

# R U N S H A W C O L L E G E

**POLICY TITLE:** Student Harassment & Bullying Policy

**APPROVED BY:** Governors' Committee

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**POSITION:** Assistant Principal

**VERSION:** 10.2

**LAST UP-DATED:** September 2021

**REVIEW DATE:** March 2025

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Runshaw College recognises that many individuals and communities experience unlawful and unfair discrimination and disadvantage on the grounds of their race or ethnic origin, disability, sex or gender identity, caring responsibilities, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age, offending background, socio-economic group, etc. We believe that equality for all is a basic human right and actively oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. We value and celebrate the diversity in our society and strive to promote and reflect that diversity within College.
- 1.2 The College aims to maintain an environment that respects the dignity and rights of all students, where individuals can realise their full potential.
- 1.3 The College will not tolerate any form of harassment or bullying. If a complaint is made it will be investigated promptly and appropriate action taken. Where a student is found to have committed acts of bullying and/or harassment, it will be dealt with under the Student Disciplinary Policy and could result in expulsion.

## 2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all students. There is a separate policy relating to the bullying and harassment of staff.
- 2.2 It applies to bullying and/or harassment at college and at college related functions and events.
- 2.3 Under current legislation, students can be held individually liable for an act of harassment.

## 2.4 Other related policies include:

- Bullying and Harassment Policy (Staff)
- Care and Control of Students Policy
- Child & Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy
- Complaints Policy (Students)
- Counselling Policy (Students)
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Freedom of Expression Policy
- Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- IT Access, Usage and E-Safety Policy
- Student Disciplinary Policy
- The UK Council for Internet Safety: Sharing images of nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people how to respond to an incident
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people>

This advice is non-statutory, and schools and colleges should read this alongside:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory guidance (DfE)
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges non-statutory advice (DfE)
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation non-statutory advice (DfE).

## 3. Purpose

The College is committed to maintaining a positive, open culture that enables individuals to flourish and in which inappropriate behaviour in the form of bullying and/or harassment is challenged and appropriate action taken.

The purpose of having a policy and understood procedure is to:

- minimise the chance for bullying and/or harassment
- ensure appropriate and consistent action is taken and support offered where bullying and harassment is concerned
- ensure that everyone in the College takes responsibility for the prevention of bullying and/or harassment and the safeguarding of students.

## 4. Definitions

- 4.1 Harassment occurs when an individual is subject to unwanted conduct which has the purpose (intentional) or effect (unintentional) of:
- violating an individual's dignity; or
  - creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.
- 4.2 Harassment may be repetitive or an isolated occurrence against one or more individual.
- 4.3 Harassment is unlawful on the grounds of sex, gender reassignment, race, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation, age, religion/belief, or for a reason relating to a person's disability.
- 4.4 Bullying, although not defined legally, is described as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient.
- 4.5 Harassment and bullying can range from extremes such as physical violence to less obvious forms like ignoring someone. They can be delivered in a variety of ways, with or without witnesses, and be persistent behaviour over a period of time or a one-off act. The list below gives examples of the type of behaviour that the College considers to be unacceptable, although it is not exhaustive:
- Offensive songs, remarks, jokes, e-mails or letters
  - Sexual "jokes" or taunting
  - Clothing with inappropriate/offensive wording and/or images
  - Display of offensive posters, publications and graffiti
  - Unwanted physical contact or advances
  - Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
  - Physical behaviour constituting sexual harassment such as deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes
  - Offensive remarks about a person's race, sex, marital status, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender identity or age
  - Shouting, abusive or intimidating language
  - Spreading malicious rumours, allegations or gossip
  - Excluding, marginalising or ignoring someone
  - Failure to safeguard confidential information
  - abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers;
  - Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos (referred to in previous guidance as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery) the policy should include the school or college's approach to it. The UKCIS Education Group has published [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#) which outlines how to respond to an incident of nudes and semi-nudes being shared;
  - causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing

someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;

- up skirting (now noted as a criminal offence)
- Intrusion by pestering, spying or stalking
- Cyber-bullying including online sexual harassment: that is, the sending or posting of harmful, cruel or offensive text or images by e-mail, internet, social media, local networking websites or other digital communication devices.

