

Anti Bullying& Harrassment Policy v1

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Signed:

Printed Name: Lewis Hatcher

Job Title: Managing Director

Date: 5th July 2024

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated within College or placement. The safety, welfare and well-being of all students and staff is our key priority. We take all incidences of bullying seriously and it is our duty to take measures to prevent and tackle any bullying, harassment, or discrimination. We are committed to improving our College's approach to tackling bullying and regularly monitor, review, and assess the impact of our preventative measures. No form of bullying will be tolerated, and we take all incidents seriously.

1. DEFINITIONS

Bullying- Bullying refers to repeated, unwanted aggressive behaviour that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. It includes actions such as physical, verbal, or psychological intimidation, exclusion, coercion, or harassment.

Cyber Bullying- Cyber bullying refers to bullying behavior that occurs through electronic devices, such as smartphones, computers, or social media platforms. It includes actions such as online harassment, spreading rumours, posting hurtful comments, or sharing offensive content.

Bullying can be based on any of the following things:

- Race (racist bullying)
- Religion or belief
- Culture or class
- Gender (sexist bullying)
- Sexual orientation (homophobic or biphobic bullying)
- Gender identity (transphobic bullying)
- Special Educational Needs (SEN) or disability
- Appearance or health conditions
- Related to home or other personal situation

This list is not exhaustive.

2. SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

The signs of bullying and harassment may vary among individuals, but some common indicators include:

- Emotional distress, such as sudden changes in mood, withdrawal, anxiety, or depression.
 - Physical symptoms, such as unexplained injuries, changes in appetite or sleep patterns, or frequent illnesses.
 - Academic decline, including a decrease in academic performance, disengagement, or absenteeism.
 - Social isolation, difficulty making friends, or avoidance of certain areas or individuals.
 - Changes in behavior, such as aggression, irritability, excessive self-blame, or low self-esteem.
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3. SIGNS OF CYBER BULLYING

In the case of cyber bullying, the following signs and symptoms may be observed:

- Unusual or excessive use of electronic devices, especially during odd hours.
- Emotional reactions to messages or notifications, including anger, sadness, or fear.
- Reluctance or refusal to use electronic devices, social media platforms, or online communication channels.
- Withdrawal from social activities, loss of interest in hobbies, or changes in behavior.

4. PREVENTION OF BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

Direct Skills Group is committed to preventing bullying and harassment through the following strategies:

- Education and Awareness
- Providing regular training and educational programs for students, staff, and stakeholders on recognizing, preventing, and addressing bullying and harassment.
- Promoting awareness of the college's anti-bullying and harassment policy through orientation sessions, information sessions, and inclusion in student handbooks and staff manuals.
- Encouraging open discussions, workshops, and awareness campaigns on respect, empathy, and positive communication within the college community.
- Creating a Positive Environment
- Fostering a positive and inclusive culture that values diversity, promotes respect, and encourages empathy among all members of the college community.
- Establishing clear behavioural expectations and guidelines for students and staff, emphasizing mutual respect, kindness, and tolerance.
- Encouraging students and staff to report any incidents of bullying or harassment promptly and ensuring that they feel safe and supported when doing so.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff, both teaching and non-teaching have a duty to report bullying, to be vigilant to the signs of bullying and to play an active role in preventing bullying. If staff are aware of bullying, they should reassure the pupils involved and inform their class teacher.

The Executive Team and Managing Director have overall responsibility for ensuring that the anti-bullying policy is followed by all members of staff and that the College upholds its duty to promote the safety and well-being of all students. In addition to the designated anti-bullying leads,

Parents and carers should look out for potential signs of bullying, such as distress, lack of concentration, feigning illness or other unusual behaviour. Parents and carers should encourage their child not to retaliate and support and encourage them to report the bullying.

Parents and carers can report an incident of bullying to the College either in person, or by phoning or emailing the College [0113 2509507 / info@directskillsgroup.co.uk]

Students should not take part in any kind of bullying and should watch out for signs of bullying among their peers. They should never be bystanders to incidents of bullying, but should offer support to the victim and, if possible, encourage them to tell a trusted adult.

6. RESPONDING TO BULLYING OR HARRASMENT

- Staff will record the bullying on an 'Cause for Concern Form' and pass this on to the Training Director.
- The Training Director will summarise the information, which is reported to the governing body at every meeting.
- Staff will offer support to the target of the bullying in discussion with the class tutor. Individual meetings will then be held with any target of bullying to devise a plan of action that ensures they are made to feel safe and reassured that the bullying is not their fault.
- Staff will pro-actively respond to the bully who may require support. They will devise a plan of action including parents/carer input where necessary.
- Staff will assess whether any other authorities (such as police or the local authority) need to be involved, particularly when actions take place outside of school.

7. SUPPORT AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Direct Skills Group will ensure that individuals who report incidents of bullying or harassment are treated with respect, empathy, and sensitivity, and that their confidentiality is maintained.

Where deemed necessary we will provide appropriate support and resources, such as pastoral support, peer support programs, or if required referrals to external organisations, to individuals affected by bullying or harassment.

8. BULLYING OUTSIDE OF COLLEGE

Bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated, whether it takes place inside or outside of College. Bullying can take place on the way to and from College, before or after College hours, at the weekends or during the holidays, or in the wider community. The nature of cyber bullying in particular means that it can impact on Students' well-being beyond the College day. Staff, parents and carers, and Students must be vigilant to bullying outside of school and report and respond according to their responsibilities as outlined in this policy.

9. REVIEW AND UPDATE

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its continued effectiveness, compliance with relevant laws, regulations, and best practices, and alignment with the college's overall commitment to a safe and respectful learning environment. Any necessary updates or amendments to this policy will be made in consultation with the college management team and communicated to all members of the college community.