



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

This policy applies across the College at all age ranges including Early Years, Prep and Senior Schools. It should be read in conjunction with the College Safeguarding, Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use of Technology policies.

St. Columba's College is conducted in the educational tradition of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart. The school environment is best described by the term "sanctuary," a place where students sense the compassion which motivates those who care for them, where they feel safe to become the best person God created them to be.

We advocate a discipline that is respectful of the dignity of the individual, is consistent and fair, and is based on a relationship of mutual trust and cooperation. We develop a concern for an orderly environment that goes hand-in-hand with friendly discipline and itself will predispose young people to respect authority, their fellow students, and themselves.

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Section 1 Introduction

Bullying in any form is contrary to the ethos of the College as a foundation of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart and as a Catholic school.

As such the school is committed to creating an environment in which all students feel safe from such adverse behaviours. This is reinforced through the general standards of behaviour based upon respect for one another as individuals, the continued emphasis on right choice and moral standards. It is also informed by an understanding that actions have consequences. The Pastoral Programmes and Religious Education are central to educating the individual into an understanding of their positive contribution to the community and of a responsibility for ensuring that it is a healthy environment in which to work. These programmes provide the opportunity for discussion, thought and refinement of these core principles. However, this is also supported through action: staff being role models, students taking part in monitoring and responding to issues related to bullying, the openness with which bullying issues can be communicated and responded to. Indeed, any student can contact any staff member for the issue to be forwarded. Formal training and programmes exist in order to counter such behaviours and bring the whole school into partnership in responding at source to bullying matters. The school also retains a centralised bullying log in order to track and analyse issues.

The effects of bullying are serious and damage the community and individuals in ways that can reverberate for a lifetime; persistent school bullying can result in psychological damage including depression, low self-esteem, shyness, poor academic achievement, isolation and threatened, attempted suicide and actual suicide. Bullying behaviours, such as physical intimidation, isolation from a group, insidious repetitive comments, sexist, homophobic, racial, religious, cultural taunts or threatening behaviour are not an inevitable part of school life. Any case of bullying is acted upon immediately when it emerges and is taken as one of the most serious of priorities in ensuring that students are happy and safe whilst at the College.

Students are encouraged to report bullying at its earliest stages through contacting any person in whom they place their trust: teacher, tutor, Head of House, counsellor or CLT. Students can act in the knowledge that they will be supported, and the bullying will be stopped. The same encouragement is given to parents.

Raising the student body's awareness of bullying, what constitutes bullying, and how it can be addressed in a whole community response, is highlighted in staff training and development. Student orientation and induction addresses the ways bullying may be encountered and responded to.

Mark Livesey and Kevin Boland are the DSLs, supported by Katie Marson and Joe Tatham as DDSLs. The DSLs can be contacted at [Safeguarding - St Columba's College \[livesey.m@stcolumbascollege.org\]](mailto:livesey.m@stcolumbascollege.org) / [\[boland.k@stcolumbascollege.org\]](mailto:boland.k@stcolumbascollege.org). All staff must treat reports of bullying that may have safeguarding implications as a potential safeguarding concern and follow the College Safeguarding Policy and the DSL referral process without delay.

This policy pays regard to the following guidance: Preventing and Tackling Bullying (July 2017), Cyberbullying: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff (2014) and Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children in schools and Colleges (2018). It should be read in conjunction with other key policies, including Safeguarding, Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use of Technology.

Section 2 Aims

The policy is intended to ensure that bullying is addressed in the following ways:

1. Raise whole school and individual awareness through the curriculum and Pastoral Programme
2. Provide staff with the guidance and procedures in which to respond to incidents of bullying
3. Deter bullying behaviour, to detect it when it occurs and to deal with it on a case-by-case basis through support and/or appropriate disciplinary sanctions
4. Give students opportunities to talk about bullying
5. Provide procedures for investigating incidents
6. Provide guidelines for listening and responding to victims, witnesses, parents and bullies

Section 3 Procedures

These procedures set out to:

1. Prevent bullying
2. Respond quickly and effectively to bullying if it occurs
3. Promote an environment in which the disclosure of bullying issues is effective
4. Follow the College's Discipline Policy
5. Support the College's Code of Conduct
6. Support the ethos of the College
7. Respond to the social expectations of the College

Section 4 Bullying Defined

For the purposes of this policy, bullying is defined as violence, physical or psychological, conducted by a more powerful individual or group against an individual or group and is either perceived or intended to injure someone who is not able to defend him or herself. It may be repeated over time and intentionally hurts another pupil or group physically or emotionally and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups.

