

**ANTI-BULLYING & HARASSMENT POLICY**

**CYBER-BULLYING AND VICTIMISATION**

**Purpose:**

* To raise awareness among learners and staff as to what constitutes bullying behaviour
* To communicate to learners and staff why bullying is unacceptable, that it will not be tolerated and that victims will be supported
* To communicate the Anti-Bullying & Harassment Policy, including Cyber-bullying and Victimisation to learners and staff and follow the procedures when bullying is reported
* To aim to reduce incidents of bullying through the implementation of appropriate strategies, preventative and proactive, as well as reactive

**Staff involved:**

All staff.

**Quality Review:**

This procedure is reviewed annually to ensure that it remains effective. All staff are invited to comment on its effectiveness and contribute to its review. Amendment is the responsibility of the Senior Management Team.

**Introduction and Policy Statement**

Reynolds Training Academy aims to create an interesting and supportive environment for learning and is committed to building an environment of mutual respect, where differences are valued and respected and where innovation, creativity and diversity can flourish.

Mutual respect is facilitated by the promotion of values of dignity, courtesy and respect, alongside a culture of zero tolerance of bullying and harassment. Personal harassment and bullying will be viewed as a serious matter and will be investigated. Should the complaint be upheld, this may result in disciplinary action being taken against the person complained against, which could result in their dismissal from the Academy / Academy/College.

**Definitions**

**Harassment**

The Equality Act 2010 prohibits harassment relating to protected characteristics including, disability or age. Harassment may take place because of any issues relating to the following:

* Ethnicity, race, colour or national origin
* Gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status or family circumstances
* Disabilities and learning needs or difficulties
* Criminal record
* Trade union membership and activity
* Age
* Religious and/or political beliefs

Harassment is any behaviour that is unwanted, inappropriate, unsolicited and unacceptable to the person receiving it, causing them unease, stress, distress and a possible loss of self-esteem.

Examples of harassment include:

* Intimidating behaviour or physical assault against a person or group because of colour, race, gender, sexuality, disability, ethnicity, etc
* Name calling, insults and racist or sexist jokes
* Racist or sexist graffiti or other written insults
* Behaviour such as wearing racist or sexist badges or insignia
* Making unwanted sexual, verbal or physical advances
* Sending offensive text messages or unwanted emails or attachments

**Bullying**

Bullying is very similar to harassment and involves persecution of the victim through intimidating, unfair, sarcastic, physical, malicious or angry behaviour that causes them to feel uneasy or threatened. Bullying can be defined as *“behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally”* (DfE “Preventing and Tackling Bullying”, July 2017).

Bullying is recognised by Reynolds Training Academy as being a form of peer on peer abuse. It can be emotionally abusive and can cause severe and adverse effects on a person’s emotional development.

Examples of bullying behaviour include:

* An abuse of power including verbal or physical threats or violence; name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments, kicking, hitting, taking belongings, producing offensive graffiti, gossiping, excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours
* Deliberate withholding of knowledge or information
* Shouting
* Setting unrealistic targets
* Ridicule of the recipient's work, ideas, opinions, appearance or behaviour
* Deliberate occupation of public, shared space or communal areas to routinely exclude others or make them feel uncomfortable
* Prejudicial bullying (against people/learners with protected characteristics) – bullying related to race, religion, faith and belief and for those without faith, bullying related to ethnicity, nationality or culture
* Bullying relating to special educational needs or disability (SEND
* Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic/biphobic bullying)
* Gender based bullying, including transphobic bullying;
* Bullying against teenage parents (pregnancy and maternity under the Equality Act)

**Cyber-Bullying**

Cyber-bullying is the use of electronic media, particularly mobile phones and the internet, to intimidate, threaten or upset someone. It can be an extension of face-to-face bullying, but it differs from other forms of bullying in significant ways:

* It can happen outside of Academy/College hours
* It may be anonymous with the identity of the bully remaining hidden
* The size of the potential audience can be huge

Examples of cyber-bullying include:

* Sending offensive upsetting and inappropriate messages by phone, text, instant messenger, through gaming, websites, social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading photos or videos
* Deleting the victim's name from or ignoring their messages on social networking sites
* Identity theft
* Exerting pressure in order to manipulate

**Victimisation**

Victimisation is treating someone badly or less favourably because they have done a ‘protected act’ or because it is believed that a person has done or is going to do a protected act.

A ‘protected act’ is:

* Making a claim or complaint of discrimination or grievance under Equality Act 2010
* Helping someone else to make a claim by giving evidence or information
* Making an allegation that you or someone else has breached the Act.

If a learner or staff member is treated less favourably because they have taken action then this would be unlawful victimisation. The less favourable treatment does not need to be linked to a protected characteristic.

**Prevent**

Prevent is a Government led strategy that aims to stop people being drawn into terrorism or supporting terrorism

In accordance with the statutory guidance Reynolds Training Academy has a duty to ensure that learners are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in schools and Academy/Colleges. As such, we recognise that there are a number of specific measures that the Academy/College can take to address the threat of radicalisation online.

This includes steps to:

* Restrict access by Academy/College users to harmful content online through the use of internet filtering and monitoring
* Ensure appropriate action is taken against anyone found to be knowingly attempting to access unlawful and harmful content from the internet
* Educate users at risk and encourage programmes led by the local police forces, communities and local authorities to raise awareness to all Reynolds Training Academy internet users

**Responsibilities**

Reynolds Training Academy recognises that all forms of bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals; it can create a barrier to learning and have serious consequences for mental wellbeing. By effectively preventing and tackling bullying our Academy/College can help to create a safe and disciplined environment, where learners are able to learn and fulfill their potential.

Equality of opportunity is everyone’s concern and everyone’s responsibility. All learners and staff are responsible for creating a safe learning environment, free of harassment, bullying or victimisation. All learners and staff should take action to stop unfair treatment and have a duty not to ignore, condone by their silence or collude (join in) with acts of harassment or bullying.

Any incident that infringes a person's rights must be reported confidentially.

**Staff Responsibilities**

Every member of staff has a responsibility to treat all learners with dignity and respect, to ensure their own conduct does not cause offence or misunderstanding.

All staff who witness acts of harassment, bullying or victimisation, or who are approached in confidence by learners who are being harassed, bullied or victimised or by learners who have witnessed such actions, have a duty to take action in line with this policy to prevent the reoccurrence of these acts.

**Procedure**

**Learner to Learner**

Any learner wishing to report an incident about another learner should follow this procedure:

* In the first instance speak to the Personal Tutor or Programme Manager
* The incident will also be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead
* Details of the incident will be recorded
* The Learner Disciplinary Procedure will be initiated and appropriate action taken. In severe cases this could include suspension of the perpetrator(s) pending further investigation. Police involvement may be considered
* Every effort should be made to enable the perpetrators to receive training to raise their awareness of harassment and bullying
* All bullying incidents must be dealt with as quickly as possible

**Staff to Learner**

Where a learner wishes to lodge a complaint about a member of staff, they should follow the Learner Complaints Procedure.

**Preventing Bullying**

Reynolds Training Academy 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)
* Recognise the potential for learners with SEN and disabilities to be disproportionally impacted by bullying and will implement additional pastoral support as required
* Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as – learners with different family situations, such as looked after learners or those with caring responsibilities, religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality or appearance related difference
* Challenge practice and language (including ‘banter’) which does not uphold the Academy/College 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 learners and young people
* Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive Academy/College ethos

RTA Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy – reviewed 11-8-2023 / 29-2-2024