

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY (Amended January 2010)

The following notes concerning the International College's anti-bullying policy apply to all staff and students at the College. The first section comprises a definition, the second a numbered list stating general College beliefs and the third is a separate set of guidelines and notes explaining to staff, students and parents, the standard procedure for dealing with situations of suspected/actual cases of bullying. This is not meant as a prescriptive list as all cases of this nature involve features of individuality which should not be ignored.

The International College sets out clear standards of how it expects students to behave in the document "Behaviour Policy, Procedure, Sanctions and Rewards" and is committed to both ensuring it promotes positive behaviour and applies sanctions fairly and with full explanation to all relevant parties (student, parent, guardian as appropriate).

A copy of the document "Behaviour Policy, Procedure, Sanctions and Rewards" is available either from the College website or on request by e-mailing reception@sherborne-ic.net, by telephone +44 1935 814743, fax +44 1935 814059 or by post: International College, Sherborne School, Newell Grange, Sherborne, Dorset England UK.

A. Definition

The Government, and here the International College, defines bullying as

Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

(Source: Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools, Sept 2007).

B. Aim

To ensure that all students are safe, healthy, happy and free from physical and psychological harm.

C. Statement of Beliefs (including Objectives)

1. Every member of the College community, and person working at the International College has the right to enjoy his/her working, learning and leisure time free from intimidation.
2. Our community will not tolerate unkind actions or remarks of any kind including that relating to race, religion, culture, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
3. Any unkind action, indication or comment may be called bullying (including cyber-bullying, homophobic bullying and name calling).
4. Members of the College community should support each other by reporting all instances of bullying.
5. Bullying will be dealt with seriously as it can lead to extreme physical and psychological dangers, including suicide.

D. Staff Procedure regarding student bullying.

If a student or group of students approach you because of being upset or worried, or if you observe a student or group of students who appear to be upset, please make sure the individual or group of individuals are calm and not distressed. Do not try to force conversation whilst there is an emotive atmosphere. Take the individual(s) concerned to a more private place. If you feel the situation warrants it, ask a second member of staff to be present. Follow these guidelines:

- Never guarantee confidentiality – this could put you in a very difficult position but point out that you will act sympathetically and sensibly. Do not pass judgement on the accused, but offer support and sympathy for the predicament that the student(s) feel they are in.
- Ask the student(s) to explain the nature of their problems. Be careful to listen to everything they say and ask them to rephrase if you do not understand the content of their problem – remember they may not only be upset but are also trying to express themselves in a foreign language. If absolutely necessary conduct the conversation through an interpreter – this should be a member of the school populace who you believe to be entirely trustworthy and discreet. Third party conversations of this nature are obviously not ideal but are infinitely better than the problems of isolating a student because of a language barrier.
- Ask the student(s) if they have informed the person(s) concerned they are not happy with what they are doing, explained why the behaviour is unacceptable and asked them politely to stop. Carefully take note of their reply. Tell the student(s) that you are now officially dealing with the situation and will pass the information onto the Senior Housemaster, Housemistress or Junior Boys Housemaster. At this point contact the Senior Housemaster, Housemistress or Junior Boys Housemaster at the earliest opportunity, putting the incident in writing on a school incident report form.
- The Senior Housemaster, Housemistress or Junior Boys Housemaster will keep not only you, but all staff informed from this moment on (where appropriate) and will himself follow these guidelines:
 1. See the individual(s) again to verify the facts.
 2. Check previous incident reports to try and map any previous problems with the person accused of bullying.
 3. See the alleged bully and give him/her (in some cases “them”) the opportunity to reply. Such a reply will be written up as an addition to the incident report. Providing there is no previous history of such problems, and the Senior Housemaster, Housemistress or Junior Boys Housemaster is convinced that the complaint is genuine, he will try and challenge the **behaviour** rather than the **individual** concerned with the intention of creating genuine understanding of why such behaviour is unacceptable. Some form of punishment may be imposed but would be less likely if the situation at this stage could be resolved amicably. (Please refer to the document “Behaviour Policy, Procedures, Sanctions and Rewards”.)
 4. The student making the original complaint should be seen by the Senior Housemaster, Housemistress or Junior Boys Housemaster, and the course of action explained. It may be the case that the student complaining has also had some part to play in the antagonism and this will also be explained as applicable.
 5. Finally, both individuals (or groups of individuals) would preferably be seen together to reinforce the message that the problem has been resolved.
 6. All staff should now be notified and the situation carefully monitored, with the respective Head of House informed of any further problems or anxieties.

7. As appropriate, students who have been bullied will be suitably supported, and students who have bullied, or who may bully others, will be given suitable help and guidance.
8. 'Initiation ceremonies' intended to cause pain, anxiety or humiliation are prohibited at International College.

E. Persistent Offenders (Procedures and Sanctions).

The college reserves the right to protect the community from persistent bullies and will remove such individuals from the college on a temporary or permanent basis should the need arise and no other sensible procedure be thought applicable. The College would first,

1. through the Principal and Vice-Principal, have seen the individual concerned,
2. acted in full consultation with the Senior Housemaster/Housemistress/Junior Boys Housemaster and staff
3. have previously contacted the parent/guardians of the student(s) concerned in writing with the aim of asking for their support in dealing with the problem.
4. have usually issued a formal warning prior to removal and attempt to work away from the stigma involved with "expulsion".

If possible, and in the genuine belief that a fresh start may provide the stimulus required for change, the College would help to find a new school for the removed student. The new school, however, would be provided with a full history of the problems.

If thought applicable, and non-inflammatory, the incident and its ramifications would be explained to all members of the College.

[Note: There is a Grievance Procedure available to staff. (Details available to staff from the Bursary's Personnel Department.) Attempted bullying of staff by students will be dealt with as misbehaviour under the College "Behaviour Policy, Procedures, Sanctions and Rewards".]

F. Staff Training

The College will ensure that all staff are provided with appropriate and regular Child Protection training appropriate to their role within the College community, immediately upon appointment as a part of the induction process, and then annually or triennially according to their responsibility for child protection.

G. Student Input and Regular Checking

Students will be asked annually to complete a questionnaire relating to how they feel about living at the College, their thoughts about how they are treated at the College and areas they are particularly keen to visit/do not like to go.

Staff duty includes regular patrols of all areas of the main site/boarding houses as well as off-site patrols.

H. Student Training

Education plays an important part in ensuring good behaviour through such means as assemblies, PSHE and during lessons as the opportunity arises and through boarding life as appropriate.

Further examples of College procedures and opportunities aimed not only to prevent bullying, but also to promote good behaviour can be found in the College's "Behaviour Policy, Procedures, Sanctions and Rewards" which is available on the public section of the College website.

Amended by CJG, January 2010
Verified and checked by PAH, January 2010