

Bullying and Harassment Policy for Students

Audience	All stakeholders – staff, trustees, parents and carers
Status / review cycle	3 Years
Current review	September 2025
Next review	July 2028
Review committee	Strategy and Policy
Staff lead	Kate Parsons – Assistant Principal – Student Services and Communications
Trustee lead	N/A

1. Introduction

Esher Sixth Form College (ESFC) is committed to ensuring a safe, inclusive and respectful environment, informed by our values of inclusivity, community and empowerment, where all students can develop and thrive academically and personally. Bullying, harassment or victimisation of any kind is not tolerated. This policy aligns with the Equality Act 2010, KCSIE 2025 (where bullying and harassment by peers is referred to as ‘child on child abuse’) and the College’s safeguarding policy and procedures.

2. Aims and Scope

This policy:

- Defines what constitutes bullying and harassment.
- Provides guidance on how students can report incidents.
- Explains how the College will respond and support those involved.

This policy applies to all students, whether on-site, online or off-site.

3. Definitions

3.1 Bullying

Bullying is behaviour that is:

- Repeated;
- Intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally;
- Often targeted at certain groups or a protected characteristic, e.g., due to race, gender, disability, or sexuality.

Forms may include the following, however this is not an exhaustive list:

- **Verbal:** Name-calling, threats, insults.
- **Physical:** Hitting, pushing, unwanted physical contact.
- **Social:** Exclusion, spreading rumours, humiliation.
- **Online (cyberbullying):** Threats, abuse or humiliation using digital platforms.

3.2 Harassment

Harassment is unwanted behaviour that:

- Causes distress, intimidation or humiliation;
- Violates dignity or creates an offensive environment.

Forms may include the following, though this is not meant to be an exhaustive list:

- **Sexual:** Unwelcome sexual advances, jokes, or comments.
- **Racial or discriminatory:** Based on race, religion, gender, disability, or other protected characteristics.
- **Targeted at any protected characteristic** under the Equality Act 2010.

4. Prevention and Education

To foster a respectful culture:

- Students are educated about respectful behaviour and online conduct during induction and the Personal Development Programme (PDP).
- Positive relationships and mutual respect are promoted through our College values, the Student Contract, the Student Code of Conduct, the curriculum, extension studies and PDP.

The College actively celebrates the diverse backgrounds of the College community and promotes a culture of inclusion.

Students are encouraged to:

- Make a report to any member of staff if they experience or witness bullying.
- Use respectful language and behaviour.
- Support others who may be targeted and report any concerns.

5. Reporting Concerns

If a student is a victim of bullying or harassment, they could take either take:

Informal Steps:

- If the other person is part of a friendship group, talk to them or another person in the group about how that person is making others feel.
- Speak to a tutor or trusted teacher about any concerns. Parents can equally raise a concern and share how they or the student may want to approach the issue.

Formal Reporting:

- Report the concern directly to a tutor, teacher or member of the Student Wellbeing team.
- A formal Expression of Concern will be recorded and sent to safeguarding@esher.ac.uk

- Reports can also be submitted directly to safeguarding@esher.ac.uk or anonymously on the 6.1 or 6.2 Student Team under the Student Wellbeing channel, using the Anonymous Reporting facility.

All concerns will be taken seriously and treated sensitively. A Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (usually the Director of Student Development & Behaviour) will assess the situation and decide on next steps.

6. Investigating and Responding

Once a report is made:

- An investigation will be carried out by a Deputy DSL or Tutor Team Leader (TTL), depending on the severity of the allegation.
- This will usually involve taking a statement from the victim and the alleged perpetrator, as well as any other relevant witnesses.
- Taking screenshots of any alleged online bullying and harassment is encouraged to provide clear evidence of inappropriate behaviour.
- The College will assess whether the behaviour meets the threshold for an intervention.
- Parents/carers may be informed depending on the severity and nature of the incident.

Actions may include:

- Restorative conversations.
- Robust action consistent with the Cause for Concern Procedures (up to and including exclusion) is taken if there are allegations of bullying (including cyber bullying), abuse in an intimate relationship, physical abuse, sexual violence/harassment, up skirting, consensual/non-consensual sharing of nude/semi-nude images/videos and initiation/hazing type violence/rituals.
- Referral to external agencies (including the Police) if criminal conduct is suspected.

Support will be offered to both the victim and the alleged perpetrator, ensuring everyone involved is safeguarded.

7. Confidentiality

All disclosures and actions taken will be treated with sensitivity and shared only with those who need to know. Confidentiality will be respected unless someone is at risk of harm.

8. Monitoring and Review

The College will:

- Monitor patterns or trends of bullying/harassment.
- Review this policy regularly in line with KCSIE updates.
- Ensure all students and staff are aware of the procedures.

9. Support Services

Students can access support from:

- **Tutor/Tutor Team Leader** – for emotional and practical support.
- **Counselling** – referrals can be made through TTLs.
- **Wellbeing Team or a DSL** – for advice, reporting, and follow-up.

External support is also available via:

- **Childline:** 0800 1111
- **NSPCC:** www.nspcc.org.uk
- **Kooth** (Online Counselling): www.kooth.com

10. Related Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Cause for Concern Procedures
- Student Contract
- Student Code of Conduct
- Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy