



## **DOVER COLLEGE ANTI-BULLYING POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

Reviewed By: Senior HSM  
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## Aims

At Dover College, we aim to provide a caring, safe and friendly environment, where our pupils can learn and develop in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is anti-social behaviour and is not tolerated. Thankfully, bullying at Dover College is a rare occurrence but can surface occasionally and is always taken as a concern when it arises. If bullying does occur, all pupils and parents should be able to inform someone within the school and have confidence that the incident will be dealt with promptly, effectively and appropriately. We expect anyone who knows that bullying is happening to inform a member of staff.

The College takes a four-pronged approach to bullying:

1. Educating pupils formally and informally, emphasising care and tolerance towards individuals.
2. Encouraging pupils to watch and recognise signs of unhappiness in other pupils and be confident to report it to a member of staff.
3. Provide an anti-bullying policy and complaints procedure.
4. Treating bullying cases with circumspection and in the first instance with a no blame approach. However, continued unacceptable behaviour will be dealt with robustly.

## Definition

Bullying is the intentional, repetitive or persistent hurting of one person by another, often where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying may not necessarily include all individual examples of unpleasant, aggressive or anti-social behaviour. Bullying can be done face to face, through third parties, or through sending messages or images by email, text or over the internet.

### Peer on Peer Abuse

Peer on peer abuse occurs when a young person is exploited, bullied and / or harmed by their peers who are the same or similar age; everyone directly involved in peer on peer abuse is under the age of 18. 'Peer-on-peer' abuse can relate to various forms of abuse (not just sexual abuse and exploitation), and crucially it does not capture the fact that the behaviour in question is harmful to the child perpetrator as well as the victim. Other forms of abuse include: cyberbullying, sexual violence and harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling; sexting and initiating/hazing type violence and rituals.

Sexual violence and harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or harassing a single child or group of children. Children subjected to this will likely find the experience highly distressing. This in all likelihood will adversely affect their educational attainment.

Staff are made aware of the importance of:

- **Such behaviour is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;**

- **Not dismissing sexual harassment or violence merely as ‘Banter’, ‘part of growing up’, ‘just having a laugh’, ‘boys being boys’, ‘girls being girls’;**
- **Challenge behaviours such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing such behaviours or tolerating them risks normalising them.**

It may be:

- Emotional: being deliberately unfriendly, excluding people from groups, tormenting (e.g. hiding books or possessions, making threatening gestures, damaging property or theft of property);
- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, spitting or using any form of physical violence;
- Racist: racial taunts, gestures or graffiti;
- Religious: anti-religious or sectarian taunts, gestures or graffiti;
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive comments or rumours;
- Homophobic: focussing on the issue of sexuality, including name calling;
- Verbal: name calling, teasing, mocking, spreading rumours, making offensive comments;
- Focussed on special needs or disability;
- Cyber: misuse of all areas of the internet, such as email and chat rooms, mobile phones, text messaging, camera or video technology deliberately used to cause offence, torment or spread rumours.

Bullying hurts and can do lasting harm. Pupils who bully need to learn different ways of behaving.

## **Objectives**

- To provide a caring environment in which pupils develop respect for themselves and for others;
- To encourage pupils to be kind, fair, and honest and so to develop within themselves a total rejection of bullying in any form;
- To ensure that all in the school community are aware that bullying will not be tolerated;
- To create an open and supportive climate for all pupils, so that bullying is reported and dealt with swiftly;
- To ensure that pupils and parents know about the school policy on bullying and know what they should do if bullying arises;
- To ensure that staff are familiar with the school policy on bullying and know what they should do if bullying is reported to them, dealing with it in a way that takes account of the needs of both the victim and the bully.

## **Whole School Strategy to Prevent Bullying**

- The Dover College Code for Conduct in the termly pupil prep planner emphasises the need for mutual respect and care within the College community;
- The PSHE Programme provides a range of opportunities for pupils to discuss issues to do with friendship, relationships, caring for each other in the community as well as discussing bullying as a specific topic;
- Whole College Assemblies, House Meetings and Chapel Services regularly focus on issues such as respect, friendship, community values and bullying itself;
- All staff are expected to treat all pupils with respect, fairness and justice;
- There are currently two members of Staff on duty per day during free time around the College grounds. Housemaster/Housemistress and Matrons are also available in the houses and a significant adult presence around the College enables pupil's easy access to staff members if the need arises;
- All the staff have a pastoral duty within the College and most are assigned to a house tutor team within the houses;
- Pupils will be made aware of whom they can talk to in confidence, including the Independent Listener and School Counsellor. All cases will be treated with discretion and sensitivity;
- All Pupils meet for a formal meeting throughout the year with the Pastoral Welfare Team to discuss all pastoral and Welfare matters;
- Staff are asked to watch for early signs of distress in pupils (deterioration in work, spurious illness, isolation, avoidance of their own peer group) and report any concerns to the relevant Housemaster/Housemistress.

## **Procedure for Dealing with Bullying**

All reports of bullying should be taken seriously and dealt with promptly. Teachers should listen carefully to accounts and try not to make premature assumptions. Reports of any bullying concerns are dealt with by the Housemaster/Housemistress, in the first instance, with support from the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The first priority is to stop the bullying and support both the victim and the bully from future re-occurrence.

1. Alert - Cases of bullying or suspected incidents should be immediately reported to the relevant Housemaster/Housemistress.

2. Investigation - The Housemaster/Housemistress will notify the Senior Housemistress of any other pupil concerned as well as the Designated Safeguarding Lead of the case and then make a preliminary investigation. If the allegations are concrete, the Housemaster/Housemistress will inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the parents of his/her pupil. A copy of the notes and actions taken should be placed in the pupil's house files and central files, with a copy sent to the DSL. The incident should be recorded on the central ISAMs system for pupil records.

3. Reporting - At the earliest opportunity the Housemaster/Housemistress will 'flag' the pupil concerned informing staff and asking them to observe the pupil(s) and to report any incidents, regarded as bullying. A bullying incident should be treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm.

4. Case Discussion - If reports indicate pupils involved are across houses the Housemaster's concerned should meet twice weekly with their pupils to discuss whether the problem is persisting. These meetings are noted and the Housemaster/Housemistress should confer to ensure the pupils' accounts match up. This approach should continue for a minimum two weeks to ensure there is no recurrence. If the cases are more persistent, the Housemaster/Housemistress and the Designated Safeguarding Lead will meet to exchange information and devise an action plan, setting out objectives with regards supporting the victim and the bully and to restore normal relationships. The group will set monitoring procedures and a date for a review meeting. A copy of this action plan will be discussed with the Headmaster and the parents concerned.

5. Monitoring and Reviews - The Housemaster/Housemistress involved will oversee monitoring of the situation in conjunction with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. At any review meetings those concerned will discuss outcomes to date and whether it is necessary to renew action plan objectives and continue monitoring, whilst setting future dates for review meetings. In extreme cases the Headmaster will be asked to join such meetings.

6. Feedback - At each stage of the procedure staff should be kept informed at flagging meetings of any pupils requiring monitoring. The College should make clear to parents of victims and bullies, the actions being taken, why they are being taken and what they can do to support our decisions.

### **Serious Offences**

If a pupil does not respond positively to attempts to stop the bullying behaviour or the bullying behaviour is sufficiently serious, the pupil will be dealt with according to the College's behaviour policy and appropriate sanctions robustly applied, which could lead to exclusion or referral to outside agencies at the Headmaster's discretion.