## 5. Responsibilities

### 5.1 Governors are responsible for:

- (i) being aware of their legal responsibilities in relation to bullying and harassment and
- (ii) receiving and responding to any key monitoring information collated as part of the reviews of this policy, ensuring that the College meets its duties;

### 5.2 Managers are responsible for:

- (i) Taking the lead in creating a positive open culture that challenges inappropriate behaviour from any individual
- (ii) Ensuring all members of the College community understand that bullying and/or harassment will not be tolerated
- (iii) Consulting staff and student representatives on the bullying/harassment agenda
- (iv) Ensuring all members of the College community are made aware of the policy and procedures.
- (v) Ensuring appropriate training, development and guidance is provided to support staff and students understanding of the Student Harassment and Bullying Policy
- (vi) Ensuring there is a clear procedure to follow when harassment or bullying occurs.
- (vii) Enabling/ encouraging the reporting of incidents both in and out of the classroom and on and off college premises where it impacts on our students (as detailed in the Education and Inspection Act 2006).
- (viii) Ensuring that complaints are treated sensitively and seriously and where appropriate, as a disciplinary matter.
- (ix) Supporting the victims of harassment or bullying and taking action and offering support to the students undertaking the bullying and/or harassment, as well if this is appropriate e.g. re-education. The proportionality of any discipline taken will be consistent across college. Staff should refer to the College Student Discipline Policy.

### 5.3 Staff are responsible for:

- (i) Engaging with the harassment and bullying agenda by familiarising themselves with the Student Harassment and Bullying Policy, challenging inappropriate behaviour and attending training
- (ii) Ensuring that their behaviour supports a positive environment free from harassment and bullying by:
  - promoting positive behaviour across the College community
  - being proactive in safeguarding staff and students' wellbeing
  - a teaching member of staff, using additional resources provided by the Heads of Studies as appropriate in the classroom e.g. Respect materials, Bullying materials, etc.
  - taking action and recording outcomes
  - not promising confidentiality as in certain cases it may be necessary to involve a third party e.g. parents, police
  - in all cases involving visiting High School pupils either the Head of Studies or Schools Liaison Admissions Tutor will inform the school.

#### **If bullying is reported or made known staff must:**

- accept what is said
- listen carefully
- treat it seriously
- offer support
- record what is said
- establish how long the bullying has been going on for
- report to the Heads of Studies who will investigate the allegations and take the necessary action. This may be in the form of disciplinary action or other appropriate support, e.g. mediation.

#### **If staff witness bullying they must:**

- (i) Intervene to stop it
- (ii) Make it clear to the bully that such behaviour is unacceptable and report the incident to the relevant Programme Office
- (iii) And then, either by themselves or by referring the student to their Progress Mentor tell the victim that College will help and support them and reassure them that:
  - it is not their fault
  - it is good that it has come to light
- (iv) With the student's consent, where this is possible:
  - take a written statement
  - inform their Progress Mentor and Head of Studies
  - inform other relevant agencies e.g. parents / Student Services
- (v) Complete an incident report form and forward to the relevant Programme Office. Heads of Studies who may invoke the disciplinary procedures where appropriate

(vi) Continue to monitor closely – don't assume bullying has stopped.

## 5.4 Students

Students are responsible for:

- (i) ensuring that their behaviour supports a positive environment free from harassment (in all its forms) and bullying
- (ii) reporting issues of bullying and/or harassment (in all its forms) to a member of staff
- (iii) in the case of sexual harassment may wish to report this directly to the college safeguarding team: [Safeguarding@runshaw.ac.uk](mailto:Safeguarding@runshaw.ac.uk) or 01772 644377

## 6. Support

The College recognises the sensitive nature of harassment and bullying. Students who believe they are being harassed or bullied can discuss their particular situation with their Progress Mentor or another member of staff.

They can also discuss the situation with the College student counsellors, who can be contacted on 01772 622677 ext. 2135 or by email at [studentcounsellors@runshaw.ac.uk](mailto:studentcounsellors@runshaw.ac.uk)

## 7. Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years by the management team in line with legislative developments and the need for good practice. Information such as the number of harassment/bullying complaints raised, student surveys, focus group feedback and comments made in leavers' interviews will inform any review.