

Padworth College Policy Manual

Students

D.6 Anti- Bullying Policy

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This policy has been drawn up using a number of useful guidance notes, reference points, as well as guidance produced by the Department of Education (DfE) are listed below:

- A. ["Preventing and Tackling Bullying", DfE, July 2017](#)
- B. [ISI Inspection Framework](#), September 2019
- C. [The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework 2017](#)
- D. [Bullying UK: Cyberbullying](#)
- E. ["Cyberbullying: Advice for Headteachers and College Staff"](#), November 2014
- F. ["Cyberbullying Guidance: Understand, Prevent and Respond"](#) - Childnet International
- G. ["Searching, screening and confiscation"](#), DfE, July 2022
- H. ["Teaching Online Safety in College"](#), DfE, June 2019
- I. ["Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people"](#), DfE, December 2020
- J. [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), DfE September 2024

Related Policies to Padworth College's Anti-Bullying Policy:

- Behaviour Management Policy
- Special Education Needs (SEN) and Learning Difficulties Policy
- Exclusions Policy
- Equal Opportunities
- Complaints Procedure/Policy
- Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy (Includes Peer on Peer Abuse)

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

At Padworth College our community is based upon being kind and being a team player. This involves respect, good manners, and fair play. We are committed to providing a safe and caring environment that is free from disruption, violence, and any form of harassment so that every one of our students can develop to their full potential. We expect our students to treat members of staff with courtesy and co-operation so that they can learn in a relaxed, but orderly, atmosphere. All students should care for and support each other, inside and outside of College.

The College prides itself on its respect and mutual tolerance. Parents/guardians have an important role in supporting the College in maintaining high standards of behaviour. It is essential that there are consistent expectations of behaviour both at college, online and at home, and that the College and parents co-operate closely together.

This policy is available to parents of students and prospective students on our website and on request and for reading in the College office during the college day. It is also communicated to all staff and students.

Bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination of students or staff will not be tolerated by the College. We treat all of our students and their parents fairly, and with consideration, and we expect them to respect the staff, the College and each other, in return. All forms of bullying are unacceptable at the College (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)

D.6	Page 1 of 10	Version:
Updated	CBD	March 2023
Review	CBD	September 2024
Next Review Due		June 2025

Padworth College Policy Manual

Students

D.6 Anti- Bullying Policy

and any instances of bullying will be recorded and, where appropriate, will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the College's Behaviour Management Policy.

This policy applies to all day and boarding students in the College

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

Put another way, bullying is the intentional hurting, harming, or humiliating of another person. It may take many forms, including physical (including any threat of or use of violence of any kind), sexual (including the sharing of nudes/semi-nudes), verbal (including cyberbullying via text messages, email, social media, gaming, or other instant messages, and can include the use of images and video), and/or emotional (including by excluding, being sarcastic, name-calling, tormenting or spreading malicious rumours). It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone, or actions that fall short of direct participation, where someone encourages others to bully, or joins in with laughing at a victim. Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and intimidating, and often involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator(s) and the victim(s) whether that be a physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), or intellectual imbalance, or by the perpetrator(s) having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate the victim(s).

Bullying can sometimes amount to child on child abuse, which is defined as abuse by one or more students against another student. It can be standalone or as part of wider abuse and can happen both inside and outside of college, and online. Further information about peer on peer abuse, including the procedures to follow when an incident on peer on peer abuse is reported can be found in the College's Child Protection and Safeguarding policy.

Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, and may involve actions or comments regarding a person's race, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, special education needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions, or because of a child's familial circumstances, such as they are adopted, in care or that they have caring responsibilities. Bullying may be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. For example, bullying can still be homophobic if directed towards a child that is perceived to be gay, whether or not this is the case.

Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time and can involve anyone - students, other young people, staff, and parents.

Where an incident of bullying causes or is likely to cause significant harm to a student, the College will follow the procedures set out in the College's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

THE COLLEGE'S RESPONSE TO BULLYING

At the College, we always treat bullying very seriously. It conflicts sharply with the College's values, virtues, social and moral principles, and potentially with its policy on equal opportunities for students, and will not be tolerated. When incidents of bullying do occur, they are dealt with quickly and taken

D.6	Page 2 of 10	Version:
Updated	CBD	March 2023
Review	CBD	September 2024
Next Review Due		June 2025

Padworth College Policy Manual

Students

D.6 Anti- Bullying Policy

seriously. The College will never dismiss or downplay bullying as banter or horseplay, and all reported incidents of bullying will be dealt with by staff in accordance with this policy. Staff will reassure any victim(s) that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.

