



Soham Village College

Prejudice-Related Incidents Policy

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1. Introduction and Aim

- 1.1 The aim of this policy is to provide guidelines for Soham Village College to establish effective procedures for the reporting and recording of prejudice-related incidents.
- 1.2 It will ensure that action is taken to support the victims of prejudice and to deal with perpetrators appropriately. The policy has been informed by the following documents:
- Equality Act 2010 – protected characteristics of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, religion & belief, sexual identity and orientation.
 - Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff (DfE, February 2024)
 - Non-Crime Hate Incidents: Code of Practice on the Recording and Retention of Personal Data, Government, June 2023
- 1.3 We all have a responsibility to challenge prejudice in our institution by giving due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (2023). Action will only be successful if it forms part of a wider policy which is embedded within all our practices.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 Our definition of a non-crime hate incident is based on the definition in the 'Non-Crime Hate Incidents: Code of Practice on the Recording and Retention of Personal Data' 'an incident or alleged incident which involves or is alleged to involve an act by a person ('the subject') which is perceived by a person other than the subject to be motivated – wholly or partly – by hostility or prejudice towards persons with a particular characteristic'.

3. Examples

- 3.1 A prejudice-related incident may include:
- derogatory name-calling, insults, jokes and language
 - verbal abuse and threats
 - physical assaults
 - ridicule based on differences of colour, disability, gender identity, race, ethnicity, nationality, culture, religion, sexual orientation or language
 - refusal to co-operate with others because of any of the above differences
 - racist comments
 - LGBTQ+ phobic graffiti
 - written abuse
 - damage to property
 - incitement of others to act in a racist manner
 - provocative behaviour such as wearing racist badges or insignia
 - bringing racist materials such as leaflets, magazines or computer software onto the premise, or sharing content online
 - recruiting other young people to prejudice-based organisations or groups

Please refer to Appendix 1 for some practical guidelines in dealing with prejudice-related language and stereotyping.

- 3.2 Even if the victim of an incident does not complain, it should be treated as a prejudice-related incident if another person perceives it as such. For example, a teacher or youth worker overhears a child calling a Traveller child a 'gyppo'. The adult records this as a racist incident, even though the abused child does not complain to them.

4. Dealing with Prejudice-related Incidents

- 4.1 No incident that is, or appears to be prejudicially motivated, should go unchallenged and every member of staff has a responsibility for responding to the situation.
- 4.2 They should make explicit that any such behaviour is unacceptable and contravenes the institution's policy, culture and ethos.
- 4.3 If the member of staff is unable to resolve the matter, it should be referred to the Headteacher.
- 4.4 The action to be taken will depend on whether the perpetrator is known and whether they are a young person, a member of staff or an outside perpetrator.
- 4.5 Where the perpetrator is a young person or student, staff should explain why prejudice-based behaviour is unacceptable. Any disciplinary action taken, including temporary or permanent exclusion, will be in line with the institution's behaviour policy.
- 4.6 The parents or carers of all perpetrators and victims will be informed of the incident and action taken.
- 4.7 Prejudice-related harassment or any form of such behaviour from any member of staff towards any student, young person, parent or another member of staff will not be tolerated, and will be dealt with as a serious breach of the institution's disciplinary procedures. We recognise that appropriate training and other support will be necessary for all staff. When members of staff are found to have committed misconduct involving prejudice-based harassment they will face disciplinary sanctions up to and including dismissal.
- 4.8 Where there is an outside perpetrator, staff should attempt to discuss the matter with them and if necessary refer them to the head teacher.

5. Recording and Reporting Incidents

- 5.1 In line with the recommendations of the documents cited in 1.2, Soham Village College records all prejudice-related incidents. This includes the following details:

- date
- names of perpetrators and victims
- the background of all individuals involved
- nature of incident
- action taken in response
- name of the person reporting the incident
- staff should log all incidents digitally via My Concern

5.2 All incidents will be monitored for ethnicity to ensure that potentially racist incidents are not overlooked.

5.3 Although some incidents may seem minor, it is still important to log them as repeat incidents often mean that earlier reports assume greater importance.

5.4 Parents/carers and governors are informed of the number and nature of prejudice-related incidents and the action taken to deal with them.

