

Bullying and Harassment Policy

Purpose

The Inspire Education Group (IEG) is committed to ensuring that everyone is equally valued and treated with respect. The Group has a duty of care to all students and is committed to ensuring:

- All students are protected from different forms of harassment and / or bullying
- Eliminating all forms of discrimination on the grounds of all protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010.
- There is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence or sexual harassment. This type of behaviour is never acceptable and will not be dismissed as 'banter', 'part of growing up' or 'just having a laugh.'

It is recognised that a student's academic progress and emotional wellbeing may be adversely affected if they are subjected to any forms of bullying and / or harassment.

Scope

This policy applies to all students at their place of study, around the internal and external site, on College transport and at work placement locations. Support and appropriate signposting to external services and agencies are available to students involved in bullying and/or harassment incidents. Topics that focus on bullying, relationships, consent, respect and harassment including sexual harassment are embedded throughout the academic year as part of the student personal development programme. Promoting anti-bullying and raising awareness to support prevention is also a key aspect of student engagement activities and cross-college events.

The Policy Statement

Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and / or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and / or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.

Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour can be repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time.

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. (National Centre Against Bullying 2021).

Policy Name: STU005 - Bullying and Harassment Policy

Responsibility: Executive Director Student Services

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Approved By: The Policies Approvals Group

Review Date: 01/07/2022

Site: Staff Intranet, IEG, Peterborough, Stamford

Harassment is defined as anything that causes alarm or distress to another on more than one occasion which they either know or should have known would amount to harassment of the other. (National Police Chiefs Council 2020).

This type of unwanted conduct has the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of an individual or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive

environment for them. There are three types of harassment that are unlawful under the Equality Act:

- Harassment related to a relevant protected characteristic
- Sexual harassment
- Less favourable treatment of a student because they submit to or reject sexual harassment or harassment related to sex

Pregnancy and maternity are not protected directly under the harassment provisions; however, unwanted behaviour will amount to harassment related to sex. (Equality and Human Rights Commission 2021).

Students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are three times more likely to be abused than their peers. Additional barriers can sometimes exist when recognising abuse in SEND students. These can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the student's disability without further exploration
- The potential for students with SEND being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying and harassment, without outwardly showing any signs; and Communication barriers and difficulties overcoming these barriers

For examples of bullying and harassment behaviour – Use Appendix 2

Responsibilities

All members of staff have a responsibility to ensure that suspected bullying and harassment is dealt with fairly and consistently, maintaining an attitude of 'it could happen here'. Managers and teaching/support staff are responsible for taking seriously and addressing all cases of harassment and bullying, both to address the behaviour of the alleged bully / harasser and to provide suitable support and reassurance for the concerned student.

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Related Procedures and Documentation

- Appendix 1 – Responsibilities
- Appendix 2 – Examples
- Appendix 3 – Flow Chart of Procedures
- Behaviour and Disciplinary Policy
- Safeguarding for All Policy
- 14-16 Policy
- Student Code of Conduct
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- When to Call the Police 2020 (NPCC)
- Sexual Violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges 2018, 2021 (DfE)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education

An Equal Opportunities Impact Assessment was carried out by the Policy Approval Group on 7 July 2021.