

## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

This policy is available in alternative formats. Please contact Human Resources for further information on extension 5076 or 5077

## Statement of Intent

Lowestoft College is committed to providing a supportive, friendly, safe and positive environment free from offensive behaviour, to help learners achieve their learning goals and get the most out of their experience of College life.

This policy is for all learners and staff and can be used for information or referred to by anyone who is being bullied or is aware that bullying is taking place.

Bullying of any kind is not tolerated at Lowestoft College. If it does occur, learners are urged to voice their grievance in the secure knowledge that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We encourage both those who are being bullied and those who are aware of bullying, to inform a member of staff.

## What is bullying?

Bullying is the abuse of power and the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the person being bullied and is unacceptable.

Bullying can be:

- **Physical** pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching etc
- **Emotional** excluding, upsetting, making fun, embarrassing
- **Verbal** name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours
- **Racist** racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- **Sexual** unwanted physical contact, abusive or unwelcome remarks
- **Homophobic** comments about one's sexuality

## Some potential causes of bullying

There are lots and lots of reasons why someone may be bullied, too many to list. Here are just some of them:

- Age
- Religion
- Disability
- Race
- Money
- Gender
- Sexual orientation

## Examples of bullying which are listed as Gross Misconduct with the Learner Disciplinary Policy

- Disruptive and aggressive behaviour towards learners, staff or visitors
- Fighting
- Harassment and Bullying ~ racist, sexist etc
- Endangering the health and/or safety of self and/or others
- Gross indecencies
- Incidents involving violence or threat of violence
- Hoaxes of any kind, including telephone
- Threatening use of mobile phones/internet e.g. emails, photographs, blogs, Social Networking, Instant Messenger etc

## Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

- Not wanting to come to College

- Change in usual routines
- Becoming anxious or withdrawn
- Attempted or threatened suicide
- Crying
- Nightmares
- Feeling ill
- Bruising, cuts
- Doing poorly at College
- Possessions 'go missing'
- Becoming aggressive or unreasonable
- Becoming withdrawn and lacking in confidence
- Bullying other children or siblings

### **Why is it important to respond to bullying?**

Bullying can cause serious physical and mental problems and can ruin an individual's chances of success, both in College and in their future career. No-one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everyone has the right to be treated with respect.

Learners who bully need to learn different ways of behaving, or they will go on to become bullies at home and in the workplace.

Lowestoft College undertakes to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying. If you are being bullied or you have reason to believe that someone else is being bullied, please inform a member of staff.

### **What should you do if you feel you are being bullied?**

If you feel you are being bullied, **tell someone**. This may, in the first instance, be friends, family, your Personal Tutor, a member of staff, Medical Room staff or a Learning Adviser.

Once a member of staff has been alerted, the next step will be to discuss your problem (by interviewing all parties), in order to decide upon the next course of action, conducted by the course tutor and the Head of Learner Services.

If there is a case to answer, the next step will be the Learner Disciplinary Procedure. This, in turn, could lead to the Appeals Procedure, if either party feels dissatisfied with the result. (Details of these procedures are contained within the Learner Handbook).

In certain circumstances, the College may feel it necessary to involve your parents, guardians or the police.

At all stages in the above procedures you may bring a friend or anyone of your choosing to support you.

Counselling sessions – confidential, independent and supportive - can be arranged for either the bullied or the bully, to ensure that the individuals are able to move forward in a more positive and confident way.

Lowestoft College's Anti-Bullying Policy is widely distributed throughout the College and all staff are actively committed to it. Your voice will be heard.