Anti-Bullying Policy

Approved by Governors:  Autumn 2019
Review Date:  Autumn 2020
Person Responsible:  Headteacher
**Opening Statement:**

Sedgefield Community College is a school that prides itself on its commitment to providing the highest possible standard of education to all pupils who attend the college. A crucial element of this is the determination of the school, its governing body, its staff and also its pupils to tackle all forms of bullying, with a view to minimising this and striving for the eradication of all bullying that takes place within the school and online.

**Definitions:**

Bullying is defined in a fairly broad sense and can take any of the following forms:

- Physical – any form of assault that involves some form of physical contact.
- Verbal – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, etc.
- Emotional – any behaviour that makes the victim feel uncomfortable or unhappy.
- Cyber-bullying – use of technologies to deliberately and repeatedly upset someone else, consisting of threats, harassment, embarrassment, humiliation deformation or impersonation.
- Racist – Racial taunts, graffiti, gesture or any of the above forms of bullying that are motivate by race.
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact or abusive comments.
- Homophobic – comments regarding sexuality.

Whilst any kind of bullying is serious, persistent and targeted bullying is the most insidious form of bullying, due to the way in which it is intended to undermine the confidence and self-respect of a person. This kind of bullying must be the priority to tackle decisively and effectively.

Advances in new technology will also have an impact on the nature of bullying that takes place within educational establishments; mobile phones, the internet, facebook, MSN messages present a number of distinct problems. Sedgefield Community College is also aware that the nature of bullying will continue to change and this situation is continually monitored and the school will respond to developments as necessary.

**Measures for Prevention:**

A crucial element of the way in which the school looks to prevent instances of bullying would be by promoting an awareness of the seriousness of bullying across the school. Staff and pupils are made clear about the implications and consequences of bullying for all parties involved. Some of the ways in which this takes place are:

- Consistent messages about bullying delivered by all teaching and auxiliary staff within the school.
- Bullying and online safety a theme/issue that Year Managers speak to each cohort about in assemblies. This ensures consistency of message and also that pupils are clear about what the school defines bullying to be and also how it will be addressed.
- Bullying and online safety is now addressed directly through the curriculum in Years 7, 8 and 9.
- Availability of the Counselling Service / Year Managers to speak to students as groups or individuals on all issues connected to bullying or cyber bullying.
- Bullying and online safety is a theme/issue which is addressed by tutors in SMSC sessions.

The school is also committed to building on the positive ethos that currently exists and which clearly defines bullying as being unacceptable. Much progress has already been made and the following will all continue to be worked towards:

- Every pupil in the school being clear that there are staff within the school that they can speak to if bullying is taking place and systems that can be used to share information anonymously if required. Development of culture in which ‘telling’ is acceptable. Key elements within this are:
- Each pupil in the school having a tutor assigned to their group. This enables close and trusting relationships to be developed between staff and pupils and an environment in which issues such as bullying can be comfortably discussed.

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A Year 7 Manager and Transition Support Officer for year 7 who liaise closely with the ‘partnership’ schools in order to ensure that the mix of pupils within the Year Seven form groups are organised so as to minimise the possibility of bullying.

Year Managers will remain with their given year group for a period of time. This enables each Year Manager to develop a comprehensive overview of their year group and consequently to oversee the way in which instances of bullying are addressed to ensure the action is effective.

The Year Managers and their tutor teams closely monitor pupils who have been bullied or have been identified as bullying others in the past. Staff to be informed of areas where bullying may develop, in order to pre-empt this. This is in order to ensure that there is no repetition of bullying.

The Year Managers and their tutor teams to work closely with the families of students who have been bullied or who have been identified as bullies, to build a relationship with parents to ensure there is clear and consistent communication.

The staff currently comprises of a school counsellor. As well as being used to address instances of bullying, these staff also have a pro-active role taking measures to avoid bullying and cyberbullying. The use of these staff is periodically reviewed.

School to ensure that there is a high profile staff presence in all areas of the school. Head of duty teams to ensure that staff are directed to areas that are identified as being potential bullying hot spots.

The development of a climate in which pupils do not tolerate bullying taking place amongst their peers. Key elements within this are:

- The developing role of student bodies within the school.
- The desire to increase the sense of pride that pupils have as being part of Sedgefield Community College.

