff will ensure that parents are involved in the process of supporting their child in dealing with bullying;
- staff will do their best to address any concerns parents may have;
- wherever necessary, the school will put parents in contact with outside agencies that can help to support them and their child in addressing his/her experience of being bullied.

If their child is bullying another pupil, parents can expect that:

- they and their child will be listened to;
- their child will be treated fairly;
- their child will be expected to change their bullying behaviour and supported and encouraged in doing so by parents and staff;
- wherever necessary, the school will put parents in contact with outside agencies that can help to support their child in addressing his/her bullying behaviour.

Parents who are worried that their child is being bullied are strongly encouraged to get their child to report it to their child's Form Tutor/Head of Year or to any other member of staff. If parents have any concerns that another child who attends the school (e.g., a friend of their child) may be experiencing bullying, this should be reported to a member of the Pastoral Team. The College will always respond in an impartial manner and fully investigate all incidents.



Where appropriate and all parties agree, a restorative meeting will be convened and supported by the relevant staff involved.

### ***Governors***

College Governors can expect to be kept up to date on the progress of the school's anti-bullying work. College Governors will be expected to:

- give feedback on the monitoring and evaluation of the anti-bullying policy and practices in the school;
- openly support the school's anti-bullying message.

### **How to report bullying behaviours or harassment**

#### ***Students***

If a student is a victim of bullying or harassment, 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@lintonvc.org](mailto:thinkpink@lintonvc.org). There are Pink Postcard boxes within certain social areas and The Support Hub where students can raise an anonymous concern.
- e) To call Childline to speak with someone in confidence 08001111

#### ***College staff***

All staff must be vigilant to the signs of harassment and bullying and must play an active role in the College's efforts to prevent bullying incidents and behaviours. All members of staff have a duty to report harassment and bullying. If staff are aware of harassment and bullying, they should reassure the students involved and report the incident on My Concern. The title of the email should be Suspected Bullying with the Initials of victim and tutor group.

All members of staff play a vital role when it comes to the College's anti-bullying work. Any member of staff could witness bullying behaviours. This behaviour should never be overlooked and should always be reported in line with both this policy and the behaviour and discipline policy.

#### ***Parent(s) / Carer (s)***

We ask that parents and carers remain vigilant for the potential signs of harassment and bullying. This could include distress, lack of concentration or feigning illness. 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 or bullying to the College by appointment, by phoning or emailing reception or by emailing [thinkpink@lintonvc.org](mailto:thinkpink@lintonvc.org).

## **How will the College respond to reports of bullying behaviours?**

College staff will always respond in a manner that is measured, proportionate and pragmatic. 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.

The College has a protocol for reporting and following up on all instances of bullying and harassment. This protocol can be found in *appendices 1 + 2*.

When an investigation shows that a student has demonstrated bullying behaviours or has bullied another student, they will be issued with a sanction in line with the College's consistent response to behaviour. Details of these responses can be found in appendix 4.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Flow chart outlining protocol for logging bullying incidents



