

Brixham College

# Anti Bullying Policy

Date Adopted	June 2024
Prepared by	Jeanne Marcham
Ratified by	Trustees
Review	June 2026



# Introduction

## Aim

The aim of the anti-bullying policy is to ensure that students learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without the fear of being bullied and that staff are free from fear of bullying by students. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will students be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available at Brixham College.

## Statutory Duties

Colleges have a legal duty under the College Standards and Framework act 1998 to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among students and to bring these procedures to the attention of staff, parents and students. Under the Education Inspections Bill 2006 the duties are extended to include preventing/responding to bullying that happens outside College, where it is reasonable to do so. Colleges also have a duty to 'safeguard' and promote the welfare of students (Education act 2011) and to ensure that children and young people are safe from bullying and discrimination (Children Act 2004). Government guidance advises that the policy should also address the bullying of staff by students ('Safe to Learn' DCSF 2007) (Coalition Government documents and law-equality Act 2010, Education Act 2011)

## Scope of this policy and links to other policies

This policy includes:

- Bullying of students by students within College
- Bullying of and/or by students outside of College, where the College is aware of it
- Bullying of staff by students within or outside College

Allegations about bullying of students by staff will be dealt with under the College's Safeguarding Policy.

This policy is based on DfE guidance "Preventing and Tackling Bullying" July 2017 and supporting documents. It also takes into account the DfE statutory guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education" 2023.

## Links with other College policies and practices

This policy has links to the following College policies and procedures:

- Behaviour policy Pride in Progress
- Acceptable use policy (internet safety)

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints procedures
- Young Carers Policy
- SEN Policy and practice

### **Policy objectives:**

- This policy outlines what Brixham College will do to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying.
- The policy has been adopted with the involvement of the whole College community with consultation via student, staff & parental forums.
- Brixham College is committed to developing an anti-bullying culture where the bullying of children and young people is not tolerated in any form.

### **1. Our vision**

Brixham College is a happy, harmonious learning community where staff and students feel safe and secure. College life is characterised by a calm, purposeful environment underpinned by relationships built upon mutual respect. Our expectation is that all students and staff will behave in appropriate and socially acceptable ways. This includes speaking up against behaviour that damages the community and reporting bullying when it is witnessed.

Every member of staff has a key role to play in promoting and sustaining the highest standards of behaviour for learning. We aim to provide a safe learning environment where everyone feels able to enjoy and achieve and fulfil their potential free from bullying.

The well-being of every young person is of paramount importance; every learner has the right to a high quality learning experience at College, free from harm, neglect and abuse. All staff have a duty of care and a responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the well-being of students.

### **2. Definition**

The College community share the definition of bullying as defined by The Anti-Bullying Alliance (<https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools>) as

***“the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face to face or through cyberspace.”***

Many times, a single act or behaviour is out of proportion, but it is **not** considered **bullying**. Some people think that **bullying** is any aggressive behaviour and although such behaviours are a source of concern and need attention, it is important to separate them from **bullying**.

### **Who bullies?**

Anyone has the capacity to bully. There are no completely reliable predisposition diagnoses. However, those who perceive themselves as low status within a community, institution or group may use bullying in an attempt to artificially boost their status. Self-esteem is therefore a key factor in whether someone bullies or not. This puts equal opportunities and inclusion at the centre of all anti-bullying work in colleges.

### **Who is bullied?**

Anyone can be bullied – young person, parent/carer/guardian, staff member or volunteer.

People who suffer bullying are often perceived by others to be different. Sometimes the perceived difference is individual to that person – shyness, physical appearance, clothing and possessions, accent, perceived inappropriate behaviour. Frequently the perceived difference comes from assigning an individual to a group. Such bullying would then be designated as class, disability, homophobic, racist, religious or sexist. People can be assigned or be a member of more than one group.

