

Bullying

Concord means “harmony” and thus Concord College Summer School strives for a sense of community from all its staff and students. The Concord College Summer School is committed to providing a supportive, caring and safe environment where the welfare of its staff and students is a priority. Any incident of abuse or bullying is not acceptable, falls far short of the high standards of behaviour expected of both its staff and students, and will not be tolerated. Anyone experiencing bullying is encouraged to report it. Any such allegations will be taken seriously, investigated and addressed. No member of the Concord College Summer School community should tolerate bullying or suffer in silence.

Bullying can take many forms but, in general, must be a deliberate attempt to make another person feel bad. This deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, makes it difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. It could be by threatening them, hurting them physically, frightening them or upsetting them. It involves someone having some negative power over the person who is being bullied. Bullying happens often, not just once.

An awareness of the following types of bullying is necessary:

1. Physical (e.g. pushing someone around whenever they are encountered)
2. Extortion (e.g. demanding payment in money or in kind)
3. Gesture (e.g. giving someone “evil” looks)
4. Exclusion (e.g. not allowing another to be part of a group or activity)
5. Verbal (e.g. spreading stories or gossip about another person)
6. Cyber bullying (where information technology is used as a means of communicating verbal and emotional bullying e.g. text message; mobile ‘phone pictures/video clips; mobile ‘phone calls; e-mail; chat rooms; instant messaging; websites including Blogs and social networking sites like Bebo). The following definition of cyber bullying is offered by the DCSF in its “Safe to Learn” antibullying guidance: “Cyber bullying can be defined as *the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else*. It can be an extension of face-to-face bullying, with technology providing the bully with another route to harass their target. However, it differs in several significant ways from other kinds of bullying: the invasion of home and personal space; the difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages; the size of the audience; perceived anonymity; and even the profile of the person doing the bullying and their target.”
7. Students are bullied for a variety of reasons - and for no reason. Specific types of bullying include: bullying related to race, religion or culture; bullying related to special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities; bullying related to appearance or health conditions; bullying related to sexual orientation; bullying of young carers or looked-after children or otherwise related to home circumstances; sexist or sexual bullying.
8. Bullying can take place between students, between students and staff, or between staff; by individuals or groups; face-to-face, indirectly or using a range of cyber bullying methods.

Concord College Summer School Policy

No forms of abuse or bullying are acceptable. Concord College Summer School takes its duty of care for its students and its staff extremely seriously and will investigate whenever there are signs, or allegations, of abuse or bullying. External agencies such as the Police, Health Specialists and Social Services will be called in as necessary. Many accusations of bullying and/or abuse could result in the implementation of Child Protection Procedures, as outlined in the Concord College Summer School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Many of the Concord College Summer School Summer School's students are young people living away from home and are thus particularly vulnerable to bullying and abuse by their peers. All students receive induction talks regarding the Concord College Summer School's concern for them to be safe, healthy and happy. They are encouraged to report any incidents of abuse or bullying. The Children's Safeguards Manager introduces himself and discusses the range of people they could approach (both staff and student) if they have any welfare problems or questions. Students are encouraged not only to share their own experiences, but to share their concerns about their friends and peers. The Concord College Summer School will also raise the awareness of the nature, causes and effects of bullying within its assemblies and tutorial periods as appropriate.

Staff should be alert for any changes of behaviour in students. Both staff and students receive training in Child Protection and should be aware of the need to be vigilant for any signs or symptoms of abuse. Such concerns should be shared with staff concerned such as their Tutor, Houseparent, Course Director, Director of Studies, Child Safeguarding Manager or their deputies.

While the Concord College Summer School has not experienced bullying as a significant problem in the past, it recognises that incidents can occur and accepts the moral and statutory duties to be prepared to deal with these as, and when, they occur.

Specific advice for dealing with Cyber bullying Incidents:

Fresh challenges are presented by young people's use, misuse, or abuse of new technologies. Cyber bullying can be unintentional - as with other forms of bullying. However, the perpetrator can share electronic bullying materials and thus the bullying can be aggravated by the involvement of bystanders or "accessories".