Children who bully others can come from any kind of family, regardless of social class or cultural background. It is important to recognise that there is no stereotype for the bully and no preconceptions should be held about how a bully appears. Some may experience poor discipline at home and/or excessive physical punishment or even abuse by a parent or older sibling; or little warmth in family relationships in general. A bully tends to be assertive and aggressive while lacking empathy and any sense of guilt.

Bullying can occur directly or through cyber-technology (social media, text messages, photographs and email). Abuse in any form should not be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'having a laugh'. All forms of bullying are capable of being exercised peer on peer, by either sex towards either sex.

All must be on guard to counter bullying. There are no stereotypical victims of bullying but often they are different in their appearance, behaviour or background and lack self-confidence. There are certain risk factors which make the experience of bullying more likely whilst not being acceptable as an excuse for allowing a student to become a victim of bullying.

These include:

- Lack of close friends at school
- Being shy or reticent
- Coming from an over-protective family background
- Being from a different racial, ethnic, sexual or religious group to the majority
- Being different in some obvious respect from the majority: more intelligent, more talented in a particular way, physically different (perhaps with disabilities)
- Having some specific learning difficulty
- Someone who behaves inappropriately in the company of others: perhaps being disruptive or over dominant in games, being a nuisance etc.

Bullying may also constitute peer-on-peer abuse (including sexual harassment/abuse). Incidents of bullying that involve sexual violence, sexual harassment, or other harms must be managed under the Safeguarding Policy; immediate safeguarding steps must be taken. Special educational needs can also increase the risk of a student being both the perpetrator and victim of bullying.

Section 5 Features of Bullying

1. Nature: this can be physical and/or psychological

Verbal is the most common form of bullying and can escalate into violence. There can be a defensive or retaliatory reaction by the victim. Verbal bullying can be directed at the victim personally or can be directed at their relations or the group whom they may regard themselves as representing (this is often more provoking and injurious). Racist, religious, sexist and sexual taunts, (particularly homophobic in the case of younger children) all come under this category.

To complicate matters, friendship groups and bullies can use similar names, for instance nicknames. Where their use may be deemed acceptable by the friendship group, it can also be regarded as inappropriate by an individual when used by a different group and in other circumstances.

Physical violence and / or threatening behaviour is often regarded as more commonplace in the behaviour of boys, but can also be used by girls, or towards girls. Often the threat of violence, which may never materialise, is more intimidating because it is less tangible and overt. It is also less difficult to attribute.

Isolation / Rejection: deliberately being ostracised from various groups is designed to cause distress and demoralise the victim.

Indirect or Insidious behaviour: this covers a wide variety of methods, such as malicious rumour, the taking, destroying or hiding of possessions, extortion, coercion to act in wrongful ways in order to court correction or the favour of a group. More serious and extreme examples of this type of bullying include anonymous telephone calls, hate mail, trolling and the like.

