



# YMCA George Williams College Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy

Policy Last Approved	Review Frequency	Approving Body	Date of next Review
Mar 2018	Annually	Board of Trustees	Mar 2019

**STAFF AND STUDENT ANTI-BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY** Please note: It is absolutely essential that any and all reports of bullying or any incident where bullying appears to be taking place must not be ignored but must be acted upon and followed up.



## **Scope of the Policy**

This policy applies to bullying and harassment and its implications for our students and the ethos of the College as a whole.

The policy should be read with other relevant College policies, in particular the College's Student Disciplinary Procedure, the Equal Opportunities Policy, the Disability Equality Scheme, the Gender Equality Scheme and the Race Equality Scheme. It should also be considered in conjunction with the college's approach to Every Citizen Matters 'Staying Safe'.

## **Policy Statement**

The YMCA George Williams College ('the College') will not tolerate any form of bullying or harassment and is committed to eliminating bullying from the organisation. Our vision is to have high standards of teaching and learning which challenge our students to achieve. Our anti-bullying and harassment policy supports this; by promoting respect and tolerance for each other and for the College. We believe in tackling incidents of bullying by encouraging an environment where individuality is celebrated and individuals can develop without fear. This involves ensuring that all our students and staff share the same perception of what constitutes bullying, and that students are encouraged to report all incidents of bullying to a member of college staff.

## **Introduction**

This policy applies to all students and staff at the College irrespective of their age. While this policy focuses mainly on the bullying of students by other students, it is recognised that other forms of bullying may occur and this is also addressed in this policy.

We believe that all students and staff have the right to live, be educated and work in an environment which is supportive, caring and safe, and where there is mutual respect, courtesy, kindness and co-operation. Bullying is anti-social behaviour which threatens the fundamental principles of the College, and it will not be tolerated. This policy has been developed with due regard to the duties and obligations under existing legislation and public sector duties for the safeguarding and well-being of all students.

## **Forms of Bullying**

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour to someone as a single incident or over a period of time. It can be either physical, verbal or indirect or a combination of any of these forms. Often it includes one or more of the following: intimidation, exclusion, rumour-spreading, name-calling, anonymous messages, damage to or theft of personal property. The victim may react by becoming silent or withdrawn, feigning illness, missing study days, not eating, or not working. The potential serious consequences of bullying, both physical and emotional, should not be underestimated. Bullying can lead to psychological damage and in extreme cases, suicide.



Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. It is usually conscious and wilful and commonly consists of repeated acts of aggression and/or manipulation. People can be bullied on the grounds of:

- Race
- Gender
- Age
- Sexual orientation
- Disability
- Socio-economic status
- Nationality
- Language
- Religion
- Belief
- Other real or perceived differences

However, it can also be for no apparent reason. Bullying can take many forms, including:

- Use of IT and mobile telephones, i.e. cyber-bullying and text messages
- Being called names
- Being teased or taunted
- Being pushed or pulled around
- Being hit or attacked
- Having bags and other possessions taken and thrown around
- Having rumours spread
- Being ignored and left out
- Being forced to hand over money or possessions
- Being attacked because of religion, colour, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation, disability, gender, class, age, family circumstances etc.

Bullying can be subtle or it can be blatant. It can cause short-term suffering for the victim or it can go on for years, but it is always damaging and the college will always take it seriously and address it.

### **Cyberbullying**

Cyberbullying includes the use of ICT in the following ways:

- Texting or emailing unpleasant, scary or rude mobile phone messages.
- 'Sexting', where sexually inappropriate mobile phone pictures of one person are used by another person to upset, harass or demean the person in the pictures.
- Posting abusive or demeaning comments on social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter, or in chat rooms.
- Deleting or ignoring a person's messages on social networking sites or in chat rooms.

### **Sexual and sexist bullying**

Sexual and sexist bullying includes:



- Making any offensive, derogatory or demeaning comment or innuendo to a person linked to their gender, sexuality or sexual activity.
- Displaying sexual or pornographic pictures on any electronic device with intent to insult, demean or harass another person.
- Any unwanted physical conduct or coercion into a sexual act.

### **Racist and religious bullying**

Racist and religious bullying includes making any offensive, derogatory or demeaning comment to a person linked to their race, nationality, ethnicity, religion or belief, or cultural practices.

### **Homophobic bullying**

Homophobic bullying includes making any offensive, derogatory or demeaning comment or innuendo to a person linked to their sexuality to upset, harass, humiliate or isolate that person.

### **Disability bullying**

Disability bullying includes making any offensive comment or physical interference towards another person who has a mental or physical disability or a learning difficulty, whereby that disability or learning difficulty is exploited with the intent to upset, harass, humiliate or isolate that person.

### **Tackling Bullying**

#### **Prevention**

The following procedures and recommendations are intended to discourage bullying in all its forms.