### **Types of bullying**

There are various types of bullying, but most have three things in common:

It is deliberately hurtful behaviour

It is repeated over time

There is an imbalance of power, which makes it hard for those being bullied to defend themselves

Bullying can take different forms and can be:

- Physical: e.g. hitting, kicking, taking belongings
- Verbal; e.g. name calling, insulting, hurtful remarks
- Relational e.g. spreading nasty stories, gossiping, excluding from social groups
- Indirect; e.g. graffiti, defacing of property, display of pornographic, class, disability, homophobic, racist or sexist material.
- Cyber: e.g. using mobile phones, tablets, other types of devices to send threatening or offensive messages or images

### **What Is Cyberbullying**

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place over digital devices like cell phones, computers, and tablets. Cyberbullying can occur through SMS, Text, and apps, or

online in social media, forums, or gaming where people can view, participate in, or share content. Cyberbullying includes sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or mean content about someone else. It can include sharing personal or private information about someone else causing embarrassment or humiliation. Some cyberbullying crosses the line into unlawful or criminal behaviour.

The most common places where cyberbullying occurs are:

- Social Media, such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Tiktok and Twitter
- SMS (Short Message Service) also known as Text Message sent through devices
- Instant Message (via devices, email provider services, apps, and social media messaging features)
- Email

### **Special Concerns**

With the prevalence of social media and digital forums, comments, photos, posts, and content shared by individuals can often be viewed by strangers as well as acquaintances. The content an individual shares online – both their personal content as well as any negative, mean, or hurtful content – creates a kind of permanent public record of their views, activities, and behaviour. This public record can be thought of as an online reputation, which may be accessible to colleges, employers, clubs, and others who may be researching an individual now or in the future. Cyberbullying can harm the online reputations of everyone involved – not just the person being bullied, but those doing the bullying or participating in it. Cyberbullying has unique concerns in that it can be:

- **Persistent** – Digital devices offer an ability to immediately and continuously communicate 24 hours a day, so it can be difficult for children experiencing cyberbullying to find relief.
- **Permanent** – Most information communicated electronically is permanent and public, if not reported and removed. A negative online reputation, including for those who bully, can impact College admissions, employment, and other areas of life.
- **Hard to Notice** – Because teachers and parents may not overhear or see cyberbullying taking place, it is harder to recognise.

### **Why are young people bullied?**

Children and young people are most commonly bullied because of a real or perceived “difference”. This difference can be anything, but in our experience, bullying can often be:

Racist: bullying based on ethnicity, skin colour, language, religious or cultural practices

Homophobic: bullying based on sexuality or gender identity

Disablist: the bullying of children who have special educational needs & disabilities

Sexual: unwelcome sexual advances, remarks that are intended to cause offence, humiliation or intimidation.

Discriminative: bullying based on any perceived weakness such as children in fostering or care homes, young carers, those with disabled siblings or parents, single parent families, low economic backgrounds...

### **Implications of bullying**

Bullying is always taken seriously because of the potential impact upon young people.

Many of the outward signs of bullying can be the same as other indicators of abuse such as non-accidental injuries, self-harm, low self-esteem, unhappiness, fear, distress or anxiety.

- If bullying is unchecked, others may come to see bullying behaviour as acceptable within the College
- Students who are bullied can become bullies of younger or more vulnerable students
- Bullying can have long term effects on victims which may stretch into their adult lives

### **Support**

Our approaches include;

Staff offering coaching and problem-solving strategies to enable the bullied to tackle what has happened and those who bully education to make different choices in the future through a graduated response:

- this builds resilience and confidence, nurturing lifelong learning in resolving problems.
- this approach is suitable for lower level problems and where the bullied wants to regain some control and those who bully may require education to develop their understanding of the affects of their behaviours.

A member of staff may work alongside the bullied to resolve the problems actively through a restorative model; this will involve problem solving meetings facilitated by a member of staff.

In serious incidents such as safeguarding, violence, threat of weapons, or sustained serious bullying, a member of the Senior Leadership Team will take over and deal with the issue.

The bully should receive support and help so that they can understand the harm caused by their actions.

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

The Principal has ultimate responsibility for the well-being of all students and staff.

All staff, students, parents and trustees must be aware of the policy and share responsibility for enforcing its principles. The line of communication starts with the Tutor followed by Head of Year and Pastoral Leaders followed by the Senior Leadership Team if appropriate.

