

# **Brampton College Bullying Policy**

## **Policy statement**

1. **Scope:** This policy applies to all students and staff at Brampton College irrespective of their age and whether or not a student is in the care of the College when/if bullying behaviour occurs.
2. **Policy Aims:** Through the operation of this policy we aim:
  - 2.1. To maintain and drive a positive culture of kindness and consideration among all students and staff throughout the College.
  - 2.2. To deter bullying behaviour, detect it when it occurs, and deal with it by counselling and/or disciplinary sanctions and, if necessary, by expulsion.
3. **Bullying behaviour** is always unacceptable and will not be tolerated at Brampton College because:
  - 3.1. It is harmful to the person who is bullied, and to those who engage in bullying behaviour, and those who support them.
  - 3.2. It interferes with a student's right to enjoy his/her learning and leisure time free from intimidation.
  - 3.3. It is contrary to all our aims and values, our internal culture and the reputation of the College.

## **Bullying behaviour**

4. **Meaning:** Bullying is behaviour which hurts or causes distress by taking unfair advantage of another person in some way, making him or her feel uncomfortable or threatened. The seriousness of bullying cannot be underestimated in causing psychological damage and even suicide. Examples are:
  - 4.1. Physical bullying such as hitting, kicking pushing people around, spitting; or taking, damaging or hiding possessions.
  - 4.2. Verbal bullying - name-calling, taunting, teasing, insulting, racist remarks or demanding money.
  - 4.3. Exclusionary behaviour - intimidating, isolating or excluding a person from a group.
  - 4.4. Sexual harassment - talking to or touching someone in a sexually intimidating way.
  - 4.5. General unkindness - spreading rumours or writing unkind notes or e-mails.

- 4.6. Religious or cultural, homophobic, disability and cyber bullying (social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photos and email).
5. **Intention:** Not all bullying is deliberate or intended to hurt. Some individuals may see their hurtful conduct as "teasing" or "a game" or "for the good of" the other person. These forms of bullying are equally unacceptable but may be non-malign and can often be corrected quickly with advice and without disciplinary sanctions. A bully who does not respond appropriately to advice or sanctions would ultimately have to leave the College.
6. **Responsibility:** It is everyone's responsibility to ensure, whatever the circumstances, that no student becomes a victim of bullying. A person may be vulnerable to bullying because of his/her age, physical appearance, nationality, colour, gender, sexual orientation, religion or disability, or because s/he is new in the College, appears to be uncertain or has no friends. S/he may also become a target because of an irrational decision by a bully.
7. **Legal Aspects:** A person who makes a physical or sexual assault on another, or who steals or causes damage to the property of another, commits a criminal offence and also a civil wrong known as a "tort" for which there can be legal consequences outside the College.

### **Anti-bullying culture**

8. **Ethos:** Our expectation of all members of the College Community is that:
  - 8.1. Everyone will uphold the Policy on Bullying, which is printed in the Policies File.
  - 8.2. A student or a member of staff who witnesses or hears of an incident of bullying will report it.
  - 8.3. A complaint of bullying will always be taken seriously.
  - 8.4. No one will tolerate unkind actions or remarks or stand by when someone else is being bullied.
9. **Equal Opportunities:** In the College:
  - 9.1. Discriminatory words and behaviour are treated as unacceptable.
  - 9.2. Positive attitudes are fostered towards people who are disabled and towards ethnic, cultural and linguistic groups within and outside the College.
  - 9.3. Positive attitudes are fostered towards both sexes through the curriculum and tutorials.
10. **Staff:** Through their training and experience, members of the staff are expected to promote an anti-bullying culture by:

- 10.1. Celebrating achievement.
  - 10.2. Anticipating problems and providing support.
  - 10.3. Disciplining sensibly and fairly.
  - 10.4. Making opportunities to listen to students.
  - 10.5. Acting as advocates of students.
11. **Students:** Through our pastoral care systems, students are informed and taught that bullying will not be tolerated in the College. They are encouraged:
- 11.1. To celebrate the effort and achievements of others.
  - 11.2. To hold and promote positive attitudes.
  - 11.3. To feel able to share problems with staff.
  - 11.4. To turn to anyone they trust, if they have a problem.
  - 11.5. Not to feel guilty about airing complaints.

### **Anti-bullying systems**

12. **Approach:** Our systems for detecting and dealing with bullying are designed to operate:
- 12.1. *Vertically*, through all year groups.
  - 12.2. *Horizontally*, within year groups and in the personal tutor sessions and other activities.

Our anti-bullying systems are implemented and driven in the way described below.

