

Anti-Bullying Policy



Reviewed: October 2023
Next review: October 2024

The Christian Ethos of Immanuel College

Immanuel means 'God with us'

Immanuel College, as a Christian College, fully recognises that 'Loving your neighbour as yourself' or similar recognition of the rights of every individual is fundamental to all good relationships. Students should act with respect towards each other. Bullying, of any kind, is therefore unacceptable.

Every student in school has the right to enjoy learning, free from intimidation, both in school and the surrounding community. Every member of staff should also enjoy such rights. Our school community, based on our Christian values, will not tolerate bullying behaviour of any kind including unkind actions or remarks, verbal taunting and exclusion from groups.

Aims of Policy

Everybody has the right to be treated with respect, especially in a Christian College. Students and adults who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

Immanuel College believes it has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Policy Statement

Immanuel College is a respectful community where no student need fear intimidation; we will promote a fully inclusive ethos, an open listening atmosphere and encourage students to support one another by reporting all instances of bullying.

This policy focuses on students as targets of bullying but it is recognised that staff and others may also be subject to bullying and should this occur reference should be made to the Whistleblowing Policy, Staff Grievance Policy or Staff Discipline procedures in the first instance for action to be followed.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is "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)

There are many different types of bullying that can be experienced by children and adults alike, some are obvious to spot while others can be more subtle. The different types of bullying defined below are some of the ways that bullying could be happening. Different types of bullying, as drawn from the National Centre against Bullying, include:

- **Physical:** can include repeated incidents of hitting, kicking, tripping, pinching, pushing or damaging property
- **Verbal:** can include repeated incidents of name calling, insults, teasing, intimidation, homophobic or racist remarks, or verbal abuse
- **Social:** sometimes referred to as covert bullying and is often harder to recognise. Can be carried out behind the bullied person's back and is designed to harm someone's social reputation and/or cause humiliation

- **Cyber:** can include use of digital technologies and include actions such as abusive or hurtful texts, emails or posts, deliberately excluding others on line, nasty gossip or rumours, imitating other online or using their log-in details

Drivers of Bullying

There can be different drivers behind bullying behaviours, some of which are covered by the Equality Act 2010 in respect of protected characteristics of -

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

Bullying, of any type and for any reason, is the abuse of power by one person over another. All of the types of behaviour and reasons for this behaviour listed above are unacceptable.

Child on Child Abuse including Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

Child on child abuse is never acceptable and will not be tolerated. It can happen both inside and outside of school and online.

We will seek to promote a culture of tolerance where sexual harassment, online sexual abuse and sexual violence (including sexualised language) is unacceptable and will support both victim and perpetrator where incidents arise.

KCSIE 2023, para.35 states that child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse');
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse);
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence);
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery);
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm; and

- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

Why is it important to respond to bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect, especially in a Christian school. Students and adults who are bullying others need to learn different ways of behaving.

Immanuel College believes it has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Signs and Symptoms

A student may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child (this list is not exhaustive):

- is frightened of coming to school
- doesn't want to go on the bus
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins truanting
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions go "missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- has self-harmed/ is self-harming
- has unexplained physical marks or bruising
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated. Parents should inform school promptly if they are concerned.

DEALING WITH A BULLYING INCIDENT

- Anyone can and should report any bullying incident - whether a passer-by, a victim or a bully, maintaining an attitude of 'it could happen here'.
- Students are informed that anyone wishing to report an incident can approach any member of staff with whom they feel comfortable. If the matter is urgent, a student should approach the first adult they encounter.
- All staff will be ready and willing to deal with any incident that is brought to their attention. If appropriate, a member of staff will handle the situation individually. If circumstances dictate, a member of SLT will be consulted. They will decide who is best equipped to handle the problem.
- When consulted about a bullying incident the member of staff handling the matter will interview separately the victim, the bully, and any witnesses in order to establish an accurate account of events. Written reports by those involved may be made.
- Sanctions for bullying will remain at the discretion of staff members. There will be a uniform but flexible approach to the decisions which will usually involve up to three members of staff e.g. form tutor, or teacher approached, at least one member of the Pastoral Staff.
- All factors will be considered including the nature of the incident and any previous involvement in similar offensive acts.
- It is to be emphasised that whilst sanctions will be seriously imposed, at times counselling for the bully may be the more appropriate response.

Outcomes

- A suitable colleague will discuss with the bully (bullies) appropriate behaviour as a student respecting others in a Christian school
- The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place.
- A restorative justice meeting may be facilitated between relevant parties.
- In serious cases, suspension, or other similar action, will be considered
- If possible, the students will be reconciled.
- Support will be given to all parties.
- The Parents/carers of those involved should be informed.
- After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

Anti-Bullying Measures

The following describe our approach to combating bullying:

- To create a respectful community where no student need fear intimidation, by promoting a fully inclusive ethos, an open listening atmosphere and encouraging pupils to support one another by reporting all instances of bullying;
- To be aware of the quantity and particular nature of bullying that takes place in our school through such vehicles as anonymous questionnaires so we are able to deal more effectively with the problems;
- To be aware of areas of the school that pose a threat to students and to take appropriate action to reduce those threats;

- To effect changes to the school community which may be necessary to negate bullying;
- The Citizenship / PSHCE programmes address certain aspects of anti-bullying issues;
- Furthermore, the teaching and learning styles increasingly employed within Immanuel College such as group work, role-play, and interactive learning, enables students to develop their self-awareness, responsibility towards others and respect for others. The development of these skills is crucial to the anti-bullying ethos of the school and the creation of a stronger atmosphere of respect between students.