The initial policy will be delivered to all staff by the allocated staff trainer at appropriately timed training sessions.

It is the responsibility of:

- The Principal and Senior Leader with direct responsibility to communicate this policy to the College community, to ensure that disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably.
- College Trustees to take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy.
- All staff, including: trustees, senior leadership, teaching and non-teaching staff, to support, uphold and implement this policy accordingly.
- Parents/carers to support their children and work in partnership with the College.
- Students to abide by the policy.

It is understood that for this policy to be most effective that a collaborative approach is undertaken and that key people undertake the following expectations;

**Parents/carers can help by:**

- Setting a good example
- Opening up channels of communication with the College– write a note, speak to someone, come into College to talk to staff (tutor or Head of Year in the first instance)
- Being alert to any signs of upset
- Talking regularly at home about College
- Showing interest in friendships, class work, journey to and from College and any other aspect of College life
- Informing the tutor or Head of Year or Pastoral Leader about any concerns, even if only initially for College to keep an eye on the situation without intervening
- Encouraging and supporting their children to cope with awkward situations, striking a balance between sheltering their children and expecting them to cope with difficult situations on their own
- Reminding their children that there are occasions when everyone needs support and help from others
- Discussing with the tutor or Head of Year or Pastoral Leader ways in which their child can be supported by the College and can help support her/himself
- Letting their children know how strongly they disapprove if s/he has bullied someone
- Being aware of and monitoring their children's use of social media, ensuring that the highest privacy settings are applied to their children's accounts.

### **As a College we will:**

- Take steps to involve parents and carers in developing policies and procedures, to ensure they are aware that the College does not tolerate any form of bullying.
- Make sure that key information about bullying (including policies and named points of contact) is available to parents/carers in a variety of formats.
- Ensure all parents/carers know who to contact if they are worried about bullying and where to access independent advice.
- Work with all parents/carers and the local community to address issues beyond the College gates that give rise to bullying.
- Ensure all parents/carers know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively, to raise concerns in an appropriate manner.

### **Students**

Students have the responsibility to ensure that students who are bullied are not isolated and to intervene when someone is being bullied, making it clear to the bully that their actions are disapproved of and are unacceptable. Students should inform a member of staff if they suspect bullying is taking place. Racial and homophobic bullying incidents can then be logged on Classcharts.

They can help by:

- Understanding what is bullying
- Not being involved in bullying
- Being a supportive friend
- Respecting the rights of others
- Speaking out about bullying in general
- Speaking up if you know someone is being bullied
- Having friends who respect the rights of other people
- Influencing friends to respect the rights of others
- Always using appropriate language or behaviour (including body language)
- Trying to imagine what it might feel like to be bullied
- Recognising how your own behaviour might be considered as bullying
- Making an effort to be supportive, of other students.
- Not joining in if someone is being bullied or giving in to peer pressure to be nasty to someone
- Involving an adult/teacher when you or another student is being upset by others
- Making sure that the highest privacy settings are applied to social media accounts and that passwords are not shared.
- Not posting offensive or threatening messages or images on social media sites

### **As a College we will:**



- Involve students in policy writing and decision making, to ensure that they understand the College's approach and are clear about the part they have to play to prevent bullying.
- Regularly canvas children and young people's views on the extent and nature of bullying. Ensure that all students know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying.
- Ensure that all students are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying
- Involve students in anti-bullying campaigns in College
- Publicise the details of internal support, as well as external helplines and websites
- Offer support students who have been bullied and to those who are bullying in order to address the problems they have.
- Provide a variety of reporting methods for students to disclose bullying concerns towards themselves and others.

#### **4. Responding to bullying / sanctions and monitoring**

There is a consistent approach to how bullying incidents are dealt with by using our Behaviour policy and Anti-Bullying strategy which includes various levels of severity. One-off incidents, whilst very serious and always dealt with, do not fall within the definition of bullying.

Parents are involved at the earliest opportunity. Students are empowered to develop effective personal strategies to enhance their own resilience.

