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| **Anti-Bullying Policy** |



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| **Family:**  | Corporate Governance and Legal Frameworks |
| **Reference Code:** | GOV07 |
| **Manager Responsible:** | Assistant Principal Student Experience and Wellbeing |
| **Committee for Approval:** | Safeguarding/Corporation Board |
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| **Impact Assessment status** | In preparing the Policy, any potential disproportionate impact it might have upon individuals with protected characteristics, as defined in the Equality Act 2010, have been carefully considered. It is the conclusion of the College Group that the Policy does not adversely impact on individuals with any of the protected characteristics.  |
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| **Originator** | Assistant Principal Student Experience and Wellbeing |
| **Responsibility** | Assistant Principal Student Experience and Wellbeing |

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Aim

The policy aims to ensure that:

1. The Chesterfield College Group provides a safe environment in which all users, particularly young people and vulnerable adults, can learn and in which College users can operate, flourish and progress.
2. The Chesterfield College Group is committed to the elimination of discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. It is the right of every student and apprentice to study without fear of harassment or bullying even if it is not directed at them.
3. The Chesterfield College Group recognises the problems associated with bullying and harassment and is committed to providing an environment in which all individuals can operate effectively, confidently, and competently. If a complaint is brought to the attention of management, it will be investigated fully in line with the College’s Complaints and Compliments Policy (CSE06).

Scope

This policy and associated operating procedures apply to Chesterfield College, which includes Learning Unlimited, and to our subsidiary companies; Training Services 2000 Ltd (LU Derby), Learning Unlimited ATA Ltd and Recruit Unlimited Ltd.

The policy applies to all staff, students/apprentices, and other College users, including volunteers, external contractors, remote students, and employers where students/apprentices have work placements or are engaged in work-based learning.

Throughout the policy reference is made to College users. This term is used to refer to all students and apprentices but with particular reference to safeguarding duties in respect of young people under the age of 18 years and vulnerable adults, where any form of bullying or potential child-on-child abuse is recognised and responded to.

Policy Statements

The Chesterfield College Group has a statutory and moral duty to ensure that it provides students and apprentices with a safe and supportive environment in which they can participate in a range of learning activities that are free from any form of discrimination, harassment, or victimisation. The College recognises that bullying and harassment takes place both within a face-to-face context and within the virtual world, i.e., online through social media, text messaging, emails, and other online communication platforms.

The College provides a safe, non-threatening, inclusive environment in which all College users can operate and learn, where they are treated with respect and dignity, feel safe, are listened to, where account is taken of their wishes and feelings, and positive wellbeing is promoted. This will produce students/apprentices who are confident, healthy, safe, emotionally resilient, and personally fulfilled.

The College is an intrinsic part of the local community and as such has strong relationships with external agencies with the aim of managing and reducing conflict, helping different groups of people to get on together. The College promotes Fundamental British Values and gives students/apprentices the opportunity to mix and learn with, from, and about those from different backgrounds.

**What is bullying and harassment?**

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, which is intended to hurt another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms and is often motivated by prejudice, for example on grounds of race, religion, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between individuals, or perceived differences. Bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate another. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online. Examples of bullying may include:

* Verbal and/or physical intimidation: threats, shouting, derisory and/or sarcastic remarks, often in front of others.
* Asserting a position of intellectual superiority in an aggressive, abusive, or offensive manner.
* Ostracism from groups or normal conversations.
* Withholding information, spreading malicious rumours, persistent unjustified criticism.
* Causing physical harm.

Harassment is the act of systematic and/or continued unwanted and annoying actions of one party or a group, including threats and demands. This may be linked to the protected characteristics of an individual.

**What is online bullying?**

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for ‘virtual’ bullying, which can occur inside or outside the learning environment. Online bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at any time of the day, with a potentially bigger audience and more accessories as people forward on content at the push of a button.

