



## KMS 257 Anti Bullying and Harassment Policy

**This Policy should be read in conjunction with**

KMS 260 Parent / Carer / Guardian Code of Conduct



Created By:	Assistant Principal Student Experience & Progression	Review Date:	January 2023
Approved By:	Senior Management Team	Responsibility for Review:	Assistant Principal Student Experience & Progression
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## **KMC Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy**

### **Statement**

Kingston Maurward College is committed to promoting equality, diversity and an inclusive and supportive environment for our learners, staff and others closely associated with us. We support the rights of individuals to be treated fairly and with respect.

Harassment and bullying can cause serious harm to health and well-being and can ruin an individual's chances of success both in College and in their future career.

Any incidents of bullying or harassment will be regarded extremely seriously and can be grounds for disciplinary action, which may include expulsion or dismissal.

**This policy should be read in conjunction with the College's Safeguarding Policy, the E-Safety Policy and the ICT Acceptable Use Policies for staff and students.**

**Parents, Carers and Guardians should also familiarise themselves with the College's Parents / Carers / Guardians Code of Conduct and the responsibilities outlined in the policy.**

### **Definitions**

Bullying and harassment occur where one person or a group of people exert their power to intimidate or persecute another person or group of people. Bullying and harassment can cause the victim serious physical and mental problems. Bullying and harassment may include (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Emotional – excluding, tormenting
- Physical – punching, kicking, hitting or any use of violence
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Verbal – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Discriminatory – bullying in relation to gender, age, race, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion or other characteristics.

### **Raising Awareness and Prevention**

The College undertakes to raise the awareness of staff, both teaching and non-teaching, and students to the signs and symptoms of bullying and the damage that it can do.

Specific occasions when this takes place include staff development weeks; new staff inductions; the student tutorial programme and activities surrounding Anti-Bullying Week.

All new staff and students are asked to read and sign the ICT Acceptable User policy and to read the E-Safety Policy, which addresses the problem of cyber bullying.

For the problem of bullying to be tackled successfully, a climate needs to be created and established in which all forms of victimisation are discouraged and where reporting cases of bullying is seen as the normal and proper course of action.

### **Prevent Duty**

KMC is committed to protecting students from radicalisation in accordance with the Government Prevent Strategy.

The College is aware that students who are bullied may become isolated and consequently more vulnerable to recruitment by extremists.

Similarly, intolerance of difference and the use of extremist or hate terms to exclude others are recognised as forms of bullying.

The College encourages students to respect British Values including mutual respect and tolerance. This is done through education and promotion of British Values and also through strict implementation of the Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy.

### **Reporting Bullying and Harassment**

Students can report incidents of bullying or harassment in a variety of ways including: speaking, emailing or writing to their Course Manager, a member of the Student Welfare team or another member of KMC staff; contacting the College Complaints Officer.

If the incident takes place on College transport, students can report this to the bus driver, the bus buddy or to the Head of Student Administration, via the Student Administration Office located in the LRC or at Reception, located in the Main House.

Staff can report bullying by students to their line manager, the Deputy Principal Learning & Performance, or to the Assistant Principal Student Experience & Progression.

Staff should report bullying by another member of staff to their line manager or the Human Resources Manager. Staff may also refer to the KMC Whistleblowing Policy, KMS 655.

### **Confidentiality**

Students and staff need to feel confident that their rights to confidentiality and anonymity are respected. However, it is difficult to investigate allegations if it is not possible to question someone about specific incidents.

There are also times when the College has a legal obligation to disclose certain information, such as: information that a person may harm themselves or others; a threat to national security; child protection issues; intent to commit a serious crime.

There are times when it is advisable for other parties to be involved such as a Course Manager or the Police Community Support Officer, in which case the student making a complaint needs to be asked whether they mind involving a third party. In such cases, it is important that the student is aware of precisely who is being informed and that the information is not shared with anyone else.

Parental involvement should not extend to students who are 16 or over unless this has been agreed by the student.

