



POLICY ON BULLYING, HARASSMENT AND ABUSIVE BEHAVIOUR

1. Definition of abusive behaviour

Abuse, may be defined as 'the willful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten, upset or frighten anyone'.

It is our responsibility to counter abuse not only in school, but outside it, such as in accommodation, or during school-related activities.

Some abuse may occur as individual incidents of a relatively minor nature, but these can assume greater significance when viewed in as a whole and in context.

The following forms of abusive behaviour towards Foyle students, (either by staff or fellow students) will not be tolerated:

Name calling	Aggression
Excluding	Sexual harassment
Teasing / 'winding up'	Gender abuse
Kicking / hitting	Exploiting physical weakness
Physical violence	Racial abuse
Spoiling work	Threats / extortion
Preventing others from working	Frightening
Damaging property	Stealing
'Ganging up'	Humiliating
Swearing	Denying choices

2. Aims

This document should be seen as part of Foyle International's other policies concerned with discipline and behaviour. The welfare of all students is paramount and this is especially the case for age 17 or under. Our principal aim is to foster an atmosphere in which abusive behaviour is not tolerated and is seen to be inappropriate and wrong.

Students have the right to:

- be able to tell a teacher (or line manager) about any abusive behaviour and expect that they will consult with them about any decision to be made about it

- be protected against the abuser
- feel happy and secure
- be in school or participating in school activities, without being afraid of any thing or person
- expect politeness from others
- be respected no matter what their colour of skin, nationality, sexual orientation, religion or disability

3. Responsibilities

Students and staff are expected to behave with the expected degree of decency and tolerance towards one another, in line with the Foyle's Code of Conduct.

All staff to:

- recognise instances of abuse
- report such instances
- support the implementation of the Company's policy
- offer support to victims of abuse

Welfare staff to:

- to co-ordinate the implementation of the policy through their staff
- collate and record information on incidents of abusive behaviour
- deal with cases of all incidents in accordance with the school's policy
- contact and work with the parents/guardians of victims and abusers

4. Procedures for staff

Where abuse does occur, students and staff should be encouraged to **report it (to the Safeguarding Team)**. Abusive behaviour is easily recognised by the victim, however, the perpetrator and third parties may not define it as such. Similarly, until proven, an instance of abuse is simply **alleged**.

Therefore, when abusive behaviour is seen or suspected, no-one should attempt to resolve the problem on their own, but should seek support from others within the School. They should immediately report it to the Welfare Officer (or a member of the Welfare group in her absence) so that the allegations can be jointly considered and the most appropriate action can be determined. When the case is considered serious, the Director must also be consulted at the very earliest stage.

In the case of alleged abuse by a fellow student:

The Company will:

- document all cases
- deal with instances quickly, fairly and in as positive a manner as possible
- take account of the evidence and views of those involved
- provide anonymity for the victim if so required
- offer advice and support to the victim and to the person(s) found responsible
- operate a system of sanctions which reflect the seriousness of the offence
- contact the police if appropriate

Sanctions on students of any age can include:

- handing out a warning
- withdrawal of privileges
- withdrawal from favoured activities
- exclusion from the school or language programme
- reporting to the police

Sanctions on students aged under 18, or attending a “Language and Activity Programme” can include:

- putting on report
- giving an earlier curfew for accommodation
- individual supervising at break times
- involvement of parents or guardians (when appropriate)

In the case of alleged abuse to a student by a staff member:

The Company will:

- document all cases
- deal with instances quickly, fairly and in as positive a manner as possible
- take account of the evidence and views of those involved
- provide anonymity for the victim if so required
- offer advice and support to the victim and to the person(s) found responsible
- take disciplinary action if necessary
- contact the police if appropriate

In the case of alleged abuse to a student by a homestay provider:

The Company will:

- document all cases
- deal with instances quickly, fairly and in as positive a manner as possible
- take account of the evidence and views of those involved
- provide anonymity for the victim if so required
- offer advice and support to the victim
- remove all students from this host whilst an investigation is underway
- contact the police if appropriate

5. Action

The precise course of action will be decided jointly between the member of staff most involved and the Safeguarding Officer (or a member of the Welfare group or Managing Director, when appropriate). This might include:

- speaking to both parties in confidence
- allowing a 'cooling off time' for all parties involved
- the use of appropriate counselling, including the 'no-blame' approach where suitable, until all information is collated
- talking with all parties, as it may be appropriate to discuss the behaviour together and obtain apologies
- allowing abusers to hear the feelings of the victim (if appropriate)
- feedback to victims, abusers and other concerned parties about progress made in dealing with the incident
- monitoring the problem until it is resolved to everyone's satisfaction

6. Recording

All cases should be documented, as soon as possible after the events and during discussions. Documents should include confirmation of the allegations, the response from both parties, the action taken and the outcome. Documents should be filed in Company records.