Although some technology seemingly allows anonymity, there are ways to discover where the bullying originated. However, it is important to be aware that this may not necessarily lead to an identifiable individual. For instance, if another person’s phone or College network account has been used, locating where the information was originally sent from will not, by itself, determine who the bully is. Examples of online bullying include:

* Online stalking, including PC attacks – the sending of messages to frighten or threaten someone, the sending of spyware, viruses, worms, Trojan horses etc.
* Degradation or humiliation – spreading rumours and hearsay online with the purpose of damaging the victim’s reputation.
* Harassing – sending insulting, threatening, and harassing messages persistently and tirelessly.
* Impersonating – taking on a false identity, creating a fake profile, or password theft to access the victim’s profile, for the purpose of tormenting a person and damaging their reputation. Pretending to be a victim.
* Text messaging – tormenting another person by sending endless text messages.
* Website creation – creating websites and pages and loading them with images, statements, and insulting remarks for the sole purpose of tormenting and humiliating a person or group.
* Use of photos and images – posting embarrassing photos of an individual to torment and humiliate them. In some cases, these photos and images are fake and have been altered to implicate/portray the victim.

Where issues arise that cause conflict and potential bullying and harassment, staff should work proactively to provide a safe environment that should include:

* Involving parents, where appropriate, to ensure that they are clear that the College does not tolerate bullying and are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being bullied. Parents then feel confident that the College will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issue in a way that protects the student/apprentice.
* Involve students/apprentices in the process so that they understand the College’s approach and are clear about the part they can play to reduce risks and prevent bullying, including where they find themselves as bystanders.
* Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality, and young people with different family situations, such as looked-after children or those with caring responsibilities. College will also teach students and apprentices that using prejudice-based language is unacceptable through role modelling and consistent challenge.
* Ensuring that students/apprentices know how to report bullying, including online bullying, whether this has occurred inside or outside of the learning environment.

Implementation

The College’s response to bullying should not start at the point at which a student/apprentice has been bullied. College staff should proactively gather intelligence about issues between students and apprentices which might provoke conflict and develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring. This might involve talking to students/apprentices about issues of difference through dedicated events or projects. Staff can determine what will work best for their students/apprentices, depending on the issues they need to address.

The College will look to create an ethos of good behaviour, where students/apprentices treat one another and College staff with respect in line with the College's Code of Conduct.

The College will create and maintain a safe environment where students/apprentices can openly discus the cause of their bullying, without fear of further bullying or discrimination.

Respect for staff and other students/apprentices, an understanding of the value of education, and a clear understanding of how actions affect others permeate the College environment and are reinforced by staff and students/apprentices.

The College Group will ensure that:

1. The policy is available to parents/carers and the local community via the College website.
2. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will work with colleagues across the College to implement the policy and will ensure that all staff, including volunteers, have access to the relevant information/training as reasonably required by their role.
3. The policy is implemented in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and forms part of the wider Safeguarding Policy family.

Communication Flow

The policy will follow the same communication flow as the ‘parent’ Safeguarding Policy (GOV05).

Through safeguarding training and related communication, staff and students/apprentices are clear of the reporting process for bullying incidents, which should follow the same reporting processes as any other safeguarding concern. These referrals will be picked up and actioned by the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputies within the usual timeframes for dealing with a concern.

All students/apprentices are actively encouraged to report any bullying to staff members and can seek support and guidance from their Learning, Engagement, Achievement and Progress (LEAP) Mentor or the Safeguarding Team if they are at immediate risk of harm.

Students/apprentices that may be at risk of becoming victims of bullying or harassment should be encouraged to maintain a diary to inform support interventions and necessary actions in terms of reporting.

Monitoring

The policy will follow the same monitoring of implementation as the ‘parent’ Safeguarding Policy (GOV05). Safeguarding Board reports will specifically include detail of any emerging trends around individuals or groups of individuals being subject to harassment or bullying.

Associated Information and Guidance

The policy is underpinned by associated legislation and guidance as listed below:

* Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.
* Equality Act 2010\*.
* Education (Independent College Standards) (England) Regulations 2010.
* Section 89 Education and Inspections Act 2006.
* Children Act 1989.
* Prevent Duty guidance for England and Wales.

\*The Equality Act 2010 replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. A key provision is a public sector Equality Duty covering age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. The Duty has three aims. It requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
3. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

**Reference to Criminal Law**

Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence in the UK it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassment, threatening behaviour, or communications could be a criminal offence for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986.

Related Chesterfield College Group Policies and Documents

* Complaints and Compliments Policy – CSE06
* Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy – GOV03
* Safeguarding Policy – GOV05
* Tackling Extremism and Radicalisation Policy – GOV06
* Health and Safety Policy – GOV08
* Information Security Policy – INF01
* IT Acceptable Use Policy – INF02
* Data Protection Policy – INF03
* Student/Apprentice Disciplinary Policy – TLA03

See also:

* Guidance on Maintaining Professional Relationships with Students