



Anti-bullying Policy

Definitions of Terms

College: Ashville College, including the Boarding Houses, Pre-Prep, Junior and Senior Schools

Head, Headteacher, Headmaster: Headmaster of the College

Pupils, Students: Pupils who attend the College including boarders and pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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(including support staff in regular contact with students)

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Ashville College

Anti-bullying Policy

1. Aims and Objectives

- 1.1 Ashville College is a caring community founded upon Christian values and, as such, the well-being of each of its members is a prime concern.

It is therefore unacceptable that any member of our community should suffer either mentally or physically at the hands of any other member, or members, and the College is unequivocally committed to supporting this principle.

- 1.2 This policy is designed to enable all pupils (including boarders), staff (teaching and non-teaching), parents, volunteers and Governors to have an understanding of what bullying is as well as providing details on what they should do if bullying arises. All staff involved in observing or reporting incidents involving bullying should follow the procedures laid out in the Appendix.
- 1.3 This policy has been prepared bearing in mind the guidance issued by DCSF's "Safe to learn – Embedding Anti-bullying Work in Schools". As Ashville College also has a Boarding element, then reference is made to the "National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools" (in particular, Standards 2 and 2A).

2. Definitions

- 2.1 Bullying is a deliberate attempt by an individual or a group to hurt, tease, torment, threaten, frighten or exclude someone.
- 2.2 Ashville College recognises that the well-being of each person is best fostered where it is established within the school ethos that we have a mutual responsibility to each other. It should therefore be acknowledged by all that the following activities are unacceptable and defined as bullying.
- Persistent verbal intimidation such as the use of threats, derogatory nicknames and personal comments. It is necessary to distinguish between harmless banter and what is hurtful. The persons receiving these comments will not always show their true feelings.
 - Unpleasant or aggressive actions which originate through racial, religious, cultural, sexual, sexist or homophobic motivation, or which arise from issues of disability. This includes verbal, physical, written actions, those involving use of communication technology and graffiti.
 - Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality. This includes heterosexual and homosexual references.
 - Deliberate exclusion of individuals or groups from the common social involvement.
 - Threatening demeanour towards others who are younger, smaller or more sensitive.
 - Any physical harm caused by deliberate or reckless behaviour.
- 2.3 The digital age has seen the development of new ways to bully, slander and abuse. Cyber-bullying is the use of Information Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, to upset someone else.

3. Policy

- 3.1 Ashville College's intention is to be an anti-bullying school. This can only be achieved if we work in partnership with parents, adopting a proactive and preventative approach and in particular:
- Continually reminding pupils about the issue of bullying and its consequences, through our PSHE programme and assemblies. Visiting speakers may also provide input for pupils, staff and parents, especially on matters relating to cyber-bullying;
 - Being on the look out for potential problems;
 - Seeking the cooperation of parents and pupils to inform us at an early stage of issues;
 - Raising the subject with the Student Council as part of the review process and seeking feedback from pupils through representatives' input;
 - Raising awareness of staff through training;
 - Taking action to reduce the risk of bullying at time and in places where it is most likely.
- 3.2 As such behaviour is unacceptable then it follows that action should be taken to curtail such behaviour when it occurs. It is therefore proper for others present to intervene personally (on behalf of any who suffer) **in so far as their own well-being is not endangered** and to report such instances to those who can take proper action (Red Ties, Boarding Prefects, teachers, form tutors, Year Heads, Head and Deputy Heads).
- 3.3 The pastoral system at Ashville is proven to be very effective in the resolution of such difficulties **when it is aware of them**; no pupil, friend or parent should feel reluctant or scared to discuss these problems at the relevant level. Any such discussions are always in the strictest confidence, if that is requested, and the school's priority is that the cause of the unhappiness should cease.
- 3.4 For Year 7 Sixth Formers are assigned as Liaison Prefects to act as another line of communication. One or two students are attached to each form in that year group; they get to know their group, work with the tutors and are always available if any student has a problem.
- 3.5 Support will always be offered to both the bullied and the bully. This may take the form of help and discussion with a tutor, the chaplain or another member of staff or, if it is felt to be necessary and useful, with external agencies. It is recognised that the reason for the bully's behaviour needs to be addressed if a successful outcome is to be achieved. Sanctions may be invoked as set out in the school's Behaviour Management Policy, or possibly through its policy on the Removal of Pupils from School (exclusion).
- 3.6 Where cyber-bullying involves threats through written or verbal messages the College has the right to contact the local police where they believe that these threats may be serious and a potential criminal offence may or may not have been committed.
- 3.7 More specific action relating to cyber-bullying can be found in the College's Acceptable Use Policy
- 3.8 At the beginning of each academic year every student, including boarders, receives a school planner which contains a summary of the key points of this policy. Form tutors explain this to their tutor group and students are required to sign their agreement to adhere to this policy. In addition, all boarding students receive a presentation focusing on cyber-bullying and e-safety

4. Conclusion

Bullying is a serious and pernicious form of behaviour which can cause psychological damage, even leading to suicide.

The best defence against anti-social behaviour is the clear acknowledgement by each member of the community of a personal responsibility for the well-being of others and a willingness to take appropriate action on behalf of those in need.

Appendix – Anti-bullying Policy: Guidelines for Staff

Where an instance of bullying (including cyber-bullying) has been brought to your attention, be it reported by a pupil or parent, or simply observed around the school, please follow the Guidance below for reporting and recording the details.

- On receiving a report or observing bullying behaviour please note the details, in writing, and pass these to the appropriate Year Head(s). Please speak to this Year Head(s) to clarify details which may be unclear.
- The Year Head(s) will decide on the most appropriate way to proceed, consulting the Deputy Head (Pastoral) if required.
- For lower level incidents/issues, a Form Tutor may be asked to intervene, speaking to the relevant parties and supporting both parties to try to resolve the situation. A full written report should be produced and returned to the Year Head for recording and filing.
- For more serious incidents, Year Heads will investigate, possibly with a second member of staff (who will act as a scribe as well as protecting those involved). Where appropriate, sanctions may have to be given to some or all of those involved. This could be an After School Detention or, if the Deputy Heads are involved, a Saturday Morning Detention.

If the matter is of a very serious nature or repeated bullying following previous investigations, then a referral to the Head and a possible suspension/exclusion may be the outcome. All interviews/investigations must be fully documented in writing and passed to the Year Heads for filing.

- Where the pupils involved are in two or more year groups, two Year Heads should oversee the investigation. The victim's Year Head and that of the main protagonist would be the ideal combination.
- **A report must record the date, time, names of the pupils interviewed and the staff present, as well as the details of the investigation, the outcomes and any action taken. All reports should be filed in the pupils' individual files and must be signed by pupils and staff involved.**
- **All incidents reported, however minor, must be logged in the "Bullying Incidents" File held by the Deputy Head (Pastoral). This is laid out in such a way to enable patterns to be identified.**