13. **Complaints:** A student who is being bullied should complain without delay and can do so in several ways. S/he can:
- 13.1. Tell his/her parents, his/her teacher, Personal Tutor, head of Personal Tutor team or a member of staff or responsible older student.
  - 13.2. Contact the College Counsellor.
  - 13.3. Contact Childline (0800 1111).
  - 13.4. Contact the designated Child Protection Officer, Mike Wheeldon.
14. **Vigilance:** Members of staff are vigilant at all times but particularly:
- 14.1. Before lessons; at lunchtimes and after College.

15. **Meetings:** Bullying is regularly discussed in meetings between:

15.1. Members of the Senior Management Team.

15.2. Heads of Personal Tutor Teams and Personal Tutors.

15.3. Personal Tutors and students in their tutor group.

The result of these meetings is to feed back information about friendship patterns, particular incidents, any student who seems to be isolated, any growing "power base" and any known conflict between a member of staff and a student, or between students.

16. **Record Keeping:** Personal Tutors and Heads of PT teams maintain records of the welfare and development of individual students.

17. **Education:** The GCSE PSHE curriculum includes a course on bullying which covers:

17.1. Who is the "bully"? Who is the "victim"?

17.2. Why are some people "bullies" and others "victims"?

17.3. What should a student do if s/he is bullied?

17.4. What constitutes bullying? Where are the boundaries?

17.5. What should be done if bullying is confirmed?

Videos are shown to stimulate discussion.

18. **Staff Training:** Appropriate training in all aspects of care is arranged to ensure that Personal Tutors and other staff have the necessary professional skills, especially:

18.1. Awareness of the risk and indications of child abuse and bullying, and how to deal with cases.

18.2. Counselling skills (including bereavement).

In the classes, library, hall and common room, the College will ensure that:

18.3. There is an adequate presence of staff.

18.4. Staff are actively involved with students when they are on duty.

18.5. Attempts are made to avoid boredom and lack of purpose among students.

18.6. There is space available for students' quiet withdrawal.

18.7. Good behaviour and discipline is maintained.

19. **Monitoring:** Every complaint or report of bullying must be entered in the Incident File. The Vice Principals keep Incident Files up-to-date.

## Reporting Incidents

20. **Victim:** There are many reasons why a student who has suffered bullying may be reluctant to report it. S/he may become demoralised and may say, for example:
  - 20.1. It is telling tales. They won't believe me because the person I am complaining about is intelligent and popular and I am not, and I will become even more unpopular.
  - 20.2. The things they are saying and doing are too embarrassing to discuss with an adult.
  - 20.3. It is all my fault anyway for being overweight/too studious etc.
  - 20.4. There are too many of them; there is nothing the staff can do.
  - 20.5. It will get back to my parents and they will think less of me.
  - 20.6. I will just try and toughen up and grow a thicker skin.
  - 20.7. I will lie low and not audition for a part in the College play etc.
21. **Witnesses:** There are also reasons why a student who has witnessed or learned of bullying behaviour may not want to make a report. S/he may say:
  - 21.1. It is "grassing" and I will become unpopular.
  - 21.2. It is not my concern anyway.
  - 21.3. I don't rate the victim and I would find it embarrassing to be associated with him/her.
22. **Culture:** Any of these responses would be contrary to our culture at the College. When we drive and implement this policy we encourage every student to understand that:
  - 22.1. Every complaint of bullying will be taken seriously.
  - 22.2. Members of staff will deal with a complaint correctly and effectively in accordance with their experience and the training they have received.
  - 22.3. There is a solution to nearly every problem of bullying.
  - 22.4. A student who complains will receive support and advice and in many cases the problem can be dealt with on a no-names basis.
  - 22.5. The primary aim will be for the bullying to cease, not the punishment of the bully unless necessary.

## Procedures

23. **Guidelines:** The following procedures are a guideline except where expressed in the terms "should" or "must". The best guide is the experience and training of the staff.
24. **Initial Complaint:** A person in authority who learns of alleged bullying behaviour should:
- ◆ Firstly, offer advice, support and reassurance to the alleged victim.
  - ◆ Report the allegation to the PT and Head of Personal Tutor Team of the victim and the alleged bully as soon as possible.