The College understands that bullying can be so serious that it may cause physical, emotional, and psychological damage, such as eating disorders, self-harm and even suicide. Stopping violence and ensuring the immediate physical safety of students is the College's first priority, however, the College acknowledges that emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical bullying, and therefore staff will use their discretion when dealing with an incident of bullying within the parameters of this policy and the Behaviour Management Policy. Whilst bullying itself is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment, sexual violence and assault, sexting, the sharing of nudes/semi-nudes (in certain circumstances), upskirting and to violent and threatening behaviour. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying: everybody has the right to be treated with respect.

The College recognises that children with SEND or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges and may be more prone to child on child group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children. The College also recognises that certain children may face additional barriers to reporting an incident because of their vulnerability, disability, sex, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation.

Students who are victims of bullying will always be supported and will be reassured that they will be kept safe. Students who have engaged in bullying behaviour will be subject to appropriate disciplinary sanction and will also, where possible, be supported in learning different ways of behaving and offered support for their own circumstances, where appropriate.

Bullying which occurs on College trips, online, or outside of the College's premises will not be tolerated any more than bullying on College premises. Teachers will, where appropriate, discipline students for misbehaviour online, outside College premises and outside College hours.

SIGNS OF BULLYING

Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a student is being bullied include:

- Unwillingness to return to college;
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet;
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually poor work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with, or spoilt by others;
- Books, bags, money, and other belongings suddenly go "missing", or are damaged;
- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary);
- Diminished levels of self-confidence;
- Frequent visits to the Medical Centre with symptoms which may relate to stress or anxiety, such as stomach pains or headaches;
- Unexplained cuts and bruises;
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, or late arrival to class;
- Choosing the company of adults rather than peers;
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact;
- Difficulty in sleeping or experiencing nightmares; or

D.6	Page 3 of 10	Version:
Updated	CBD	March 2023
Review	CBD	September 2024
Next Review Due		June 2025

Padworth College Policy Manual

Students

D.6 Anti- Bullying Policy

- Talking of suicide or running away from home or college.

Although there may be other causes of some of the above symptoms, a repetition or combination of these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents and teachers and reported / recorded, as appropriate, in accordance with this policy.

BULLYING - PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

Padworth College's response to bullying does not start at the point in which a student has been bullied. We take the following preventative measures in order to create an environment that prevents bullying from becoming a problem at the College in the first place:

Students

- The College promotes an ethos of good behaviour where students treat each other with respect at all times, inside and outside of college;
- All new students (including boarders) are briefed thoroughly on the College's expected standards of behaviour. They are told what to do if they encounter bullying. We guarantee that those who report bullying in good faith will not be punished, will be taken seriously and will be supported and kept safe;
- We use appropriate assemblies to explain the College's policy on bullying (including cyberbullying and prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying). Our PSHE programme is structured to give students an awareness of their social and moral responsibilities as they progress through the College. The programme is structured to enforce messages about community involvement and taking care of each other. It focuses on the importance of equality and diversity and students are encouraged to avoid prejudicial and exclusionary language;
- Other lessons highlight the issue of bullying and reinforce this message by developing social skills and by teaching moral and spiritual values that show all bullying to be unacceptable;
- All of our students are encouraged to tell any member of staff at once if they are being bullied, or if they know or suspect that bullying is taking place. They are reassured that they will be taken seriously and will be supported and kept safe;
- All boarders know how to report anxieties to the boarding team or to another member of staff.
- All students have access to a telephone helpline, enabling them to call for support in private. This helpline is called the Independent Person and is contactable on 07704866208
- The College buildings and all of our boarding houses displays advice on where students can seek help, including details of confidential help lines and websites where they can connect with external specialists, such as ChildLine, Kidscape, Bullying UK, and the Samaritans;
- We provide leadership training to our Student Leaders which specifically covers the importance of offering support and assistance to younger and to vulnerable students; and
- The College does not tolerate peer-group "initiation ceremonies" or hazing type violence or rituals designed to cause pain, anxiety or humiliation to students, and all staff remain alert to such actions.