2. **Intensity:** this can range from what is excused as “play-fighting” on the playground to vicious assault in physical terms and from the calling of nicknames to repeated nuisance telephone calls in psychological terms.
3. **Duration:** bullying tends to be a repeated event. However, in exceptional circumstances, bullying can be a one-off incident where there is an obvious discrepancy between the ages, power or strength of the parties concerned.
4. **Intention:** bullying is premeditated and calculated to injure (psychologically or physically) rather than thoughtless or accidental. Many bullies attempt to excuse their actions by denying that this was the intention. In the minority of cases this lack of understanding of the outcome of their actions and therefore what constitutes bullying remains an excuse.
5. **Number:** bullying may be carried out by one student or by a group.
6. **Motivation:** the motive is often to achieve power over another individual in an attempt to promote a student’s own personal image. It may also be to secure affiliation to a group regarded as having a greater profile. A victim may also be a scape-goat as part of preserving group solidarity.
7. **Location:** given its nature bullying can take place in a variety of locations, hence the need for staff to be vigilant at all times. In any school, there are times and places which increase the potential of bullies to operate. Bullying is more likely to take place when the bully has a setting or location in which they are able to exploit and hurt the victim, such as the far corner of a classroom, a deserted hallway, and the toilets. Places where bullying is more common are frequently deserted or poorly supervised. Staff must be alert to this fact when teaching and supervising pupils.

Section 6 Specific types of bullying

Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disability, or because a child is adopted or is a carer.. Bullying motivated by prejudice against protected characteristics (as defined in the Equality Act 2010: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation) will be treated especially seriously.

Bullying relating to Race, Religion and Culture

Some children and adults are bullied because they are seen to be different, for example because of their race, religion or culture. Religion, race, traditions, clothes, language and music can hold great significance in a large majority of people’s lives, but for people from an ethnic background, cultural identity can be made up of influences which are not part of the mainstream society they are living in and can often be misunderstood. This can lead to curiosity from other children, who don’t understand why a child is different to them. Such curiosity sometimes means that instead of asking them about their culture, they may make an issue of the differences as if they are negative in some way and this can lead to bullying.

Bullying is taking place if a child is targeted for representing a group, and attacking the individual sends a negative message to that group. This form of bullying is likely to hurt not only the victim, but also other students from the same group, and their families. In the 1999 MacPherson Report, racist bullying was defined as, 'any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person'. More recently the law on racial discrimination defines it as "Unwanted conduct with the purpose of violating dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment". The test is whether it was reasonable for the person making the complaint to have been offended.

Such behaviour is characterised by:

- verbal abuse by name-calling, racist jokes and offensive mimicry
- physical threats or attacks
- wearing of provocative badges or insignia
- bringing racist leaflets, comics or magazines
- inciting others to behave in a racist way
- racist graffiti or other written insults — even against food, music, dress or customs;
- refusing to cooperate in work or in play.

Bullying related to special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

Individuals with SEND may not be able to articulate experiences as well as other children. However, they are often at greater risk of being bullied, both directly and indirectly, and usually about their specific difficulties or disability. Public bodies have responsibilities to actively promote equality of opportunity for all disabled people and eliminate disability-related harassment. Children and young people with SEND, whether in mainstream or special schools, do not always have the levels of social confidence and competence and the robust friendship bonds that can protect against bullying.

Where children with SEND are themselves found to be bullying, in most cases (except those related to specific conditions) schools should expect the same standards of behaviour as apply to the rest of the school community, having made the reasonable adjustments necessary. Should the individual or group be from another school, then the Head Teacher of that school is informed in order for remedial action to be taken.

Bullying related to appearance or health conditions

Those with health or visible medical conditions, such as eczema, may be more likely than their peers to become targets for bullying behaviour. Perceived physical limitations, such as size and weight, and other body image issues can result in bullying, and obvious signs of affluence (or lack of it), can also be exploited ruthlessly, with severe consequences.

Bullying related to sexual orientation

Evidence of homophobic bullying suggests that children and young people who are gay (or perceived to be) face a higher risk of victimisation than their peers. Homophobic bullying is perhaps the form of bullying least likely to be self-reported, since disclosure carries risks not associated with other forms of bullying. The pupil may not want to report bullying if it means "coming out" to teachers and parents before they are ready to.