Minor incidents or disagreements should be addressed by form tutors or subject teachers in the first instance; however, any suspicions or allegations of bullying must always be reported to a trusted adult and passed on to the appropriate Head of Year as soon as possible.

The Head of Year will investigate the concern or allegation to clarify the facts through a thorough investigation, taking statements from the alleged bully, victims and witnesses.

Careful consideration of all circumstances will be made before sanctions or next actions are decided. This will in the vast majority of cases involve parents/carers of both alleged bully and victim being informed at the earliest opportunity. An incident report will be created in ClassCharts under a serious breach category.

Each individual case will be recorded and investigated by the appropriate member of staff. Students are encouraged not to remain silent in cases of bullying but be explicit regarding allegation and seek the support of their friends and witnesses if appropriate.

Sanctions will be applied to the perpetrator including extraction, suspension, intervention and support through a graduated response as outlined below:

Stage one: Sanction of Serious Breach and education booklet to be completed with Head of Year. A restorative between the perpetrator and bullied will be offered by the Head of Year.

Stage two: Sanction of Serious Breach or Suspension (dependent of circumstance) and referral to Retrack for a one to one session with the Behaviour Intervention Manager.

Stage three: Sanction of Suspension and further Retrack intervention from the Behaviour Intervention Manager and Social and Emotional intervention through Student Wellbeing Services.

Stage four: Defined as persistent bullying and referral to risk of exclusion panel will be submitted to the Local Authority.

Serious or persistent cases of bullying will lead to suspension or ultimately permanent exclusion.

The victim would receive support through our pastoral network which includes tutors, Heads of Year, Pastoral Leaders, Student Wellbeing Services and other agencies if required.

A range of approaches will be used to support the bullied and help them build resilience and, in addition, a range of approaches to help the bullies to understand the suffering and anxiety caused by their actions.

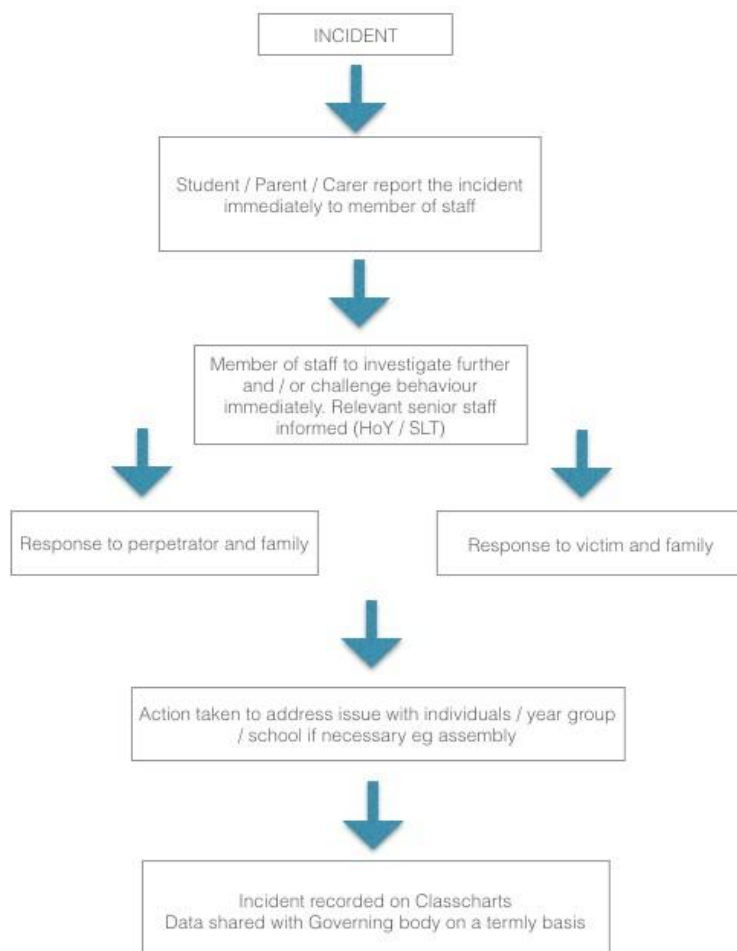
When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the College will:

- Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified.
- Provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.
- Encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation.
- Take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible.