D.6	Page 4 of 10	Version:
Updated	CBD	March 2023
Review	CBD	September 2024
Next Review Due		June 2025

Padworth College Policy Manual

Students

D.6 Anti- Bullying Policy

Staff

- Upon induction, all new members of staff are given training and guidance on the College's anti-bullying policy and on how to react to, and record allegations of bullying at the College, including cyberbullying. The College will ensure that all College staff understand the principles of the College's policy, the College's legal responsibilities, actions to be taken to resolve and prevent incidents of bullying from arising or escalating and also details of sources of further support;
- The College recognises that certain children may be more at risk of bullying than others and may require additional support when dealing with an incident of bullying, for example children with SEND and/or certain health conditions, and LGBTQ+ students. The College will ensure that staff receive appropriate training to be able to understand the specific needs of our students, and to enable all staff to provide an inclusive environment for all students;
- All reported incidents are recorded and investigated at once. We always monitor reported incidents. Records of any incidents are kept securely in the Principal's Office in order that patterns of behaviour can be identified and monitored;
- We have a strong pastoral team of Tutors and House Parents who support the Principal and Assitant Principal and are trained in handling any incidents as an immediate priority, and who are alert to possible signs of bullying and will know when to apply our Child Protection and Safeguarding policy to bullying incidents;
- Our pastoral team gives support and guidance to other staff on handling and reporting incidents, and on the follow-up work with both victims and bullies. INSET sessions are held regularly, using outside experts;
- The Principal will provide confidential advice and seek to encourage the development of tolerance, understanding and respect for others in a multi-faith community;
- Staff are always on duty at times when students are not in class and patrol the College site, particularly areas where bullying might occur. They are trained to be alert to inappropriate language or behaviour at all times;
- In boarding houses, there are strong teams of boarding tutors and academic tutors supporting the House Parents who act *in loco parentis*. Staff are aware that boarding houses provide more opportunities for bullying and are therefore always vigilant and alert to signs of issues with or between boarders. The informal house environment is important in reinforcing a student's standards and values, providing the opportunity for friendly, informal discussion of matters of concern to the individual student outside the formal classroom. A member of the boarding house staff is always on duty to supervise the students. The College will comply with its obligations as set out in the National Minimum Standards at all times.
- The College has the right, and duty, to investigate incidents of bullying involving our students which take place outside College hours, on College visits and trips, online, or that otherwise occur outside of College. The College has the right to take disciplinary measures in respect of such incidents. Disciplinary measures will be taken in accordance with the College's Behaviour Management Policy and will be applied in a fair, consistent, and reasonable manner, taking into account the needs of students with SEND and certain health conditions, and vulnerable students; and
- Staff will always consider the motive behind bullying behaviour and whether it raises any concerns for the welfare of the perpetrator(s). If staff reasonably suspect that a student may be suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, they should follow the procedures set out in the College's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and discuss their concerns with the College's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) without delay.

D.6	Page 5 of 10	Version:
Updated	CBD	March 2023
Review	CBD	September 2024
Next Review Due		June 2025

Padworth College Policy Manual

Students

D.6 Anti- Bullying Policy

Parents

- This policy is readily available on the College's website in hard copy for reading at the College office, which parents are made aware of so that they are clear on the College's approach to bullying and what to do if their child experiences bullying;
- We encourage close contact between the Head of Boarding and parents/ guardians, and will always make contact if we are worried about a student's well-being;
- If parents know or suspect that their child, or another student, is being bullied, they should contact the College without delay. All concerns will be taken seriously; and
- We welcome feedback from parents and guardians on the effectiveness of our preventative measures and all other aspects and implementation of this anti-bullying policy.

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH REPORTED BULLYING

The College ensures that all instances of, or concerns about bullying and cyberbullying, both on and away from College premises are easy to report and that they are recorded properly. Records of instances of bullying and allegations of bullying will be kept on Isams, and also on student files. Records will also be kept on files relating to safeguarding where appropriate, in order to enable the College to identify patterns of behaviour and to evaluate the effectiveness of this anti-bullying policy.

The College recognises that students are likely to report bullying to someone they trust: this could be any member of staff. The College also recognises that children may not find it easy to tell staff about bullying verbally and that instead they may show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to. It is also recognised that an incident may come to a member of staff's attention through a report of a friend, or by overhearing conversations. All staff will be trained in handling an allegation and will be aware that they must listen to the student, not ask leading questions, and make a written record of the allegation to the best of their ability.

The College also recognises that a first disclosure to a trusted adult may only be the first incident reported. It is not necessarily representative of a singular incident. Staff will take all reports seriously regardless of how long it has taken for the child to come forward. Staff will act immediately and will support the victim(s) when they raise a concern.