Homophobic bullying is the result of the use of language, gesture or media to describe someone who is lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered, intended to injure them. Those targeted do not have to be gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered to suffer as a consequence of this abuse. This form of bullying impacts on their families and others perceived to be from the same group. It may be based on gender stereotyping. Such behaviour is characterised by:

- abusive name calling
- social exclusion
- mockery of a person's contribution in class or to the College
- inciting others to act in a homophobic manner
- refusing to cooperate in work or in recreation
- circulation of improper material

Bullying of young carers or looked-after children or otherwise linked to home circumstances

Children may be made vulnerable to bullying by the fact that they provide care to someone in their family with an illness, disability, mental health or substance misuse problem. Young carers may be taking on practical and emotional caring responsibilities that would normally be expected of an adult. Research has highlighted the difficulties young carers face, including risks of ill-health, stress and tiredness, especially when they care through the night. Many feel bullied or isolated.

Children in care may also be vulnerable to bullying for a variety of reasons, such as not living with their birth parents or because they have fallen behind in their studies. Some pupils are heavily influenced by their communities or homes where bullying and abuse may be common. Some bullying at school may arise from trauma or instability at home related to issues of domestic violence or bereavement or from the experience of being part of a refugee family. Siblings of vulnerable children may themselves be the subject of bullying by association.

Sexual and sexist bullying

Sexual and sexist bullying can involve people of all genders. Such behaviour is characterised by:

- Abusive name-calling
- Looks and comments about appearance, attractiveness, emerging puberty
- Inappropriate and uninvited touching
- Sexual innuendoes and propositions
- Pornographic material, graffiti with sexual content
- In its most extreme form, sexual assault or rape. A case of proven sexual assault is likely to lead to the expulsion of the perpetrator.

Bullying related to perceived ability and talent

Students with particular abilities and talents (academic, sporting, music related) can also be subject to unacceptable behaviour which attempts to marginalise their expertise or promote a culture of anti-intellectualism for instance. Such behaviour is unacceptable and is addressed in the same regard as any other form of bullying.

Section 7 Cyber Bullying

Cyber bullying is the misuse of technology, particularly mobile phones and the Internet, in a deliberately tailored manner to cause someone else harm or distress. Various types of cyber-bullying include:

- Text messaging/ Social media (Sexting to be included in this category)
- Sending pictures or video clips
- Phone calling
- Email messaging
- Chat room messaging
- AI generated content

Cyberbullying is no less harmful than other forms of bullying but its methodology is different. All types of bullying (racist, homophobic etc.) can be conducted online. Cyberbullying has a direct link to undermining a person's emotional state. Key features include:

- 24/7 and the invasion of home/personal space
- The audience can be large-scale, reached rapidly and cannot be limited,
- The bully may attempt to remain anonymous
- The profile of the bully and target can be different to those offline: age and size are not important and even staff can be targets

The active management of technologies in school and at home and the vigilance of parents, school staff and other pupils have a significant part to play in the prevention of cyber-bullying. The Acceptable Use Policy details the College's guidance regarding the use of technology by pupils. It covers the appropriate use of email and the Internet, actions for reporting misuse and sanctions for misuse. In school, an online monitoring system is used to filter content and flag any safeguarding issues, including those relating to cyber-bullying.

Cyberbullying, regardless of whether or not it takes place within school time, has a direct impact on the health and happiness of the intended victim. If such bullying emanates from an individual or group within the College, the perpetrators are subject to disciplinary action.

In addition, in line with The Education and Inspections Act 2006, the College has the right to investigate potential perpetrators personal technology and can confiscate items such as mobile phones or devices if it believes their use is impacting on members of the school community.

Whilst all members of staff and students within the College have a responsibility to act in countering cyberbullying out of a sense of moral imperative and the law, the coordination and implementation of cyberbullying prevention and response strategies lies with the Deputy Head in the Senior School and the Deputy Head Pastoral in the Prep with the support of the other key pastoral leaders.

There is no single solution to the problem of cyberbullying. There are, however, four key areas the College seeks to address in maintaining a comprehensive and effective prevention plan;

Understanding and communicating about cyberbullying.

