



Bullying, Harassment and Victimisation

Statement

Hilderstone College is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy environment for all staff and students, and this policy explicitly acknowledges that all forms of bullying, harassment, victimisation, violent or abusive behaviour are unacceptable. All staff and students have measures in place to report and/or respond to observed reported bullying, harassment and victimisation. Any member of staff or student taking part in bullying, harassing or victimising behaviour will be subject to disciplinary action.

This policy refers to the protected characteristics contained within the Equalities Act 2010, which are as follows:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation.

This policy supports the following Hilderstone College Policies:

- Safeguarding
- Health and Safety
- Code of Conduct
- Complaints.

Bullying

There is no single legal definition of bullying, but it can include:

- emotional – being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting
- physical – pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- racist – racial taunts, gestures
- sexual – unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- homophobic – because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- discriminatory – about disability, gender, age or other differences
- verbal – name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- cyber – all areas of internet, such as email and internet chat room issues
- mobile – threats by text messaging and calls
- misuse of associated technology e.g. camera and video facilities.

Harassment

Harassment related to a person's protected characteristic, is explicitly prohibited in employment and vocational training. Harassment is defined as any unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of either:

- violating the dignity of an individual
- creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive atmosphere for an individual.

Victimisation

This policy gives all staff and students at Hilderstone College the right to make a complaint if they feel that they, or somebody else, is being bullied or harassed. If a person is mistreated because they have made, or are likely to make, a complaint; or have supported somebody else in making such a complaint, this will also be treated as victimisation.

Students: What to do if you think you are being bullied, harassed or victimised

Please speak to a member of staff as soon as possible. This could be the Accommodation and Welfare Officer, your teacher or any other member of staff you feel comfortable telling.

Staff: What to do if you suspect bullying, harassment and/or victimisation

1. Investigate all reports, however seemingly trivial. In the case of harassment, this should be reported even if the suspected perpetrator is a third party, such as a visitor to the College.
2. Once it has been established that bullying/harassment has taken/is taking place, refer the incident to the Principal /Head of Teaching (HoT). The Principal/HoT will decide the appropriate course of action, up to and including calling the Police.
3. When appropriate and with the Principal/HoT, explain to the perpetrator, that their actions are unacceptable and tell them the effect it has had on the other / others.
4. Ask them to consider an appropriate way of putting things right and, if necessary support them in carrying out an apology.
5. Ensure that any apology/reconciliation is done with Hilderstone College staff present so that it can be accurately recorded.
6. Alternatively, bring both parties (bully and bullied) together for a "no blame" meeting. The aim is to clarify the situation through discussion and allow both sides to work out a solution that is satisfactory to them both. This will be recorded and signed by a staff member.
7. In the case of the student being under 18, inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) (in writing, describing in detail the relevant information) who will inform parents/guardians of those involved what has happened and how it has been resolved.
8. If, after this meeting, the bullying continues then it must be seen as deliberate or that the perpetrator (for example if suffering from fits of anger) is unable to control himself or herself. The DSL will take immediate action to protect the bullied person and will begin procedures to restrict the activities of the bully. Hilderstone College will keep parents of the parties aged under 18 fully informed.
9. In the case of students, any further incidents of bullying by the same person will result in the perpetrator being sent home as quickly as possible. In the case of staff, the disciplinary procedure will be implemented and may result in dismissal.

Prevention

Hilderstone College will ensure that all staff and students are aware of the behavioural expectations when attending or working at or for Hilderstone College.

Related document: Safeguarding and Student Welfare Policy

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