

EMMANUEL COLLEGE

PEER-ON-PEER ABUSE POLICY 2022



Policy statement

The aim of the peer-on-peer abuse policy is to ensure that the whole College community can learn and work in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of harassment and where everyone has the right to be treated with respect. All forms of peer-on-peer abuse are behaviours that are not tolerated at Emmanuel College. Specific forms of abusive behaviour, such as bullying and racism, can take place within student groups, between students and staff, and between staff. When this does occur, the College aims for it to be dealt with promptly and effectively. Emmanuel College is an institution that encourages openness and honesty; anyone who suspects that abusive behaviour has occurred is expected to share this concern.

The purpose of this policy is:

- to prevent all forms of peer-on-peer abuse from happening at Emmanuel College.
- to make sure this behaviour is stopped as soon as possible if it does happen, and that those involved receive the support they need.
- to provide information to all staff, volunteers, children and their families about what we should all do to prevent and deal with concerns regarding peer-on-peer abuse.

The Principal has a legal duty under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to identify and implement measures to promote good behaviour, respect, and self-discipline, and to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among students and to bring these procedures to the attention of staff, parents and students. Schools also have a legal responsibility to record incidents of specific forms of peer-on-peer abuse such as bullying and racism. This policy outlines these procedures.

Types of peer-on-peer abuse

Children can abuse other children. This is generally referred to as peer-on-peer abuse and can take many forms. It can happen both inside and outside of school as well as online. It is most likely to include but may not be limited to:

- *Cyberbullying*: An incident involving the use of technology. It may take the form of intimidation; harassment; defamation; exclusion; impersonation; or involve the unauthorised publication or manipulation of private information or images.
- *Verbal/emotional bullying*: An incident where words are deliberately used to threaten/frighten/insult another. It can also involve gossip or spreading unkind rumours or revealing confidences. Emotional bullying involves non-verbal actions, such as deliberate exclusion from a group.
- *Physical bullying*: Any form of physical aggression, assault or theft. It also includes the extortion of money/possessions under threat of violence. It also includes the deliberate destruction/spoiling of another individual's possessions.
- *Sexual abuse or harassment*: Any incident with a sexual dimension. This can range from inappropriate comments to sexual assault.
- *A significant single incident*: bullying of a particularly threatening, hurtful or malicious nature whereby the impact on a student, member of staff or their family could lead to a permanent exclusion.
- *Racial/discriminatory*: An incident, which involves deliberately hurtful behaviour linked to a victim's religion or ethnicity. Discriminatory bullying is a wider definition that includes any bullying as a result of gender, ethnicity, sexual identity or orientation, or physical characteristics, such as a disability. Racist/discriminatory behaviour will be dealt with in the same way as bullying and will not be tolerated in our school.

- *Sharing of semi-nude or nude photos:* the sharing of semi-nude or nude photo/s of a child is abusive but in some circumstances can also be a crime.

There are various signs and symptoms that could alert a parent or member of staff to peer-on-peer abuse. These include:

- Being frightened of walking to or from College.
- Not wishing to go on the school/public bus.
- Arriving at College very early and/or a fear of leaving College on time.
- A reluctance to leave the classroom at break or lunch time.
- An unwillingness to go to the College – school phobia or truancy.
- Becoming withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence.
- Attempts or threatens suicide, or runs away.
- Deterioration in quality of schoolwork.
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged.
- Has possessions or dinner monies that go ‘missing’.
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises.
- Is bullying other children or siblings.

Any of these signs and behaviours could indicate a range of other sensitive issues. It is important to remember that an incident or concern should always be reported regardless how trivial it may appear.

Reporting a concern about a peer-on-peer incident

If an incident between peers is suspected to have occurred it is important that we record this and respond quickly, making it clear that this type of behaviour is not acceptable and never tolerated.

Anyone can report an incident or concern including students, staff, parents/carers/family, or members of the community by:

- (a) Visiting our website and clicking on the ‘Student and Parent Hub’ tab from the main menu
- (b) Select the ‘report peer-on-peer incident’ tab
- (c) Complete the form with as much detail as possible and click ‘send’.

A student or parent can also report an incident by speaking directly to a member of staff such as a Tutor or Head of Year. In this instance, the member of staff will complete the reporting form to ensure that all reported concerns are logged and recorded appropriately.

Any student who does not report instances of bullying honestly when directly asked by a member of staff will be sanctioned. Students should understand that this kind of behaviour helps to perpetuate peer-on-peer abuse.