The Head of Personal Tutor Team must:

- 24.1. Record the complaint in the Incident File, which is located in the office of the PA to the Principal.
- 24.2. Contact the other Heads of PT teams (if applicable) to agree on a strategy, and on who will take the lead.
25. **Assessment:** The victim's Personal Tutor will normally see the victim and (unless the case is very serious) any witnesses without delay and form an initial view of the allegation, viz:
- 25.1. The nature of the incident/s - Physical? Verbal? Exclusionary? etc.
- 25.2. Is it a "one-off" incident involving an individual or a group?
- 25.3. Is it part of a pattern of behaviour by an individual or a group?
- 25.4. Has physical injury been caused? Who should be informed – Head of PT Team? Vice Principal? Parents? The College's Child Protection Officer? Social Services? The police?
- 25.5. Can the alleged bully be seen on a no-names basis?
- 25.6. What is the likely outcome if the complaint proves to be correct?
- At this stage, the possible outcomes for an incident, which is not too serious include:
- 25.7. There has been a misunderstanding, which can be explained sympathetically to the alleged victim with advice to the alleged bully.
- 25.8. The complaint is justified in whole or in part, and further action will be needed (see Range of Action, below).
26. **Serious Incident:** If a Head of PT Team believes that serious bullying behaviour:

- 26.1. Has occurred involving a student in his/her group of students; or
- 26.2. Has recurred after warnings have been given to the "bully" s/he must inform the Principal and the College's Child Protection Officer ("CPO") [currently Mike Wheeldon]. The CPO will then:
- 26.3. Interview the alleged victim, bully and any witnesses separately, in order to establish the facts of the case. S/he may decide to ask the Head of PT Team to be present.
- 26.4. Send a summary of his/her findings to the Principal and relevant PTs.

AND

- 26.5. The Principal and/or the relevant Personal Tutor and/or Head of Personal Tutor Team will interview the alleged victim and bully separately:
  - ◆ to confirm the facts of the case, if considered necessary.
  - ◆ to decide on the action to be taken in accordance with the Range of Action set out below.
- 26.6. The Principal will notify the parents of the victim and bully giving them details of the case and the action being taken.
- 27. **Range of Action:** When a complaint is upheld the range of responses will include one or more of the following:
  - 27.1. Advice and support for the victim and, where appropriate, establishing a course of action to help the victim.
  - 27.2. Advice and support to the bully in trying to change his/her behaviour. This may include clear instructions and a warning or final warning.
  - 27.3. A supervised meeting between the bully and the victim to discuss their differences and the ways in which they may be able to avoid future conflict.
  - 27.4. A disciplinary sanction against the bully such as suspension. **In a very serious case or a case of persistent bullying, a student may, after a fair hearing, be required to leave the College permanently.**
  - 27.5. Action to break up a "power base".
  - 27.6. Moving either the bully or victim to another class after consultation with the student, his/her parents and the relevant staff.
  - 27.7. Involving Social Services or the police.

- 27.8. Notifying the parents of one or both students about the case and the action which has been taken.
  - 27.9. Such other action as may appear to the Principal to be appropriate.
  - 27.10. Noting the outcome in the relevant Incident File.
  - 28. **Monitoring:** The position should be monitored for as long as necessary thereafter. Action may include:
    - 28.1. Sharing information with some or all colleagues and with students in the College so that they may be alert to the need to monitor certain students closely.
    - 28.2. Ongoing counselling and support.
    - 28.3. Vigilance.
    - 28.4. Mentioning the incident at meetings of staff.
    - 28.5. Reviewing vulnerable individuals and areas of the College.
    - 28.6. Liaison between Personal Tutors, Heads of PT Teams, the outcome being recorded in the Incident File.
  - 29. **Formal Complaint:** If the victim or his/her parents are not satisfied with the action taken, they should be advised to make a formal complaint, according to the procedure outlined in the Complaints Procedure.
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**November 2005**

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**Policy Summary**  
**[For inclusion in Student Handbook]**  
**Policy on Bullying**

- ◆ Every student at Brampton College has the right to enjoy his/her learning and leisure time free from intimidation.
- ◆ Our College Community will not tolerate unkind actions or remarks, even when these were not intended to hurt.
- ◆ To stand by, when someone else is being bullied, is to support bullying.
- ◆ Students should support each other by reporting all instances of bullying to a member of staff or a responsible senior student.
- ◆ Bullying will always be taken seriously.
- ◆ A student who does not respond appropriately to advice or sanctions for bullying would ultimately have to leave College.

A student who is being bullied or who witnesses a bullying incident should complain and can do so in several ways:

- ◆ By informing his/her parents, his/her Personal Tutor or a member of staff, or a responsible older student.
- ◆ By contacting the College Counsellor by leaving a note in a sealed envelope in the office.
- ◆ By telephoning Childline (0800 1111).
- ◆ By contacting the College Child Protection Officer by leaving a note in a sealed envelope in the Office.

Remember that *bullying thrives on secrecy - it is best dealt with by being brought into the open; it may save other people from becoming victims of the same bully*. It is *always* better to tell someone.

A full copy of the College's Policy on Bullying can be obtained from the office on request.