



Desborough College

Anti-bullying Policy

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Desborough College Anti-Bullying Policy

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1. Rationale

1.1 At Desborough College, we are committed to creating an inclusive and respectful environment where all students feel safe, valued, and able to excel. Bullying, including prejudice-based bullying such as racism, sexism, ableism, and homophobia, is strictly prohibited.

1.2 In alignment with the Equality Act 2010 and the Department for Education (DfE) guidance, this policy addresses bullying related to all protected characteristics, ensuring fairness for every student regardless of race, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation, or any other personal attribute.

1.3 Our anti-bullying strategy supports the school's focus on safeguarding, mental well-being, and positive behaviour management, aiming to foster mutual respect and a supportive culture for all.

2. Definition of Bullying

2.1 Bullying is defined as:

"The intentional, repetitive harm of one individual or group by another, where there is an imbalance of power. Bullying can manifest as physical, verbal, psychological, or online abuse."

2.2 Types of bullying include:

- **Physical:** Hitting, kicking, spitting, or theft of belongings.
- **Verbal:** Insults, name-calling, threats, or derogatory comments.
- **Social:** Spreading rumours, excluding others, or public humiliation.
- **Cyberbullying:** Harassment via online platforms, social media, text messages, or email.

2.3 Bullying often stems from prejudice towards differences, including race, religion, gender, disability, or sexual orientation. Bullying can take place within the school, online, or in the wider community.

2.4 Every report of bullying is treated seriously, regardless of where it occurs, as its effects on individuals can be long-lasting.

3. Emotional Abuse

3.1 At Desborough, we recognise that bullying can also take the form of emotional abuse, which can severely impact a child's emotional development. This includes:

- Conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved, or inadequate, or that they are only valued for meeting another person's needs.
- Preventing the child from expressing their views, or deliberately silencing them.
- Making fun of a child's communication style or how they express themselves.
- Serious forms of bullying, including cyberbullying, which cause a child to feel constantly frightened or in danger, or lead to the exploitation or corruption of children.

4. Child-on-Child Abuse

4.1 Bullying may be part of child-on-child abuse, which includes, but is not limited to, bullying in all its forms (physical, verbal, emotional, and cyberbullying).

4.2 Child-on-child abuse also involves prejudiced and discriminatory bullying, which the school actively seeks to prevent through its policies and strategies.

5. Setting the Right Ethos of a 'Telling' School

5.1 Desborough College promotes a "telling" ethos, encouraging students to report bullying without fear of reprisal.

5.2 The school fosters this ethos by:

- **Education:** Teaching the importance of reporting bullying through PSHE lessons, assemblies, and workshops.
- **Accessible Reporting Channels:** Students can report bullying to trusted staff, through email (Safeguarding@desborough-college.net), or in person.
- **Role Models:** Staff and student leaders set an example of respectful behaviour.

- **Celebrating Diversity:** The school celebrates various cultures and backgrounds, ensuring inclusivity.

6. How to Deal with Bullying and Who to Tell

6.1 Students should report bullying to trusted adults such as form tutors, Heads of Year, or members of the Hub Team.

6.2 Parents or carers should contact the form tutor, Head of Year, or a pastoral team member if they suspect bullying.

6.3 Anonymous reporting systems are available for students who may feel uncomfortable reporting directly.

6.4 Every report is treated seriously and investigated promptly.

7. Responsibilities of Adults When Informed About Bullying

7.1 Staff must act upon reports of bullying by:

- Listening to and reassuring the student.
- Documenting the incident using the school's reporting systems.
- Escalating the matter to relevant pastoral or safeguarding staff.

7.2 All staff must handle the situation sensitively, ensuring confidentiality and fair treatment for all involved parties.

8. Staff Training on Bullying Prevention and Inclusion

8.1 Staff receive ongoing training to identify, prevent, and address bullying effectively.

8.2 Training includes:

- **Recognising Bullying:** Identifying signs of bullying, including emotional and cyberbullying.
- **Promoting Inclusivity:** Encouraging respect for diversity and preventing discriminatory behaviour.
- **Support Strategies:** Effective methods for supporting both victims and perpetrators.

8.3 The training is led by the PSHE Lead, Heads of Year and the Safeguarding Team, incorporating case studies and role-playing scenarios to enhance practical understanding.

9. Investigation Procedures

9.1 When bullying is reported, pastoral staff initiate a thorough investigation, which includes:

- Speaking with the victim, perpetrator, and witnesses.
- Reviewing any available evidence, such as screenshots or CCTV footage.
- Ensuring all parties feel heard and supported throughout the process.

9.2 Investigations are impartial, aiming for a prompt resolution while addressing the root causes of bullying.

10. Evidence Gathering

10.1 Evidence is crucial for fairness and accountability and may include:

- Written or verbal statements from those involved.
- Reviewing communication records, especially for cyberbullying.
- Involvement of external agencies (e.g., police) if necessary.

10.2 Evidence is stored securely, with only relevant staff having access to the information.

11. Dealing with Incidents Across School Boundaries

11.1 Bullying incidents that occur outside of school but affect a student's well-being or school life will be addressed. This includes:

- Liaising with parents and carers.
- Involving local authorities or the police where necessary.

11.2 This ensures students feel safe both in and outside of school.

12. Support for Victims of Bullying

12.1 Victims of bullying will receive a range of support, ensuring they feel safe and valued, including:

- **Form Tutors:** Daily support and a trusted point of contact.
- **Heads of Year:** Tailored well-being plans and ongoing monitoring.
- **The Hub Team:** Offering pastoral care and emotional support.
- **External Agencies:** Referral to counselling or specialist services when needed.

12.2 Restorative practices, regular well-being check-ins, and family involvement ensure that victims are empowered and supported.

13. Sanctions

13.1 Sanctions for bullying are proportionate and consistent. Possible actions include:

- Restorative justice and educational workshops.
- Detentions or behaviour monitoring plans.
- Parental meetings and exclusions when necessary.

14. Engaging with Parents and Carers

14.1 Parents play an essential role in addressing bullying. We engage them through:

- Regular updates on investigations.
- Providing resources to help them support their child.
- Signposting to external support services.

15. Monitoring

15.1 After resolving a bullying incident, staff conduct regular follow-ups to ensure the issue does not recur.

15.2 Bullying data is reviewed termly to identify patterns and inform prevention strategies, continually improving our anti-bullying efforts.