



Anti-Bullying Policy

Aspris College North Wales

Written: January 2023

Next Review Date: - January 2024

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At Aspris College North Wales we recognise that many of the young people attending the provision may not fully understand the consequences of their actions on others. The majority of the young people have a diagnosis of Autism and related conditions; they may have limited empathy and may not be able to consider more fully the feelings of others. This is not used as an excuse to accept any form of bullying within the College. Sanctions are not used and therefore there are no sanctions for bullying. Instead, counselling and support work is used if bullying occurs.

Bullying is described as a 'deliberate act done to cause distress solely in order to give feeling of power, status or other gratification to the bully. It can range from ostracising, name-calling, teasing, threats, and extortion, through to physical assault on persons and/or their property. It can be an unresolved single frightening incident, which casts a shadow over a person's life, or a series of such incidents.'

ACNW adopts a stance that

- No form of bullying is tolerated.
- All staff, parents, carers, other professionals, and all young people are required to work together to create a happy, welcoming and caring environment.
- Young people will be supported by staff that effectively model positive relationships and display anti-bullying attitudes to problem resolution.
- Everyone within the College is protected by the anti-bullying remit.
- It is every staff member's responsibility to prevent any form of bullying occurring and to deal with any incidents quickly and effectively.
- The College supports the victim as well as the perpetrator in resolving the issue.
- Any reporting as a result of investigation remains confidential as long as it adheres to safeguarding requirements .
- In order to understand the causes of bullying in the College, patterns and trends are monitored and evaluated.

Procedures:

- It is the responsibility of all staff to bring any incident they feel may be suspicious to the attention of the College Leadership Team,
- The victim, their friend, their parent/carer or other interested people can bring bullying to the attention of staff.
- Cases of bullying are dealt with in the context of the College policy and guidance, as well as being recorded and monitored.
- When required, such as when the bullying involves criminal behaviour or the initial steps taken to combat it have failed, a referral to the Social Services Department or police may take place.

Bullying Between Young People:

The following action is implemented depending on the perceived seriousness of the situation. The emphasis is always on a caring, supporting and listening approach, as bullies may often be victims too.

- If a member of staff believes that bullying between young people has occurred, they are required to inform the appropriate member of staff for that student. This is important, as the situation may need to be considered under the Safeguarding Procedures.
- A lengthy discussion, using appropriate means of communication for that specific young person, takes place with the victim. This may require patience and understanding and staff are asked to listen, believe and act.
- Witnesses are obtained, if possible, along with accurate times, dates and incident details.
- The College conducts a discussion (at the appropriate level and using alternative communication methods if need be) with the bully and advises them of the details. They are asked for their side of the incident, advising them to tell the truth about the situation/incident.
- While sanctions for the bully are not used, young people are helped to understand the consequences of their behaviour and are encouraged to make amends with the victim.
- Staff will ensure that the bully and victim remain fully supervised at all times.
- The College continues to monitor the situation through observation and ongoing discussions with the victim to ensure that there is no repetition.
- As the behaviour of the bully improves, the individual is praised for good behaviour. This rebuilds the individual's self-esteem, which may have been damaged after being caught bullying, or could have been low anyway, hence the bullying.
- Where appropriate, PSE/Citizenship lessons within a young person's individual programme include awareness of bullying and other related issues, including how to 'speak up'.
- Information concerning any incidents is communicated between all stakeholders particularly the young people's support workers, so that any work which has been initiated by the College is carried on in residential time, and vice versa. This information is conveyed to parents/Caregivers.
- Records of any incidents are recorded in the College incident book, reported on the Engage system, cross referenced and filed in the young person's personal files.

Bullying of Young People by Staff:

ACNW upholds strict codes of staff behaviour towards the young people. All new staff read and sign to say adhere to this policy and guidelines during their induction period. The following are regarded as disciplinary matters:

- Hitting a young person or another person
- Deliberately or maliciously inflicting pain
- Initiating or provoking unnecessary conflict or confrontation
- Bullying, intimidating or humiliating a young person including by cyber technology
- The use of unauthorised sanctions
- Failure to intervene or report incidents of bullying between young people

Bullying in the Workplace:

The College believes that every member of staff employed has the right to work in an environment that is free from harassment, intimidation, and bullying, either from managers or from other colleagues. Aspris College North Wales aims to provide a working environment that enables staff to enjoy their work and fulfil their personal potential. In order to achieve this, the College accepts that such an environment cannot be created or be sustained if, individually or collectively, staff are subject to harassment, intimidation, victimisation, or bullying. If a staff team member feels persecuted, vulnerable, and powerless, they will not be able to work effectively.