5.5 The pattern and frequency of these incidents are analysed in order to inform future planning.

5.6 Details of the pattern and frequency of these incidents are held at institutional level.

5.7 We will advise the police of any such incidents that may be categorised as crimes.

6. **Support for the Victim**

6.1 When dealing with prejudice-related incidents involving students or young people, staff should:

Listen attentively

- indicate they are pleased that the young person has been able to tell them
- remain calm and reassuring
- accept their language and terminology
- remember that to confide in a member of staff may need considerable courage

Acknowledge

- acknowledge the feelings of the young person
- confirm they were right to make the disclosure
- show they understand the difficulty in discussing the matter
- establish whether the incident is part of a pattern
- reassure while explaining the need to take the matter further

Report

Indicate that the information needs to be shared with others in authority in order to stop further harassment. If the victim is adamant that they do not want any further action, the incident should, nevertheless, be recorded. The circumstances of the victim, e.g. Age, self-confidence in dealing with the situation for themselves, will be a guiding factor for staff when deciding on a course of action. In certain cases, the victim's identity will need to be protected and the situation must be handled sensitively.

Support

Recognise that victims will need immediate support and must be reassured that the matter will be treated seriously and that a full investigation will take place.

- 6.2 Ensure that parents/carers are aware of the incident and kept informed of the progress of any investigation as appropriate. It may be necessary to either provide support or encourage parents/carers to seek support for themselves and other members of the family.
- 6.3 We recognise that members of staff can also experience prejudice-based harassment from students/young people, from other staff, from parents/carers, or members of the public. We will support them in the same way as we would students/young people.

7. Whole-school or institutional issues

- 7.1 Prejudice has an impact on the school community and on the wider community it serves. We commit ourselves to an anti-prejudiced, fully inclusive approach.
- 7.2 Assistant Headteacher has responsibility for leading implementation of this policy.

8. Policy Review

This policy will be usually be reviewed on a 3-year cycle. This review may be brought forward as required by the school/trust to reflect changes in supporting advice/guidance.

Appendix 1: Guide to challenging prejudice-related language and stereotyping

All prejudiced language should be challenged and how that challenge is made will depend on the circumstances of the incident, the severity of the incident, who it involves, where it takes place and the intention behind the comment. The following scripts can be adapted for use in challenging a variety of forms of prejudice.

Institutional responses:

- The school policy says that we are all responsible for making this a safe place for everyone. That kind of language is racist / disablist / sexist / homophobic / bi/transphobic (etc.) and makes people feel unsafe. Therefore, it is unacceptable.
- Some people would find that word insulting and so it is not OK to use at Soham Village College.
- The anti-bullying policy says that prejudice-related language is not tolerated.
- At Soham Village College we always try to be kind to each other and when you use 'gay' like that it is unkind.
- At Soham Village College we treat everyone with respect and when you use 'gay' like that it is disrespectful of gay and lesbian people
- It's really important that at this school people feel able to express their gender however they feel comfortable so we try to avoid gender stereotypes
- At Soham Village College we want to recognize very pupil's strengths and we don't want people to feel limited by expectations that relate to their gender, religion or ethnicity.

Question:

- What do you think that word means?
- What makes you think that?
- How would you feel if someone spoke about you in that way?
- Do you realize that what you said is racist / disablist / sexist / homophobic / bi/transphobic (etc.)
- Can you explain what you mean by calling that 'gay'?
- That word is an insulting term for someone who is transgender. Do you know what it means to be transgender?
- Do you know what a gender stereotype is? Can you think of why some people might be upset when they hear them at school?
- What did you mean by saying he kicks like a girl?

Direct Challenge:

- Language like that is not acceptable
- You might not think that remark is offensive, but many would.
- What you are saying presents a very stereotypical view of what men and women are like. When you do that it means that people who don't fit into your way of seeing things can feel left out or ashamed.

Personal Response

- I'm not happy with what you said
- Racist / disablist / sexist / homophobic / bi/transphobic language offends me. I don't want to hear it again
- What you said really disappoints/disturbs/upsets/angers me. I hope you would recognize that it is important to treat everyone with respect and that it is therefore wrong to use such language.