



College Position Statement **Promoting Resilience: Preventing Vulnerability**

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Originator	Paul Ashdown
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A Philosophy

A.1 The College embraces its responsibility to develop the resilience and critical awareness of our students so that their vulnerability to emotional manipulation in all forms is minimised. This includes: all aspects of safeguarding related to sexual exploitation, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, grooming and abuse; wider vulnerabilities in areas like bullying, substance abuse, and body-image; and addressing involvement with extremist ideologies under the Prevent agenda. A crucial element in strengthening student resilience in response to all these issues is the promotion of mature, critical and safe use of the internet.

A.2 The College believes that the best way to develop resilience is through student engagement with a positive culture, offering robust and sustainable values, and nurturing positive relationships with other young people and adults, so that they are not uncritically reliant on values mediated elsewhere, for example in the mass media or the internet. This culture needs to be open and dynamic, and must positively encourage the exploration of controversy that is a vital part of developing balanced and robust personal identity. Recent focus on “British Values” of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance align directly with this approach. We feel that the College is uniquely well placed to offer this environment, and we have a long-standing commitment to the development of a learning culture which has this ethos at its heart.

A.3 We believe that young people become more vulnerable when they lose their attachments to such a positive culture and become alienated from the network of support and validation it offers. This is when they are most at risk of identifying with other, often less safe, ideologies. Although the College accepts a responsibility to exclude such views whenever possible, we also know that complete insulation from them is impossible, and that the only real protection for our young people comes from giving them positive alternatives and the confidence to reject extremism.

A.4 Education in general, and a carefully nurtured College culture like ours in particular, are amongst the most powerful forces engaging young people positively, and are key elements in creating long term social resilience. The development of our College culture is seen as one of our highest priorities and as one of three key policy drivers in our 2015-20 Strategic Priorities, is the direct responsibility of the Principal.

B Action

We nurture this culture by:

B.1 Establishing at enrolment and induction the key values of the College expressed through the Enrolment Contract, the Principal's introductory address, and the new mission statement emphasising "Aspiration, Investment and Respect." (Ref: Enrolment Contract & Mission Statement.)

B.2 An approach to teaching and learning which is based on meeting individual student needs, and building skills, confidence and critical awareness. (Ref: Teaching, Learning & Assessment Policy and Schemes of Work.)

B.3 An explicit commitment to Equality & Diversity in all aspects of College life which ensures all groups and individuals are treated fairly, and none are alienated or isolated. (Ref: Equality & Diversity Policy and Report.)

B.4 Managing student behaviour and motivation through sustained praise and a measured contractual approach to non-compliance. (Ref: Behaviour & Praise Policy and Reports.)

B.5 Supporting ambition and progression so that students can view their future positively and with confidence. (Ref: Career Impact Report.)

B.6 Strong communication systems using Academic Coaches and Tyber to ensure good liaison between parents and College, and within teams at college. (Ref: Tyber.)

B.7 Highly effective arrangements for safeguarding and supporting students through timely intervention and appropriate support when issues are identified. (Ref: Safeguarding Policy).

B.8 A full commitment to the creation of student engagement in all aspects of College life, from feedback on teaching, to enrichment activities and student representation. (Ref: Student Council Constitution, Student Development Officer job descriptions, Student Surveys and Engagement Report.)

B.9 Active partnership with outside agencies including Prevent, Contest, the police, other schools, faith leaders and the local authority, which ensures that the College understands the local environment and acts in concert with others. (Ref: formal partnership agreements, liaison and meeting records.)

B.10 Clear policies on Free Speech, e-safety, use of the Prayer Room, student societies and visiting speakers which ensure external inputs support rather than undermine, College culture. (Ref: relevant policies.)

B.11 Full compliance with staff vetting, and rigorous staff selection processes which ensure that all staff, governors and volunteers are actively committed to this culture. (Ref: Recruitment & Selection Process.)

B.12 A calendar of high quality interventions with the whole student body which promote key elements of this strategy. (Ref: Coaching Seminar Programme.)

B.13 A full programme of staff training and development activities which ensures that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and actively promote College culture. (Ref: Staff Development Programme.)

C Strategic Priorities

C.1 This approach to the development of College culture is integrated fully into the Strategic Objectives 2015-2020 under Strategic Objective 5 “use the aspire approach to further enhance our learning culture.” The Development Plan for this objective will show how progress will be made and monitored by the Curriculum & Quality Committee of the Corporate Board. The Lead Manager for this objective is the Principal.

D Equalities Impact Assessment

D.1 Students in groups with protected characteristics under equalities legislation are often amongst those most vulnerable to the issues outlined here. This means that College actions and interventions to promote resilience and prevent vulnerabilities of all types will help to improve outcomes for those with protected characteristics.