The whole College has a shared, agreed definition of cyberbullying. Everyone is made aware of the impact of cyberbullying and the ways in which it differs from other forms of bullying. All members of the community (staff, students and parents) are made aware of their responsibilities in their use of technology, and that the whole range of sanctions under the College's Code of Conduct can be applied dependent upon the nature of the incident. Staff, students and parents are supported over cyberbullying instances both in and outside the school, and in certain circumstances police/children's social care intervention may be required.

Reporting cyberbullying

All members of the College community are encouraged to report cyberbullying with the confidence that the matter will be treated seriously, sympathetically and with all due speed and caution to bring a resolution to the matter. No one should feel that they have to deal with cyberbullying alone. Information is provided about contacting service providers directly in communications to parents on entry to the College, in Student Handbooks, within the taught Computing curriculum and in the Pastoral Programme. Pupils and parents must preserve evidence (screenshots, forwarded messages) and report to the Deputy Head/Head of House as soon as possible. The College will advise on how to report content to platform providers and will, where appropriate, support formal complaints to service providers or involve police. The College will also risk-assess situations arising outside school hours and, where required, take proportionate disciplinary or safeguarding actions.

Evaluating the impact of prevention activities

Regular reviews are on-going regarding technology use and strategy which includes all aspects of e- safety and potential bullying.

Awareness Bulletins

The whole College is provided with updates regarding the development of matters regarding e-safety. Guidance is provided regarding use as technology, applications and software change.

Section 8 Raising Awareness

The College intends to make students aware that bullying is not an inevitable part of school life. This is achieved by:

1. Educating students about what bullying is in its range and depth, through inductions and orientation programmes, the curriculum, online filtering and monitoring online student concern form, Pastoral Programme, assemblies and guest speakers, and the general ethos of the school;
2. Indicating how they as students are to respond to it as victims and as members of a community which stands again bullying;
3. Providing a support system to which they can turn in cases of bullying;
4. Supporting any student who is the victim of bullying;
5. Allowing students to feel confident that the bullying will be acted upon swiftly to curtail the problem;
6. Raising staff awareness of the nature, range and response to be made to bullying and its victims;
7. Raising the awareness of the senior students and prefects to the nature, range and response to be made to incidents of bullying and its victims;
8. Raising the awareness of parents to the serious commitment of the school to act on bullying issues and gain their confidence in dealing with the issue when they materialise.

Education and Training

Staff: all new staff undertake a training seminar about preventing and dealing with bullying in their induction programme. In addition, all staff are reminded of the Anti-Bullying Policy. Staff are also trained on a cycle through resources led by the DSLs/Deputy Heads as well as by outside providers on safeguarding topics including child protection, anti-bullying and e-safety to keep abreast of current practice and changes in legislation. Where appropriate, specialist training is provided so that staff can support groups of students with specific needs, for example those with special educational needs. In addition, staff receive refresher training as needed to remind them how to identify bullying behaviour (so that they are aware of what should be recorded, even if they initially consider it does not amount to a bullying issue), and that all incidents should be properly communicated and recorded in a consistent and systematic way which allows trends to be identified at the earliest opportunity.

Students take on all forms of anti-bullying responsibilities through the pastoral and service programmes provided for different age groups to include; Anti-Bullying themed week, drama workshops, pupil led assemblies, anti-bullying techniques training, buddying schemes, the Mentoring programme, input from student voice, and the training of Senior students who act as prefects. The prefect body, Senior students and staff provide significant role models for the younger pupils in regard to setting standards of behaviour, use of non-prejudicial language and in setting the tone of anti-bullying. Students are taught the part they can play in preventing bullying by not tolerating this conduct when they find themselves to be bystanders.

Relationship education and e-safety are also attended to within a variety of themes of the pastoral programme, in addition to the IT curriculum. To support this, computer use is monitored by a specialist outsourced company which generates reports for the DSLs, Deputy Head and Heads of House on any significant issues.

