

LINTON VILLAGE COLLEGE

ANTI-BULLYING & HARRASSMENT POLICY

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Member of staff with responsibility for review:	Louise Keen
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1. Statement of Intent

At Linton Village College we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our students so that they can learn in a supportive and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all students should feel confident about the College's procedures, feel secure in informing staff and be safe in the knowledge that incidents will be managed promptly, effectively and fairly.

The aim of this policy is to establish clearly what bullying is, the impact it can have on all of the individuals involved and the steps that the College will take to deal with bullying.

2. What is Bullying

Bullying is a form of child-on-child abuse as outlined in the DfE statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024'. It is the use of *repeated* behaviours with the intention of hurting another person(s). 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'***.

Bullying can also include one-off incidents where similar types of behaviour may be used to hurt another. All bullying results in pain and distress.

Categories of bullying can include:

- **Verbal:** Name calling, teasing, threatening, sarcasm
- **Physical:** Hitting, punching, kicking, pushing, throwing things at another person(s), inappropriate touching
- **Relational:** Ignoring, leaving out, spreading rumours
- **Indirect:** Stealing, demanding belongings, theft, targeted graffiti
- **Cyber-bullying:** 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
- **Prejudice based or discriminatory:** Prejudice-related bullying (also known as identity-based bullying or bias bullying) refers to any form of bullying that relates to protected characteristics, considered unique to a child's identity
 - Age
 - Race
 - Religion or belief
 - Culture or class
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation (homophobic or bi-phobic bullying)
 - Gender identity (transphobic bullying and gender reassignment)
 - Pregnancy and maternity

- Special Educational Needs (SEN) or Disability
- Appearance or health conditions
- Related to home or personal situation
- Related to another vulnerable group (such as young carers)

These forms of bullying are not only targeted at an individual but reflect negative attitudes towards a wider sub-community or group with whom that individual identifies.

The College is committed to ensuring the protection and support of groups identified under the Equality Act 2010.

At Linton Village College we recognise the following roles in bullying behaviour:

- Target
- Perpetrator/Ringleader
- Perpetrator/Assistant
- Reinforcer
- Defender
- Bystander

3. 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 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 and/or intimidation by individuals or groups based on gender.
- Online sexual harassment, which might include non-consensual and consensual sharing of 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.

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.

4. Why is it important that the whole College community work together to eliminate bullying behaviours?

Bullying is damaging and the negative impact can be long-lasting. It damages self-esteem, achievement and well-being. No-one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect and pupils who are bullying need to be educated to behave differently to secure their own success as students and citizens.

5. Preventing bullying

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

5.1. Raising awareness

- All teaching and non-teaching staff, students, parents and governors need to understand what bullying is.
- All teaching and non-teaching staff and governors should know what the College policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All students and parents are made aware of the College policy on bullying and what they should do if bullying arises or is suspected.
- All stakeholders must be clear that bullying is not tolerated at Linton Village College.
- The College will implement programmes, information and training, alongside support procedures to help ensure those outcomes.
- The College has its own Anti-Bullying Alliance, which allows students to support those students who may have been victims of bullying.
- Pastoral staff work with students and colleagues to raise awareness and to eliminate bullying through whole-school campaigns and events.

- Anti-bullying week is used as an additional way of raising awareness during tutor time and assemblies.
- There are anti-bullying assemblies at other points in the academic year to keep anti-bullying firmly in mind.
- Anti-bullying education is delivered through PSHE lessons at both Key Stage 3 and 4.

5.2. Responding to bullying behaviour

- Bullying can be reported by students, parents, staff and members of the community by speaking to a member of the pastoral or safeguarding team directly or by emailing with their concerns.
- Staff will also log bullying concerns on MyConcern, the College's safeguarding reporting system.
- When bullying is reported it will be taken seriously and acted upon.
- Staff will work with students who are being bullied to make them feel safe.
- Staff will work with students who are bullying to change the bullying behaviour.
- Wherever possible, staff will work with the parents/carers of any student who is being bullied to support and encourage that student in finding solutions to the bullying.
- Wherever possible, staff will work with parents/carers of any student who is bullying to support and encourage that student to understand the impact of their behaviour and to find alternative behaviours.
- Staff will involve, where necessary, outside agencies in supporting students who are experiencing bullying or who are bullying.
- Students may face various consequences including isolation in school or suspension from school for a fixed period. If particularly serious victimisation, abuse and intimidation, whether on or off-line, or physical bullying against another person belonging to the school community is reported, that student or students may have to be taken out of mainstream school activities while it is being investigated, and solutions are sought.
- If the solutions have no effect, or if the bullying was so severe that it would be harmful to the rest of the College community to allow the suspended student to return to school, they may have to be placed in alternative provision or, as a last resort, permanently excluded, in line with East and South Cambs Inclusion Partnership, Local Authority and statutory guidelines. Furthermore, if appropriate, police will be consulted – whilst the College will endeavour to resolve bullying through its own policies and procedures, the College will encourage the police to exercise their full powers if required, especially where bullying takes place outside of school, electronically or is repeated despite the imposition of school consequences. Headteachers have the power to discipline students for poor behaviour outside the school premises as students are travelling to or from school. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives headteachers the power to regulate students' conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff.

6. Standing up to bullying behaviour

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

6.1. All students

Students may find themselves in vulnerable positions sometimes, e.g. when they start a new school or if they are having problems at home. As part of the school community, students have a responsibility to help combat bullying by supporting other students when they are vulnerable.

- Students should not gang up against another student in a vulnerable position. They should try to help them to feel less vulnerable.
- Students should not join in making fun of them, even if they don't feel able to challenge the bullying behaviours themselves.
- Students should not turn a blind eye to bullying and victimisation – they should be prepared to be a defender rather than a bystander.
- Students should not use 'banter' as an excuse for bullying behaviours. This will not be tolerated.
- If students know that another student is being bullied (this could be a friend, someone in one of their classes or someone that they just see around the school or on the way to and from school), students must let a member of staff know.