By continually looking at ways of more successfully dealing with instances of bullying within school, the intent is to refine and improve the school’s practice and consequently to more effectively prevent future instances of bullying. The key elements of this are:

- Adopting good practice, identified from other schools, whether they be secondary or primary.
- A member of staff within the school having the responsibility for having an overview of the whole school approach to anti-bullying. This member of staff has a responsibility for periodically reviewing the school’s anti-bullying policy and to update it as necessary and also for reviewing the impact of new data that comes into school from the LA and other sources.

Keep Safe (Red Button). Electronic system whereby any student can disclose or share information anonymously.

**How bullying will be tackled:**

Any referral or report of bullying that is received by the school will be dealt with thoroughly in order to ensure the most appropriate and effective response to each given situation. There are three distinct components to the tackling of bullying with Sedgefield Community College and these are as follows:

**Intervention Techniques**

Depending on the nature of the referral, the appropriate member of staff to gain a full understanding of the situation. This may involve any or all of the following:

- Speaking to the alleged victim of bullying. The alleged victim to understand that their voice is heard and to be accurately informed of the action that is being taken.
- Speaking to the alleged perpetrator.
- Speaking to alleged witnesses of the bullying – whether these be pupils or teachers.
- Recording of incidents.
• Counselling of pupils may be the core element in addressing the bullying. This would be for the perpetrator and the victim. In the first instance this may be through a member of the teaching staff, but this may be supplemented by any or all of the following, dependant on the identity of the teacher involved in the initial response:

  o Counselling from Head of Department to support the class teacher if instances of bullying are identified in the classroom.

  o Counselling from form tutor as the member of staff who has the most detailed knowledge of individual pupils within their form group and understand the nature of interventions required.

  o Counselling from Year Manager as the member of staff with the overview of pupils within their cohort and who are able to identify bullying uses that go beyond individual curriculum areas.

  o Referral from Year Manager to the Deputy Headteacher (Student Welfare), asking for counselling work to be undertaken either by external support agencies.

As the member of staff responsible for having an overview of the progress of each child in their year group, it would be the role of the Year Manager to co-ordinate this kind of intervention.

• Parental involvement is an important element of the school's intervention techniques for tackling bullying and this is addressed on Page 7 of the policy.

• School to address the potential underlying reasons for bullying. For example, there may be academic difficulties relating to a learning difficulty that has not yet been identified. Thorough investigation of reasons for bullying to take place as a matter of course.

Sanctions

• Whilst the school accepts that sanctions alone are not always the most successful response to bullying, there is also an acceptance that they do have a part to play. The sanction is not against the pupil, but against their behaviour in bullying another. An outline of the sanctions that may be utilised by the school are:

  o Detentions as a response to isolated incidents of bullying. Function of acting as deterrent to repetition of the incident.

  o The use of fixed-term exclusions. Although these have a role in underlining the seriousness with which the school addresses bullying, they have an extremely important role in involving parents in the process of tackling bullying, due to the home/school meeting that exclusion automatically triggers. The time of the fixed-term exclusion is also used by the school in order to ensure that a coherent and workable strategy has been devised for the victim and the perpetrator in order to ensure that there is no repetition.

  o Whilst Sedgefield Community College prides itself on being an inclusive school, instances of persistent and targeted bullying, in which the intervention strategies have not worked and the perpetrator is not prepared to enable them to work, may ultimately result in a permanent exclusion.

Curriculum

• Each year group’s SMSC scheme to address the theme of bullying. Intent of raising awareness of the issue and the serious implications of it. The SMSC co-ordinator within the school will play an important role- this person will oversee the development of the treatment of the issue between year groups.

• Other curriculum subjects address the theme of bullying and online safety where the opportunities arise within their lessons. Most notably this takes place in Key Stage Three Drama.
Registering concerns and problems:

Clear systems of referral are in place within the school in order to ensure that all are clear about the process for addressing an alleged instance of bullying. The reason for there being a number of systems is that the first referral may take a variety of different forms. All systems are underpinned by the involvement of the form tutor and the relevant Year Manager and provide support for all members of staff.
### Referral System for Apparent Isolated Incident of Bullying in Class

Class teacher to deal with the incident of bullying in the first instance.