If an incident of bullying is reported, the following procedure will be adopted:

1. The member of staff to whom the incident was reported, or who first discovers the situation, will control the situation (the "Case Handler"), and will reassure and support the students involved, without promising absolute confidentiality;
2. The Case Handler will inform an appropriate member of the College's DSL team about the bullying allegation as soon as possible;
3. Where an issue of student behaviour or bullying gives 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm', staff should follow the procedures set out in the College's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy rather than the procedure set out below.

D.6	Page 6 of 10	Version:
Updated	CBD	March 2023
Review	CBD	September 2024
Next Review Due		June 2025

Padworth College Policy Manual

Students

D.6 Anti- Bullying Policy

4. The victim(s) and the alleged perpetrator(s) will each be interviewed individually by the Case Handler on their own (or, if appropriate, with a suitable person present for support) and asked to write their account of events;
5. Where the Case Handler considers that the reported bullying behaviour may be criminal, or considers that there may be a risk of harm to someone, the Case Handler will discuss this with the Principal, and will report the matter to the Police without delay, if considered necessary. The College will then follow the procedures set out in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy as well as any guidance from the Police;
6. The incident/s should be recorded on Well Being Manager in Isams.
7. The Principal will inform the tutors, Head of Boarding / House Parents of both the alleged perpetrator(s) and the victim(s) as soon as possible through Isams
8. The victim(s) will be interviewed again at a later stage by a member of the welfare team, separately from the alleged perpetrator(s). They will be offered support to develop a strategy to help. It will be made clear to them why revenge or retaliation is inappropriate;
9. The perpetrator(s) will be interviewed again at a later stage by a member of the welfare team, separately from the victim(s), and it will be made clear why their behaviour was inappropriate and caused distress. They will be offered guidance on modifying their behaviour. The College's Behaviour Management Policy may also be invoked. Sanctions under the Behaviour Management Policy and/or Exclusions Policy might include, for example, detention and withdrawal of privileges. The College may exclude a student, either temporarily or permanently, in cases of serious or persistent bullying, or in the event that the support put in place for the perpetrator(s) does not result in the modification of behaviour to an acceptable level.
10. The parents/ guardians of all parties will be informed and may be invited into College to discuss the matter, and the appropriate sanctions under the Behaviour Management Policy and/or Exclusions Policy. The parents' support will be sought in respect of preventative measures, and any concerns of either party will be addressed;
11. A way forward, including where appropriate disciplinary sanctions and support for the perpetrator(s), should be determined, and where possible agreed with all parties. This should recognise that suitable support may be needed by the students who are being bullied, and also by the students who bully others, as well as dealing with disciplinary measures in accordance with the College's Behaviour Management Policy and/or Exclusions Policy if appropriate;
12. As part of this process, a meeting involving all the parties, with close staff supervision, may be convened to help develop a strategy which enables all concerned to close the episode;
13. A monitoring and review strategy will be put in place and put on record;
14. In very serious cases, and only after the Head has been involved, it may be necessary to make a report to the Police, the DSL or to Children's Services. However, in many cases it will be possible to resolve such issues internally under this policy and the College's Behaviour Management Policy.

CYBERBULLYING

D.6	Page 7 of 10	Version:
Updated	CBD	March 2023
Review	CBD	September 2024
Next Review Due		June 2025

Padworth College Policy Manual

Students

D.6 Anti- Bullying Policy

Cyberbullying can be defined as "*the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others*" (Belsey, <http://www.cyberbullying.org/>). It is an aggressive, intentional act often carried out repeatedly over time, and often against a victim who cannot easily defend themselves. The College acknowledges that cyberbullying may take place inside College, outside of College and at any time of the day.

Cyberbullying could involve communications by various electronic media, including for example:

- Texts, instant messages or calls on mobile phones;
- The use of mobile phone camera images to cause distress, fear, or humiliation;
- Posting threatening, abusive, sexual, discriminatory, offensive, or humiliating material or comments on websites (including blogs, personal websites, and social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or YouTube);
- Using e-mail to message others in a threatening or abusive manner; or
- Hijacking/ cloning e-mail accounts.

The College acknowledges that cyberbullying may take many different forms including: cyberstalking, exclusion or peer rejection, impersonation, unauthorised publication of private information or images, encouraging derogative comments on online platforms, sharing nudes/semi-nudes, upskirting, and sexting.

The College has a role to play in teaching students about the underpinning knowledge and behaviours that can help them to navigate the online world safely and confidently regardless of the device, platform, or app. In taking this forward, the College has regard to the DfE's non-statutory guidance on *Teaching online safety in college* (June 2019).