### **Dealing with Allegations**

Every allegation of bullying or harassment needs to be treated on its own merit and the course of action will vary according to circumstances.

Allegations made against a student regarding bullying or harassment of another student should be referred to the student's Course Manager or to a member of the Student Welfare team.

Allegations made against a student regarding bullying or harassment of a member of staff should be referred to the student's Course Manager or Head of Department.

Allegations made against a member of staff regarding bullying or harassment of a student should be referred to the staff member's line manager or Head of Department.

Allegations made against a member of staff regarding bullying or harassment of another member of staff should be referred to the staff member's line manager, or Head of Department or the Human Resources Manager.

**If the nature of the allegation involves abuse of a child or vulnerable adults, action should be taken in accordance with the College's Safeguarding Policy (KMS 250).**

### **Investigation of Allegations**

Investigations should be carried out fairly and objectively so that **victims** feel that they are being supported; **alleged bullies** feel that they are getting a fair hearing and **witnesses** feel comfortable about reporting incidents without fear of reprisals.

The key elements on an investigation should include:

- An interview with the victim
- An interview with the alleged bully
- A discussion with witnesses
- A discussion with other relevant members of staff
- Written and signed statements, or updated comments / file notes should be added to ProMonitor or MyConcern
- A decision should then be made whether the disciplinary policy should be invoked or whether an amicable resolution may be more appropriate

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- A written report summarising incident and actions taken added to the files of students involved

It may be appropriate to bring both parties together at this stage to attempt an amicable resolution. This is most likely to occur when the incident is minor or is based on a misunderstanding, or when both parties are found to have contributed to the incident. It is not usually appropriate when there is disparity between the degrees of competence between the parties, for example, if one party is considered to be vulnerable.

If an amicable resolution is not viable, the disciplinary policy should be invoked. The point of entry into the disciplinary action should be decided according to each individual case.

Considerations may include: the vulnerability of one or both parties; the severity of the incident; any previous offences; mitigating circumstances.

Incidents should be followed up and monitored by Course Managers to ensure that there is no repetition. All parties should be offered support which can be arranged through Student Welfare (for students) or Human Resources (for staff).

### Recording

Confirmed incidents of bullying including details of the outcome should be added to the MyConcern record of the person carrying out the bullying. A comment should be added to the record of the victim describing the incident(s) and any outcomes. The Student Welfare team **must** be alerted of any incidents of bullying.

### Timescales

It is essential that allegations of bullying or harassment are dealt with as quickly as possible while still ensuring a fair and balanced investigation.

Preliminary interviews and discussions & signed statements or records obtained	Within 48 hours of incident, where possible
Decision made as to how to proceed	As soon as possible after all the information has been obtained
Reconciliation meeting held if appropriate	On the first date that both parties are available
Disciplinary policy invoked if not	As soon as the decision has been made. If an incident is very serious, a student may be suspended immediately after the initial allegation has been made
Follow-up	2 weeks after the incident has been resolved
Repeat follow-up with victim	4 weeks after initial follow-up or sooner if problems reoccur

### **A note on Cyber bullying**

Cyber bullying is a particularly insidious and dangerous form of bullying because it does not require face-to-face confrontation and it can carry on at any time during the day or night.

Cyber bullying is defined by the Anti-bullying Alliance as 'an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or an individual, using electronic forms of contact, repeatedly over time against a victim who cannot easily defend him or herself. It can include, but is not restricted to, bullying by: text messages; pictures or video clips sent via mobile phones; social networking / media sites; phone calls; emails; chat room responses; instant messaging and websites.

The College treats cyber bullying with the same level of concern as other forms of bullying and the above procedure should be followed when cyber bullying involving KMC students or staff is reported. Victims are advised to save or print out copies of the offending messages.

### **Further Information**

Further information for staff can be found on Moodle under Teaching Resources then Resources for Tutorials

Further information for students can be found on Moodle under Student Welfare then No Bullying Zone.