The school annually dedicates one full week of the Pastoral Programme to respond to anti-bullying awareness and training. In Prep this is delivered through external providers as well as staff and school council pupils. STOP is used throughout the Prep as a basis for all pupils to recognise their own responsibility in preventing bullying of any sort. In the Senior school the themed week is often led by presentations from the Sixth Form to each year group on a specific topic e.g. language use, cyberbullying, texting etc. The College also provides for student feedback on bullying matters through student voice, gathered in different ways.. This allows for review and development of its programmes and counter bullying arrangements.

Students are made aware of the issues surrounding bullying through their induction programme at the beginning of each school year. Sixth Form duty monitors and prefects are given guidance regarding their proactive role in countering incidents of bullying and in being accessible to victims of bullying. Any student who is bullied can feel free to approach any member of the school community whom they feel able to relate to in a bullying predicament.

In addition, students are advised:

1. to be careful to whom they give their contact details: phone numbers and email addresses/social media details
2. to keep a record of the date and time of the receipt of any offensive message
3. to save/screen shot messages they are concerned about and let parents and a member of staff see them.

Parents are encouraged to communicate with staff on bullying matters, confident that they will be taken seriously, attended to and resolved as speedily as possible. Periodically staff, student and parents are provided with relevant information over a range of matters some of which focus on counter-bullying matters such as e-safety.

In addition, parents are advised;

1. to monitor their children's use of electronic media
2. to assist in monitoring and recording such instances
3. to inform the school immediately of the detail they have gathered
4. to take advice on whether or not they should involve themselves directly in order to intervene when the individual/s are known to them
5. inform the police where such behaviour is a criminal offence.

All of this allows for a culture of communication over bullying matters to be open, clear and speedy.

Section 9 Communicating Cases of Bullying

This can be achieved through a number of means:

1. A member of staff noticing changes in the demeanour or work profile of an individual and begins an investigation into the cause.
2. The victim/ other students talking to a member of staff or a prefect.
3. The victim /other students reporting the matter via the online concern form
4. Parents contacting the school about a problem.

There may be reticence to provide information because of the natural concern regarding possible reprisals or further victimisation against the informant or the victim, as well as regarding what disclosure may mean for the fate of the bully. However, to divulge that there is a bullying problem and then not to provide the detail renders the College powerless to address the matter. Parents have to be persuaded that the College must act on the names given and will provide the correct levels of protection for their son/daughter whilst investigating the situation. The threat of recrimination or continuance of bullying within the College is rare and perpetrators are dealt with.

Section 10 Managing and Recording Incidents of Bullying

Whilst a student/parent/prefect may have the confidence to communicate a bullying problem to any member of staff, it is vital that the tutor and Senior School Head of House/Prep Pastoral Deputy are informed. Given the seriousness of bullying, these latter staff usually lead the investigation. If the allegation of bullying involves students from more than one House then the responsibility for the investigation is allocated by the Deputy Head to the appropriate Head of House.

The Deputy Head must be made aware of all incidents of bullying within the College and be updated regarding the progress of the investigation into the alleged bullying. It may well be that the Deputy Head or DSL takes a role in the investigation of a bullying incident depending upon its range and complexity.

A record of all bullying incidents is kept by the Senior School Deputy Head/Prep Deputy Head Pastoral in order to identify any emerging patterns and provide background to any future incidents, should they occur. The member of staff leading the investigation is also responsible for logging the bullying incident on CPOMS. Staff are required to be vigilant in monitoring relationships between students, in order to spot trends and patterns of behaviour throughout the year. In addition, Heads of House keep records of incidents which, whilst not in themselves meeting the criteria of bullying as defined in this policy, if repeated may be classified as bullying.

Parents of the victim(s) are contacted as appropriate in order to keep them updated regarding progress and the conclusion of the investigation. The initial acknowledgement to the reporting pupil/parent will typically be made within 24 hours on school days. An investigation will usually begin within 48 hours. Parents of both victim and perpetrator(s) will be informed promptly when appropriate. Where safeguarding concerns arise, the school will follow the Safeguarding Policy timeline for referrals.

All bullying incidents will be logged on CPOMS and summarised annually to the Senior Leadership Team and Safeguarding Governor. The summary will include trends, actions taken and any safeguarding referrals as a result.

