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Principles

- At Alpha Training we wish to clarify for students, staff and parents that bullying of any kind is totally unacceptable.
- Each student is given the opportunity to achieve their full potential. To secure this, a caring and secure environment must be provided, where each student is respected equally and can pursue their studies without fear of threats, aggression or harassment of any kind.
- It is important to inform students, parents and the local community of our commitment to taking action on any bullying which may occur in this academy.
- Positive action will be taken whenever bullying occurs to help both the victims of bullying and the bully.

Objectives

- To stress how seriously Alpha Training views bullying, whenever the opportunity arises.
- To create an atmosphere in the college where students who are being bullied, or others who know about it, feel they can tell someone, and that action taken will be swift but sensitive to their concerns.
- To provide ongoing support for victims of bullying and bullies.

PROCEDURES

Identifying symptoms of bullying

- Bullied students are often isolated
- Clothing and belongings may sometimes be torn or damaged
- Physical bruising or other evidence of assault may be seen
- Signs of anxiety/stress can be discerned
- Increasing lack of self-confidence
- Absenteeism
- Frequently complaining of feeling unwell
- Personality changes and mood swings



Types of Bullying

Bullying can consist of physical abuse, verbal abuse, cyber abuse, damaging or hiding other people's possessions, isolating people from their peer group, spreading rumours or gossip about other people, sexual or racial harassment, threatening people verbally or with gestures, intimidating other people, non-verbal bullying such as staring someone out or giggling at them.

Actions for students

- Tell someone immediately if you are being bullied, or you suspect someone else is
- Avoid areas where bullying may occur

Actions for staff

- If you suspect bullying is taking place inform management who will then talk to the student, along with you, to find out what has been happening
- Listen to the student, believe them, reassure them
- Follow up each case quickly
- Be discreet and sensitive
- Record any discussions in writing
- Provide ongoing support

Dealing with Incidents

Adults are crucial to all these procedures, but their role essentially rests on helping the students to deal with the bullying themselves. Different circumstances may require different approaches, but usually will include the following:

1. Interview the 'victim' getting them to describe how they feel. Identify the other students concerned.
2. Offer the 'victim' alternative courses of action.
3. Give them ongoing support and suggest ways of coping with the situation with support of the Academy team. Provide a time limit to see if these strategies work and the bullying stops.
 - Obtains the students permission to talk to the bullies and other people concerned.
 - Set up a meeting with the bullies and explain to them how the victim feels and how the group should act to address these feeling. (The none blame approach). Ask the group members to make a commitment to doing something to improve their relationship with the victim.
 - If none of these courses of action work then it may be necessary to involve the students school and parents.