This can be done in a number of ways, including:

- Students can use a 'Peer Postcard' to write down the details of the bullying if they would rather remain anonymous. They should include as much detail as possible – when and where the bullying is happening, who is doing the bullying and the names of any witnesses.
- Students can email 'thinkpink@lintonvc.org' with the details of the bullying that is taking place and can expect a reply so that they know that appropriate action is being taken.
- Students can speak to a trusted member of staff.
- All members of staff, no matter what their position in the College, will support students who wish to report bullying.
- Staff will ensure that the report of bullying is logged on MyConcern.
- Staff will make it clear to the alleged perpetrator or perpetrators that there should be no backlash towards the victim and that if there is, this will be treated seriously.
- Staff will anticipate possible backlash and put in place protective measures, as appropriate.

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

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

Students 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 student 'whistleblowing' will have their anonymity protected during and after any investigation has taken place.

6.2. Students who are being bullied

If a student is being bullied, it is expected that:

- Students will be listened to and taken seriously.
- Action will be taken to help a student to stop bullying.
- Students will be given the opportunity to talk about the way 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 will be told about the situation so they can help support the student.
 - Students will be given the chance to work with staff to find strategies to deal with bullying and to talk about any feelings and worries that they may have.
 - Students will be offered the chance to talk with staff from other agencies, if appropriate.
 - The Form Tutor or Head of Year will let parents/carers know what is happening and what actions have been taken. In addition, they will offer parents/carers strategies to help support their child.
 - Students will have regular meetings with staff to ensure that the action taken to stop the bullying is working.
 - If students are ever in fear of their safety, staff will help and take action. A safe space will be offered so that the victim feels re-assured and comfortable within the College environment.

6.3. Students who are bullying

Bullying has no place at Linton Village College. If students 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 will be encouraged and supported in doing so. This means:
 - Our priority is to make the school a safe and positive place for the whole school community.
 - The student who is bullying will be expected to work with 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 or Head of Year will let parents/carers know what is going on and will offer them the chance to help support their child in changing bullying behaviour.

- Students 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 stop.
- If students don't work at changing bullying behaviour, then staff will have to take more serious action. These consequences may include restrictions on social time and where the student is allowed to go around the school site, internal or fixed term exclusion.
- The College is obliged to report any prejudice-related incident to the Local Authority and a record remains on the student's school history indefinitely.
- The College will report any act which could be defined as a hate crime to the police.
- Cyber abuse is also a criminal offence and is likely to involve significant consequences being imposed by the College or the victim's parents/carers.

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

6.4. College Staff

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

All staff must:

- Promote 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.
- Follow the procedures set out in this policy when they are dealing with bullying.
- Work in co-operation with colleagues, students, parents and carers.
- Report bullying and child-on-child abuse incidents in the College's electronic safeguarding system, MyConcern.

6.5. Parent(s)/Carer(s)

All parents and carers can expect to be kept informed of the school's anti-bullying work throughout the school year.

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 and promoting 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 and believed.
- Staff will involve them in the process of supporting their child in dealing with bullying.
- Their concerns will be addressed in the best way possible by staff.

If their child is bullying another student, 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 will be supported and encouraged in doing so by parents and staff.
- Wherever possible, they will be put in contact by staff with outside agencies that can help to support their child in addressing their bullying behaviour.

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

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

Where a restorative approach has failed to modify the behaviour of the perpetrator and the bullying is continuing or when serious consequences are to be put in place, the parents/carers will be invited to the school to discuss their child's behaviour.

7. Monitoring the impact of the policy

The College will undertake regular reviews to both test the effectiveness of the policy and to identify possible changes in bullying patterns. Reviews will include information from the Health-Related Behaviour Survey, the Prejudice Reporting for Education database, scrutiny of MyConcern logs to help to identify themes and trends and information from the College's Wellbeing Mentor to determine whether intervention and support has been successful and adapt accordingly. The College will consult more informally with individuals, groups of students, staff and parents.

Louise Keen, Director of Safeguarding, has the whole-school responsibility for Anti-Bullying and will draw together the various strands of the anti-bullying policy and procedures and report to SLT and governors on the effectiveness of provision.

Anglian Learning will also monitor bullying through its regular programme of quality assurance, including site visits, parental and student surveys, pupil panels and peer visits.

8. Conclusion

Preventing bullying requires action from all members of the College community. At Linton Village College we expect:

- All students and staff to:
 - Treat one another with respect.
 - Report bullying incidents to staff of school leaders.
 - Not to bully others or to stand by and watch others being bullied.
 - Address bullying behaviour promptly.
 - Support victims where they can and involve parents/carers to work together to help rebuild resilience and self-esteem.
 - To support perpetrators of bullying to understand the negative impact on their behaviours and seek appropriate support.

- Parents/Carers to:
 - Listen calmly to a victim, keeping an open mind to try to establish the facts.
 - Contact the College promptly concerning any bullying.
 - Support the College's efforts to prevent bullying.
 - Not support their child in bullying behaviour but work in partnership with the College and their child to address these behaviours.
 - Work with the College in a positive way whenever a bullying problem involves their child.
- In return the College will:
 - Ensure staff are always vigilant and do not ignore bullying incidents.
 - Listen sympathetically to the victims.
 - Investigate thoroughly and record all incidents.
 - Protect the identity of the person reporting the incident, wherever possible.
 - Ensure that consequences for individuals remain confidential.
 - Provide help and support for victims and perpetrators.
 - Keep parents/carers informed.
 - Aim towards the elimination of bullying.