Staff members are informed of the problem as appropriate, so that relations between those involved can be monitored. This is particularly important, for instance, for subject teachers who may have those involved in their lessons. An address to a group (form, year or other group) may be regarded as appropriate depending upon the nature, range and groups involved in the incident.

Section 11 After the Event

The College offers a proactive, sympathetic and supportive response to children who are the victims of bullying. The exact nature of the response is determined by the particular child's individual needs and may include:

- immediate action to stop the incident and secure the child's safety
- positive reinforcement that reporting the incident was the correct thing to do
- reassurance that the victim is not responsible for the behaviour of the bully
- strategies to prevent further incidents and reprisal
- sympathy and empathy
- counselling
- assertiveness training
- extra supervision/monitoring
- creation of a support group
- peer mediation/peer mentoring
- informing/involving parents
- adult mediation between the perpetrator and the victim (provided this does not increase the victim's vulnerability)
- arrangements to review progress

The College fully appreciates the need to address the behaviour of the bully and must use a variety of approaches to prevent re-offending. It adopts a supportive, pragmatic, restorative justice and problem-solving approach to enable bullies to behave in a more acceptable way.

Where appropriate, a written risk assessment/ safety plan will be prepared for affected pupils and recorded on CPOMS.

Section 12 Sanctions

It is very difficult to define an appropriate sanction for each case of bullying as each is different and sanctions will be the subject of discussion. The College responds to incidents of bullying behaviour in a proportionate way – the more serious the cause for concern, the more serious the response. When sanctions are felt to be necessary, they are applied consistently and fairly. The College does not believe that the use of punishment in itself, or alone, is always appropriate in managing this problem but is of the view that the positive use of sanctions can be useful in demonstrating to bullies that there are consequences to their actions, their behaviour is unacceptable, and as an element in promoting change. Restorative practices will be used where safe and appropriate.

The following options are considered:

- immediate action to stop an incident of bullying in progress
- engagement with the bully to reinforce the message that their behaviour is a breach of school rules and is unacceptable
- loss of break, lunch or extra-curricular privileges
- detention
- removal from class/group
- withholding participation in sports or out of school activity (if not essential part of curriculum)
- informing parents
- counselling/instruction in alternative ways of behaving
- peer mentoring
- adult mediation between the perpetrator and the victim (provided this is safe for the victim)
- formal warning (operational for a full Key Stage)
- fixed term or permanent exclusion (in cases of severe and persistent bullying)

Section 13 Responses to Extreme Cases of Bullying

Under normal circumstances the College deals with bullying incidents internally. However, some incidents are of such a nature that staff will notify the local authority and seek support without delay. This is where the student or situation passes beyond a threshold which is capable of being managed by the school. All staff are aware that they have the power to notify local authorities in the absence/disagreement of the DSL. It is the responsibility of the school to make decisions about which incidents are serious and record and report them appropriately. Aspects of bullying incidents that may suggest serious concern include:

- serious physical violence, e.g. needing medical attention, use of weapons
- orchestrated bullying and harassment
- repeated victim (a number of significant repeat experiences as a victim)
- extremist group activity in school, e.g. distribution of literature and incitement to hate
- extended absence related to bullying/racist incidents
- media reports of bullying/racist incidents in the school

- risk of/attempted suicide/self-harm or other behaviour likely to suggest severe vulnerability
- heightened parental concerns that bullying/racist incident(s) remain unresolved despite school action
- formal complaints related to bullying or racist incidents.

Where a criminal offence is suspected or a pupil is at immediate risk, the DSL will consult police and local authority Children's Social Care without delay. The Deputy Head and CLT will cooperate with police and external investigators and preserve records/evidence. The College will also consider permanent exclusion in line with policy where necessary and ensure the pupil's onward safeguarding and education arrangements.

It should also be noted that, although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal act in the UK, some types of harassing or threatening behaviour or communications could be a criminal offence. If the College feels that an offence may have been committed the Head may decide to seek assistance from the police.