This may include:

- looking at the use of the College systems;
- identifying and interviewing possible witnesses;
- contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary.
- work with the individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation. This may include support reports to a service provider to remove content if those involved are unable to be identified or if those involved refuse to or are unable to delete content.
- confiscating and searching students' electronic devices, such as mobile phones, in accordance with the law and also the College behaviour and discipline policy. (Note: Brixham College will ensure they access the DfE Searching, screening and confiscation at College' and Childnet Cyberbullying guidance to ensure that the Colleges powers are used proportionately and lawfully)
- requesting the deletion of locally-held content and content posted online if they contravene College behavioural policies
- ensure that sanctions are applied to the person responsible for the cyberbullying; the College will take steps to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any additional help that they may need.
- inform the police if a criminal offence has been committed.

#### Responding to and reporting incidents



### Early intervention & prevention

The College takes a proactive stance to raise awareness about bullying. This is done through a range of strategies including, assemblies, Flexible Learning Days and Values lessons, peer mentoring and staff presence and visibility during lessons change over, break, lunch time and after College.

## **Brixham College Anti-Bullying Pledge**

### **Supporting friendship and Respect and Being Kind**

We want Brixham College to be a happy, harmonious learning community where staff and students feel safe and secure. Bullying has no place in our community.

We define bullying as “A persistent and deliberate attempt to hurt or humiliate someone”.

We agree that everyone has a responsibility to prevent bullying.

It is up to each of us to make sure bullying does not take place in our community.

We will:

- Treat others with respect
- Find ways to include others in our activities
- Speak out against bullying
- Not allow others to be bullied
- Tell a trusted member of staff if we see bullying behaviour
- Be responsible students who are active in being part of the solution to prevent bullying
- Help others to feel safe and secure in our community.
- I agree to keep and support the Anti-Bullying Pledge

## **5. Additional Factors**

### **Environment**

The whole College community will:

- Create and support an inclusive environment, which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration and care for others, which will be upheld by all.
- Recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the community, including adults and children (peer on peer abuse).
- Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as: religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality or appearance related

difference. Also children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities.

- Challenge practice and language which does not uphold the values of tolerance, non-discrimination and respect towards others.
- Be encouraged to use technology, especially mobile phones and social media positively and responsibly.
- Work with staff, the wider community and outside agencies to prevent and tackle concerns including all forms of prejudice-driven bullying.
- Actively create “safe spaces” for vulnerable children and young people.
- Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive College ethos.

## **Policy and Support**

The whole College community will:

- Provide a range of approaches for students, staff and parents/carers to access support and report concerns
- Regularly update and evaluate our practice to take into account the developments of technology and provide up-to-date advice and education to all members of the community regarding positive online behaviour.
- Take appropriate, proportionate and reasonable action, in line with existing College policies, for any bullying brought to the College’s attention, which involves or effects students, even when they are not on College premises; for example, when using College transport or online, etc.
- Implement appropriate disciplinary sanctions; the consequences of bullying will reflect the seriousness of the incident, so that others see that bullying is unacceptable.
- Use a variety of techniques to resolve the issues between those who bully, and those who have been bullied.

## **Education and Training**

The College community will:

- Train all staff, including: teaching staff, support staff (e.g. administration staff, lunchtime support staff and site support staff) and pastoral staff, to identify all forms of bullying and take appropriate action, following the College’s policy and procedures (including recording and reporting incidents).

- Consider a range of opportunities and approaches for addressing bullying throughout the curriculum and other activities, such as: through displays, assemblies, peer support, the College/student council, etc.
- Provide systematic opportunities to develop students' social and emotional skills, including building their resilience and self-esteem.

## **6. Monitoring and evaluation**

Regular reviews will be carried out on student data to ensure there are no prevalent patterns of behaviour with perpetrators or victims.

Intervention and support will be annually reviewed through the TAC (Team Around the Child) group on a termly basis.