Students who experience cyber bullying should be encouraged to store examples of abusive messages or images for use as evidence against the perpetrators. In addition, students should be aware of the means of stopping or limiting the spread of bullying material (e.g. blocking, contacting network managers/internet service providers and/or police).

Specific sanctions should be considered for those found to be guilty of cyber bullying in terms of the Concord College Summer School Policies for Computer Network & Access and also Computers/Network/Internet/E-Mail Acceptable Use. Such sanctions could include banning perpetrators from having mobile 'phones and/or stopping students from accessing the Concord College Summer School intranet or the internet. However, the deliberate, insidious and malicious nature of serious cyber bullying could lead to very serious punishments being imposed by the Course Director on both perpetrators and accessories. The perpetrator (and accessories) could well have done such damage to the Concord College Summer School community and its core values of trust and decency, that the bully, or cyber bully and his/her accessories, might have brought their future at the Concord College Summer School into doubt. They could be suspended, required to leave, or even expelled from the Concord College Summer School community as a result of cyber bullying. In contrast, it should be noted that there is no question at all of any punishment being given to students who experience bullying during their time at Concord.

The following procedure is to be followed in the case of an incident of bullying being either suspected or reported:

Procedure for Dealing with a Bullying Incident

1. A written record of the Bullying Incident should be made by the member of staff receiving the allegation as soon as possible. If the alleged victim reports the incident by themselves, they should be convinced that they are being listened to, taken seriously, reassured that further action will follow, they are being supported.
2. The Incident should be reported to the Course Director and Child Safeguarding Manager as soon as possible. (The written record should follow an oral report as soon as practical.)
3. The Senior Manager investigating the Bullying Incident will interview the victim and alleged bully separately and will make a written record of these interviews. Other interviews with students who witnessed the alleged incident(s) might also be necessary at this stage. Victims should be treated with sensitivity. Anonymity cannot be guaranteed if the bully is to be effectively tackled, but discretion and reassurance must be offered.
4. At the discretion of the Senior Manager, the parents of both the victim and the bully might be contacted at this stage along with the appropriate members of staff (e.g. Houseparents, Tutors, subject teachers).
5. Consideration will be given as to whether an interview, or mediation session, involving the Senior Manager, victim and bully would be appropriate and productive.
6. Appropriate punishments in the case of actual incidents of bullying will be awarded and recorded. Copies of Bullying Incidents will be kept in both the victim's and bully's student files. Support for the victim will also be provided. The causes of bullying should be considered with both the victim and bully in order to establish how to avoid a repeat of the initial incident.
7. A review meeting, or meetings, should be held with both the victim and bully within a few days. If there have been no further incidents, no further action is needed. However, if the review suggests evidence of further bullying, or provocation, then the parents of both the victim and bully will be contacted by the Senior Manager at this stage. It is also likely that the Director of Summer Courses will become involved at this stage since Major Punishments such as expulsion might be deemed necessary and appropriate. External agencies could also be involved as both necessary and appropriate under related Concord College Summer School Policies concerning Abuse and Child Protection.

Publicising our Anti-Bullying Policy

Concord College Summer School's Anti-Bullying Policy will be published and disseminated to staff, students and Trustees as part of their Child Protection or Safeguarding Training, Refresher Training or Induction Training. The Policy is part of the Staff and Student Handbooks and it will also be publicised to parents via the Concord College Summer School website.

At the end of every course, our students are surveyed and their returns are studied carefully. The results of questions regarding student welfare are scrutinised closely. Students are specifically asked about bullying and whether they feel the Concord College Summer School does enough to promote their welfare. The Concord College Summer School undertakes to review its Anti-Bullying Policy annually along with its Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. This is particularly important in the light of the changes and challenges presented by new technologies and the need to be aware of the specific danger of cyber bullying as outlined above.

Review

This policy/procedure will be reviewed annually or earlier in the event of any incidents or changes to local or national guidelines.