#### **General: Preventative Measures to stop bullying**

- Unauthorized absence from study days will be reported by the tutor to the Head of Department, who will then follow up.
- Poor academic performance is monitored and addressed by the Head of Department.
- Tutors will see any member of their tutor group, by appointment, during working hours, who wishes to discuss any personal problem with them.
- Tutors will be informed of anyone in their tutor group who has reported or is suspected of being bullied or bullying and asked to monitor the situation.
- Staff team will be vigilant around College at all times. Any student whose behaviour is a cause for concern will be discussed at regular department meetings.
- The College will discourage the formation of racial or ethnic cliques and insist on the use of English in and out of lessons.
- Students will be advised that members of staff do have the ability to stop bullying and encouraged to speak to them.
- Students will be advised that anyone who feels that they are being bullied, or who knows that someone else is being bullied, should tell a member of the academic staff. The disclosure will be passed on to and dealt with by the Head of Department in the first instance.
- All complaints of bullying will be taken seriously, investigated, dealt with appropriately, effectively, sensitively and as confidentially as possible, and responded to in a consistent manner.
- Staff will receive regular training opportunities to help prevent and tackle bullying.



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**Cyber-Bullying: Preventative Measures to stop bullying**

- All students and staff are required to adhere to the College's 'Acceptable Use of ICT Policy' for the safe use of the internet and electronic communications. Certain sites are blocked by the College's filtering system and staff may monitor students' use. Students' email use may also be monitored by the College.
- Guidance is offered on the safe-keeping of names, addresses, passwords, mobile telephone numbers and other personal details.
- Mobile telephones are to be used with discretion and not during study days unless expressly for teaching purposes, as directed by the tutor.
- The use of cameras on mobile telephones is not allowed during study days (unless with express permission) nor in washing and changing areas.

**Recording, reporting and monitoring Bullying**

Students and staff are encouraged to report incidents of bullying to any member of the academic staff. Students may also choose to give information anonymously by a note. The member of staff learning of the incident will pass the details on to the relevant Head of Department.

All incidents of bullying should be recorded and reported to relevant tutors, and where the student is under 18 - parents/carers. The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) should be copied into all reports and trustees should receive regular updates and reports.

Where students have been involved in a bullying incident, they will be observed to ensure that the behaviour is not repeated.

**Support**

**Students or Staff who have been bullied will be supported in the following ways:**

- Being offered an immediate opportunity to discuss what happened, particularly their feelings, with their tutor or any member of staff of their choice.
- Being reassured that they have done the right thing by reporting the incident, if applicable, and that the College will be investigating the incident and taking it seriously.
- Being offered on-going and continuous support, if appropriate.
- Working together to restore their self-esteem and confidence, if appropriate.
- Signposting the services of a Counsellor/Listener, if appropriate.

The above forms of intervention will be aimed at supporting and empowering students and staff who have experienced bullying rather than encouraging a view of them as victims.

**Students or Staff who have bullied will be helped in the following ways:**

- Discussing what happened and discovering why they became involved.
- Exploring different perspectives of the incident, as appropriate.
- Establishing all hurtful and offensive behaviour and the need to change.
- If the student is under 18, informing parents/guardians and encouraging them to support the change in their child.
- Signposting services of a Counsellor/Listener to help bullies control their aggression and be more empathetic, if appropriate.

**Sanctions for Bullying**



The College will impose sanctions on students or staff who have bullied in accordance with its 'Student Disciplinary Policy' for students and 'Staff Disciplinary Policy' for staff. The type of sanction will depend upon the severity of the incident.

## **Responsibilities**

Everyone in the College must take responsibility for promoting a common anti-bullying approach and all members of the College community are expected to report and challenge incidents of bullying without fear or favour.

## **College Staff**

We expect that staff will:

- Ensure that all alleged incidents of bullying, perceived or otherwise, are reported to line managers and acted upon
- Provide a good role model for young people by behaving in a respectful and caring manner with students and colleagues
- Undertake training to help them to deal effectively with issues of bullying and harassment
- Tackle specific incidents of bullying through the disciplinary procedure, if appropriate
- Raise awareness in the classroom of bullying, for example through the tutorial programme and induction
- Record, monitor and investigate reported incidences of bullying and harassment in accordance with College procedures
- Communicate the College's anti-bullying policy to students

We expect that students will:

- Support College staff in the implementation of the policy
- Become involved in the monitoring of the policy
- Feel confident to challenge and report incidence of bullying or harassment
- Feel reassured that bullying is taken seriously and is always tackled by the College

## **Governing Body**

We expect that the Governing Body will:

- Support the Principal and College staff in the implementation of the policy
- Designate a Governor to take lead responsibility for the implementation of the policy
- Be fully informed on all matters concerning bullying and harassment in the College