To reduce the incidence of harassment and bullying, the College aims to ensure that all staff are aware of their own behaviour and of the effect that their behaviour can have on others.

All employees of Aspris College North Wales:

- have the right to work in a work place free from harassment or bullying
- have the right to be protected from harassment or bullying in the workplace
- have the right to complain of harassment or bullying suffered in the workplace
- have the right to be free from false allegations of harassment or bullying.

All employees found responsible for harassment or bullying in the workplace are disciplined, as directed by the company's Disciplinary Procedure.

Any employees found to have suffered harassment or bullying in the workplace are supported by the organisation and, depending upon the circumstances and the victim's wishes, may be offered a move to any other area of the College or have another member of staff act as a mentor to discuss this issue with.

Any employee found to have made false allegations of harassment, sexual harassment or bullying will be subject to the company's Disciplinary Procedure.

Staff are required to report harassment or bullying to their line manager or another responsible senior member of staff, as soon as possible after the incident or sequence of incidents.

A member of staff who does not wish to approach their line manager, or if the manager is the alleged bully, should approach the Senior Management Team to discuss any possible incidents of bullying.

Upon reports or the witnessing of harassment or bullying, the manager:

- discusses whether the individual wishes to make a complaint of harassment or bullying.

- provides support to employees wishing to make an allegation of harassment or bullying.
- applies the Disciplinary Procedure, which may lead to dismissal for those responsible for harassment or bullying in the work place
- provides further support if needed for employees suffering from the consequences of harassment or bullying

An allegation of harassment or bullying is investigated swiftly and confidentially, whilst ensuring the rights of all are protected.

DEFINITION OF CYBER-BULLYING at ACNW

Cyber-bullying is an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual using electronic forms of contact repeatedly over time against a victim who cannot easily defend himself/herself. By cyber-bullying, we mean bullying by electronic media:

- Bullying by texts or messages or calls on mobile phones
- The use of mobile phone cameras to cause distress, fear or humiliation
- Posting threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating material on websites, to include blogs, personal websites, social networking sites
- Using e-mail to message others
- Hijacking/cloning e-mail accounts
- Making threatening, abusive, and defamatory or humiliating remarks in chat rooms, to include Facebook, Snapchat, Youtube and TikTok etc.

Cyber-bullying is generally criminal in character, this law applies to cyberspace. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information in any media including internet sites.

Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to ‘send, by public means of a public electronic communications network, a message or other matter that is grossly offensive or one of an indecent, obscene or menacing character’.

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to ‘knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment’.

Whilst education and guidance remain at the heart of what we do, PCW reserves the right to take action against those who take part in cyber-bullying. All bullying is damaging but cyber-bullying and harassment can be invasive of privacy at all times. These acts may also be criminal acts. PCW supports victims and, when necessary, will work with the Police to detect those involved in criminal acts.

All members of the College community are expected to bring to the attention of the Senior Managers – Claire Imber, Kath Lawler, Carla Owen, Jane Plant and Abbi Roberts any example of cyber-bullying or harassment that they know about or suspect.

GUIDANCE FOR STAFF

If you suspect or are told about a cyber-bullying incident, follow the protocol outlined below:

Mobile Phones

- Ask the student to show you the mobile phone
- Note clearly everything on the screen relating to an inappropriate text message or image, to include the date, time and names
- Make a transcript of a spoken message, again record date, times and names
- Tell the student to save the message/image
- Go with the student to senior management

Computers

- Ask the student to get up on-screen the material in question
- Ask the student to save the material
- Print off the offending material straight away
- Make sure you have got all pages in the right order and that there are no omissions
- Accompany the student, taking the offending material, to a member of the Senior Management Team
- Normal procedures to interview students and to take statements will then be followed particularly if a Safeguarding or child protection issue is presented.

ACNW ICT CODE OF CONDUCT

In addition, students at the College are requested to sign a safe working document before using IT equipment and camera phones are not to be used to take photographs of students – only College equipment should be used (with the exception to college Wi-Fi)

This is displayed prominently in Computer Room and the Code of Conduct is explained and discussed with students on induction, on application and in PSE classes