- Inform / refer to Head of Department / Faculty to seek further support and inform them of incident.
- Inform / refer to Year Manager to seek further support and inform them of incident.
- Inform / refer to form tutor to monitor pupils concerned within their form class.

### Referral System for Parental Contact Informing School of Bullying

Year Manager to speak to parent – investigate and respond to incident as appropriate.

- Referral to form tutor for information / follow up action as deemed necessary.
- Referral to other members of staff for information / follow up as deemed necessary.

### Referral System for a Pupil Report of Bullying outside the Classroom

Member of staff to address incident and refer to Year Manager / form tutor for information / further action.

- Year Manager / form tutor to speak to pupil - investigate and respond to incident as appropriate.
- Referral to form tutor for information / follow up action as deemed necessary.
- Referral to other members of staff for information / follow up as deemed necessary.

### Referral System for Prolonged and Targeted Bullying

Year Manager to speak to parent / pupils – investigate and respond to incident as appropriate.

- Referral to form tutor for information / follow up action as deemed necessary.
- Referral to other members of staff for information / follow up as deemed necessary.
- Referral to identified member of SLT For advice / support in addressing the bullying.
Parental Involvement:

The links with parents are important in tackling instances of bullying. The aim of the school is to work in partnership with parents to make Sedgefield Community College a more welcoming place for all students.

- The relevant Year Manager to take the decision as to when it is necessary to inform parents about instances of bullying in school in order to gain their support in dealing effectively in bullying. This may involve some or all of the following:
  - Phone conversations / letters asking parents to support the school in dealing with an identified instance of bullying.
  - Meetings in school between the parent(s) of a victim / perpetrator in order to devise a coherent strategy for addressing the problem.
  - Parents to be kept fully informed by the school of action that is being taken by the school in order to ensure school and home work successfully together.
  - To investigate ways of accessing more parents and to make them more aware of the school’s anti-bullying policy.

Confidentiality:

If pupils are to trust that Sedgefield Community College is an environment committed to successfully tackling bullying with a view to the eradication of it, confidentiality is an issue of importance.

- Staff to whom an incident of bullying is reported, to respect the confidentiality of the pupil making the referral. All efforts to be made to ensure confidentiality and if the nature of the referral dictates that this may not be possible, the member of staff to be open with the child about this.

- Year Manager who has an overview of the year group to take an informed decision as to what information about an incident of bullying needs to be disseminated to other members of staff. Any such information to be included on a confidential memo so that all staff are aware and is not to be seen by pupils in the school.

Recording and reporting:

All incidences of bullying are to be recorded On CPOMS.

Stage 1: Completion of CPOMS

- CPOMS is located from the RM Unify launch pad
- Search the students name from the dashboard and log the new incident with a bullying identifier.
- Notify through CPOMS all relevant parties (Tutor, Year Manager, Designated Safeguarding Lead)

Monitoring and evaluation:

As has already been stated, the school is anxious to continually move forward, developing and improving the way in which instances of bullying are addressed within the college. Key elements of the monitoring and evaluation process within the college are:

- The periodic review of the school’s Anti-Bullying Policy.
  - This initially to be undertaken by the member of staff within the school with responsibility for reviewing this area. This is in the light of feedback gained by the school from the way in which instances of bullying have been dealt with from staff, pupils and parents.
  - Governing body / SLT / Whole staff / school council to review and modify amendments to the policy.

- Continue asking sample groups of pupils to complete anonymous questionnaires about the current way in which bullying is addressed within the school. Intention of this, once again, being to identify information about refinements to the policy that would be useful.
- The role of the SLT member, as the line manager for the school counsellor / anti-bullying worker will be important in reviewing the impact of these workers in school and how it can be increased.

- School to continue to look for means of refining and improving the policy and ways in which it is implemented, from within and outside the college:
  - Periodic staff training on the most effective ways of dealing with bullying. Dissemination of good practice throughout the college.
  - Sharing good practice from other educational establishments.
  - Using documentation / systems of the LA, Ofsted, etc as a means of refining practice.