If you are concerned that the incident is a safeguarding concern, please contact Mrs R Hooker (Designated Safeguarding Lead) or Mrs A Scott (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead); if it is an allegation of a safeguarding nature involving a member of staff, then a parent should immediately contact the Principal.

How we will we respond to a report of an incident

All incidents that are reported to us are logged using the reporting form even if it has been reported by a member of staff or directly to a member or staff by a student/parent, etc. This ensures that all suspected incidents are reported effectively.

Every reported incident will always be:

- Responded to and investigated by the Assistant Vice Principal: Behaviour and Attitudes, supported by the appropriate pastoral team where necessary.

- The Assistant Vice Principal will respond to the person who has reported the incident to ensure they know that their concern is being dealt with. This may be via email, by phone or in person.
- A record is kept of the outcome of the investigation.
- Reported to parents as soon as possible and ideally within 24 hours after an incident has taken place or been reported to us.

It is important that the victim understands the support available to them and that appropriate steps are taken to prevent the behavior being repeated by the perpetrator which may include supportive measures being put in place for them too. However, where an incident of peer-on-peer abuse is found to have occurred after investigation, the following actions will be taken by the College to address this behaviour with the perpetrator of the abuse.

Stage 1: Following a first incident

The **AVP: Behaviour and Attitudes** will:

- Meet with parents/carers and the student to review the outcome of the investigation.
- Agree any measures required to support the student to change their behaviour (may include working with external agencies).
- Record the outcome of the meeting in a formal letter sent to parent/carers which will include:

A FIRST FORMAL WARNING FOR PEER-ON-PEER ABUSE.

If a student is involved in a subsequent incident of peer-on-peer abuse, this will be dealt with at either Stage 2 or 3. This is dependent on whether the incident involves the same victim, which could lead to this being dealt with at Stage 3, or the specific circumstances of the incident require this to be dealt with at Stage 3 immediately.

Stage 2: Following a second incident

The **Vice Principal** will:

- Meet with parents/carers and the student to review the outcome of the investigation.
- Agree any measures required to support the student to change their behaviour (may include working with external agencies).
- Record the outcome of the meeting in a formal letter to parent/carers which will include:

A SECOND FORMAL WARNING FOR PEER-ON-PEER ABUSE.

Stage 3

The **Principal** will:

- Meet with parents/carers and the student to review the outcome of the investigation.
- Review all measures taken previously by the AVP/VP and recommend any other measures as appropriate.
- Record the outcome of the meeting in a formal letter to parents/carers which will include:

**A FINAL SPECIFIC WARNING or
A FINAL GENERAL WARNING.**

In instances where a single incident or repeated incidents are extremely serious, the Principal may issue a **PERMANENT EXCLUSION.**

If it is appropriate, then the College may involve the police and suspend any investigation whilst they conduct their own procedures. The decision to involve the police will be taken only by the Principal or a Vice Principal. Parents will always be informed promptly if the police are involved. The governing body are informed of any cases of permanent exclusion and have details of temporary exclusions in termly meetings with the Vice Principal.

Allegations of any behaviour considered to be bullying or discriminatory involving members of staff will be referred immediately to the Principal and should be reported directly to the Principal.

An important aspect of the follow-up of a peer-on-peer abuse incident is for the student who has perpetrated this behaviour to seek forgiveness from the victim and seek to restore their trust in them. In this process of restoration, it may be necessary to:

- Discuss what happened.
- Establish the reasons why the person became involved.
- Establish and explain the wrongdoing and to see an expression of the need for change.
- Involve the parents to help change the attitude of the person who has bullied.

Prevention

Within the curriculum, the College raises awareness of the nature of peer-on-peer abuse through work in form tutorial time, assemblies and in subject areas. The personal development curriculum includes specific sessions on British Values, Citizenship, our Core Values and on how to manage and maintain positive relationships. Specific sessions on bullying and racism are incorporated into this programme and on the protected characteristics and the Equality Act 2010.

At the end of lessons, staff supervise the movement of students in the vicinity of their classroom, in stairwells, and the movement of students into and out of the classroom. During break and lunch times students are supervised by a duty team to ensure that they are safe.

We seek to prevent all forms of peer-on-peer abuse from occurring by the ensuring that:

- Our Student Code of Conduct is understood by all students, parents and staff through publication on the College website and in the Student Study File.
- Providing training for staff on how to deal with peer-on-peer incidents.
- Ensuring our response, if this occurs, takes into account the needs of the victim, the needs of the person displaying this behaviour, others who may be affected, and the College as a whole.
- We have a broad and balanced personal development curriculum that encourages to respect each other's differences, to have self-control and to be able to identify peer-on-peer abuse.