

Anti-bullying and Harassment Policy

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Policy Statement

Barnet and Southgate College is committed to providing high quality education and training, ensuring that our students achieve to the very best of their ability. The College recognises that students are more likely to successfully complete their course if they feel safe and secure at College. This policy explains the measures the College will take to prevent and react to bullying and harassment.

1. Introduction

Definition of Bullying and Harassment

Bullying is a subjective experience and can take many forms making it difficult to define.

There is no legal definition of bullying, but for the purposes of this policy it should be defined as:

“The persecution of an individual by another person or group. It is unreasonable, behaviour that degrades, humiliates or belittles through actions, words or gestures”

There is a legal definition of Harassment under Equality legislation. For the purposes of this document it has been summarised as:

“unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristics which has the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of an individual, or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the individual”.

Difference in attitude or culture and the misinterpretation of social signs can lead to a situation where a person perceives that they are a victim of bullying and/or harassment. The alleged perpetrator may not see the situation in this way. However, the defining feature of an incident is: *“that the behaviour is unwanted by the recipient”.*

Bullying and Harassment includes unwanted actions, behaviour or language relating to:

- Race
- Religion/faith/belief
- Culture
- Age
- Sexual orientation
- Gender including gender reassignment
- Disability and learning difficulties
- Marital status
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Socio-Economic status
- Cyber bullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (for example email, social networks and instant messenger)

Bullying and harassment are linked to a range of negative outcomes including; poor mental health, decreased achievement and development of destructive behaviours.

2. Aims and Links to College Values

Promoting equality and inclusiveness is one of the six key values which underpins everything that we do. This means that the College will:

- Treat people fairly
- Respect differences and treat people as individuals
- Be supportive and understanding of each other
- Recognise the contribution that others make
- Promote equality and diversity to all in our community

3. General Principles

It is difficult to be prescriptive when dealing with cases of bullying and harassment as each case is different. It is important to focus on the student alleging the bullying or harassment; putting them at the centre whilst respecting their wishes so that they feel free to speak openly and honestly, to trust and to feel in control of their own situation.

This policy:

- applies to ALL students attending Barnet and Southgate College
- requires students to behave responsibly both inside and outside of College
- is reinforced through Induction and the Student Code of Conduct; Equality, Diversity and Inclusion; Safeguarding, Behaviours for Excellence and associated policies
- will be implemented in a way that focuses on the student who has been bullied and ensures that their views are listened to and they are consulted on how the matter should be dealt with

4. Staff responsibilities

Teachers/tutors/support staff:

In the case of a student reporting allegations of bullying and/or harassment the staff member should ascertain as many details as possible:

- ***Priority*** Check for injuries and refer to first aider as appropriate
- Explain that you might need to ask a colleague for advice as to how best to help the student (Do not promise total confidentiality)
- Listen to the student: Ask; “Tell, Explain, Describe” to fully understand the situation
- Take notes if possible including dates, times, names, witnesses, etc
- Ask the student how they would like the matter dealt with; what outcome do they expect?
- Do NOT assume anything or put words into the students mouth
- Signpost the student to appropriate support (counselling; student services or safeguarding and equality teams)
- If necessary and dependent on severity/circumstances inform and take advice from one or more of the following: Duty Principal, Head of Department, Safeguarding Lead or Designated Safeguarding Officer
- Complete necessary forms and reports ie: Health and Safety Incident, etc.
- Explain that the College will keep them informed of progress and outcome
- A Safeguarding and Equality form is required for all incidents of bullying and harassment. Apart from support, the College is required to monitor and evaluate bullying and harassment cases, identify any growing trends and take appropriate action. This is one way in which the College do this.

Duty Principal, Head of Department or Member of ELG, Designated member of Staff:

Students are best protected and supported when staff work together to ensure best outcome for the students. Therefore, on completion of the above it should be reported to one of the above and the following actions taken:

- Read notes/information provided including students wishes as to how the matter is dealt with
- If necessary, take a statement or arrange for statements to be taken from witnesses
- If not already happened, signpost student (victim) to appropriate support (counselling; welfare or safeguarding and equality)
- Notify tutor/curriculum manager and request that they arrange an interview with the alleged perpetrator to get their understanding of the situation and potential disciplinary action
- Where there are cases of injury or perceived risk to any students, suspensions pending investigation to be considered and implemented
- Pass on notes and reports of allegations to tutor/curriculum manager in preparation for the interview
- If not already completed, record on Safeguarding and Equality form (Hub) or update with actions if already completed.

Possible Outcomes and Actions:

Where allegations are proven:

Reinforce the Behaviours for Excellence and implement associated procedures:

- Where the severity of circumstances is clearly demonstrated, suspend the perpetrator under the relevant Policy
- Deal with the incident implementing the appropriate behaviour process
- Referral/signpost to external bodies as appropriate
- Bullied student to be advised of outcome and offered support

Where the allegations are unclear, unfounded or there are mitigating circumstances:

Reinforce the Behaviours for Excellence and implement associated procedures:

- Make all parties aware of the Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Make a clear agreement between all parties that the situation is to end
- Offer opportunity for each involved to meet with Welfare or Safeguarding and Equality (S&E) team for further understanding of unacceptable behaviours; potential impact of continuing bullying behaviour at both college and in the workplace.

Follow up action by the designated member of staff:

- Check all parties are attending college – follow up as required
- Staff to monitor and observe interactions as appropriate
- Signpost to Counselling, Welfare or Safeguarding and Equality support if required
- Check outcome of any disciplinary actions
- Check it has been recorded appropriately Safeguarding and Equality form; Promonitor
- Alert security to ensure they are vigilant in monitoring the perpetrators behaviour

5. Creating a safe environment

Barnet and Southgate College recognises their responsibility to provide a safe environment for all students and that it should be free from harm, harassment and discrimination. The following policies, but not limited to, seek to address this:

- Safeguarding (including Child Protection, the Protection of Vulnerable Adults and Prevent)
- Health and Safety
- Behaviours for Excellence and associated Positive behaviour policies
- Complaints
- Whistleblowing
- Recruitment Procedure
- Managing allegations against staff
- Staff and Student Code of Conduct
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Scheme
- Online and Social Media Policy
- Data protection
- Attendance and Punctuality
- Mental Health Strategy
- Fitness to Study Policy

Complimentary to these documents, detailing how the College works to provide a safe environment, are the following procedures, processes and statements:

- Shared values, beliefs and attitudes
- Induction tutorials outlining services and support available in College
- Workshops to enable students to understand and share issues associated with equality, diversity, safeguarding, bullying and harassment
- Enrichment sessions to raise student awareness of key issues and support available

6. Sources of help

- Safeguarding and Equality Team: 0203 764 4077;
safeguarding@barnetsouthgate.ac.uk ; 'Red Button' on iLearn
- Student Services Team: All students at Barnet and Southgate College can self-refer where there is a range of support available and staff suitably trained to signpost and refer to external support if required. .
- Tutor Support: Full-time students will be allocated a personal tutor. There will also be timetabled sessions for group tutorials.
- Children and young people who are worried about bullying could seek help and advice from:
ChildLine on 0800 1111 or www.childline.org
NSPCC on 0808 500 8000.
- Parents who are worried about their children could contact:
Parentline Plus on 0808 800 2222 or www.parentlineplus.org.uk.