Prevention of cyberbullying

For the prevention of cyberbullying, in addition to the measures described above, the College:

- Expects all students to adhere to its policy for the safe use of the internet. Certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and our IT support company monitors students' use;
- May impose disciplinary sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse, of the internet in accordance with the Behaviour Management Policy;
- Issues all students with their own personal College email address. Access to some social media sites is not allowed inside the College;
- Offers guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and cyberbullying in PSHE lessons, which covers blocking, removing contacts from "friend" lists and sharing their personal data;
- Ensures its students are aware of the various forms in which cyberbullying can take place, that it can have severe and distressing consequences, and that participation in cyberbullying will not be tolerated;
- Offers guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details private and secure;
- Does not allow the use of mobile phones in classrooms apart from Year 13 and NCUK students, or where they may cause annoyance, humiliation, or distress to others; and

D.6	Page 8 of 10	Version:
Updated	CBD	March 2023
Review	CBD	September 2024
Next Review Due		June 2025

Padworth College Policy Manual

Students

D.6 Anti- Bullying Policy

- Does not allow the use of cameras/ mobile phone cameras in toilets, washing and changing areas.

Procedures for dealing with cyberbullying

The College will follow the procedures set out in this policy and in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy where relevant for incidents of cyberbullying, taking such disciplinary action that is considered reasonable in the circumstances, with a view to regulating student conduct and protecting the reputation of the College, and the welfare of its students.

Although cyberbullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are however criminal laws that may apply to communications of a harassing or threatening manner or the unauthorised publication of private images, upskirting, sharing nudes/semi-nudes, and sexting. Where the College considers that a reported incident of cyberbullying may amount to a criminal offence, it will inform the Police.

Electronic devices

In response to an allegation of cyberbullying, certain staff are permitted to conduct a search for electronic devices, such as a student's mobile phone, with the authority of the Principal. Staff do not require the consent of the student, or their parents to undertake a search, provided they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that the student is in possession of a prohibited item, or an item that has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence, or to cause personal injury to any person (including the student being searched), or cause damage to property, and provided they have the Principal's prior consent to undertake a search.

The search will be conducted in accordance with the procedure set out in the Behaviour Management Policy.

Where a search finds an electronic device that is prohibited by the College rules, or where the member of staff undertaking the search reasonably suspects that the electronic device has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence or cause personal injury or damage to property, the College may examine any data or files on the device, where there is good reason to do so, for example, where there has been an allegation of cyberbullying. Parental consent to search through electronic devices is not required but they will be informed after the event unless doing so presents a further risk to any child.

The College may also erase any data or files from the device if the College considers there to be good reason to do so, unless there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the device may contain evidence in relation to a criminal offence, where the files should not be deleted and the device must be given to the Police without delay.

If, following a search, the member of staff determines that the device does not contain any evidence in relation to a criminal offence, or are advised by the Police following a report to them that they will not take any further action to investigate an alleged offence, the College can decide whether it is appropriate to delete any files or data from the device, and may retain the device as evidence of a breach of this policy and the Behaviour Management Policy and the College expectations. The College may then take steps to punish the student in accordance with the Behaviour Management Policy, where appropriate. In the event that the search highlights a safeguarding concern in respect of

D.6	Page 9 of 10	Version:
Updated	CBD	March 2023
Review	CBD	September 2024
Next Review Due		June 2025

Padworth College Policy Manual

Students

D.6 Anti- Bullying Policy

any student, the College will follow the procedures set out in the College's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

The College will keep a record of all searches carried out, including the results of any search, and the actions taken following that search.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Parents and students are encouraged to use our Complaints Procedure (which is published on our website) if they feel that any concerns about bullying (or anything else) are not being addressed properly. Parents of boarders should be aware that they have the right to refer a complaint directly to ISI, if they are unhappy with the way in which their complaint has been handled (the Complaints Procedure explains how to complain to ISI).

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The College will record all incidents of reported bullying in accordance with this policy.

The Principal will review all incidents of reported bullying to help identify patterns of behaviour, so that the College can take appropriate steps to address bullying behaviours within the College. Records of bullying incidents will also be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the College's anti-bullying procedures, and to highlight any necessary amendments.

This policy is reviewed and updated at least annually, by the Senior Leadership Team.

D.6	Page 10 of 10	Version:
Updated	CBD	March 2023
Review	CBD	September 2024
Next Review Due		June 2025