

**ANTI-BULLYING &  
HARASSMENT  
POLICY**

# Anti-bullying and Harassment Policy

**Policy/Procedure Owner:** Board

**Date Approved:** 15 December 2022

**Next Review:** July 2025

**Responsibility for Review:** Support for Learners Group

**Policy Review Frequency:** 2.5 years

Applicable to staff: Yes

Applicable to students: Yes

Publish on College website: Yes

**Consultation:**

Undertaken with:	Yes/No:	Date:
Board/Committee	Board Q & S	15 December 2022 17 November 2022
ELT	Yes	7 November 2022
SMT		
Unions		
Students	Yes-Learner Voice & Student Council	Autumn 2022
Employees		
Employers/Stakeholders		

**Any Associated Documentation, for Reference:**

Student e-handbook. Positive Behaviour Framework, Behaviour Charter

**ELT SIGN-OFF:** Marie Haworth, Vice Principal Quality, Teaching, Learning & Learner Support



## **1. Aims and Objectives**

- 1.1 Preston College aims to ensure that it is fully compliant with the Protection of Harassment Act 1997 – Chapter 40. The College is committed to ensuring all users of its services are part of a safe, friendly, and positive learning environment where bullying and harassment are not acceptable. All staff, learners, and visitors to the college have the right to be treated with respect and should not be discriminated against as a result of gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or personal circumstances. The aim of this policy is to support this principle and to strive to prevent harassment and bullying from occurring.
- 1.2 Bullying or harassment of any kind will not be tolerated at Preston College. In the event that it does occur, learners are encouraged to voice their grievance so that incidents can be dealt with promptly according to the procedures set out in this policy. Learners will be supported when any bullying or harassment is reported.
- 1.3 Learners who are being bullied or are aware of another learner being bullied should follow the procedures set out in this policy. Staff who are made aware of learner(s) being bullied or harassed for any reason should also follow the College procedure. This Policy also applies to learners who bully and harass members of staff, on these occasions the College procedure apply.
- 1.4 The Anti-bullying and Harassment Policy is directly linked to the Positive Behaviour Framework and the College Behaviour Charter to ensure a robust response to any incident of bullying or harassment.
- 1.5 Preston College may apply the Anti-bullying and Harassment Policy where a learner's behaviour outside of College impacts negatively on members of the College community or brings the College's reputation into disrepute. This will include any incident on public transport or online.
- 1.6 Preston College also operates a robust approach to any Hate Crime or incident of Harmful Sexual Behaviour, and will deal with any occurrence as an example of Serious Wrongdoing in line with the Positive Behaviour Framework. We will also report the matter to the relevant authorities, as appropriate.

## **2. Definitions of Bullying and Harassment**

### **2.1 Harassment**

- 2.1.1 Harassment occurs when an individual is subjected to unwanted conduct which has the purpose or effect (both intentional or otherwise) of:
  - Violating a person's dignity, or
  - Creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the individual.
- 2.1.2 Harassment is unlawful when it is on the grounds of sex, race, gender reassignment, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, age, or religious beliefs. It is also unlawful to subject an individual to sexual harassment.

## **2.2 Bullying**

Bullying is described as offensive, malicious, insulting or intimidating behaviour. Bullying is often an abuse or misuse of power intended to undermine, humiliate, belittle or injure the recipient. Although not legally defined, bullying will not be tolerated by Preston College.

## **2.3 Hate Crime/Incident**

2.3.1 A Hate Crime is defined as "Any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice, based on a person's disability or perceived disability; race or perceived race; or religion or perceived religion; or sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation or transgender identity or perceived transgender identity."

2.3.2 A Hate Incident is any incident which the victim, or anyone else, thinks is based on someone's prejudice towards them because of their race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or because they are transgender.

## **2.4 Harmful Sexual Behaviour (Sexual violence or sexual harassment)**

2.4.1 Sexual violence is rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault.

2.4.2 Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature. Harmful sexual behaviour is problematic, abusive and violent behaviour that is developmentally inappropriate and may cause distress or developmental damage.

## **3 Examples of Forms of Bullying and Harassment**

3.1 Harassment and bullying can take many forms. Examples of unacceptable behaviour can include:

- Offensive songs, remarks, jokes, emails or gestures, including remarks of a sexual nature
- Display of offensive or sexual posters, publications and graffiti
- Unwanted physical contact or advances e.g. deliberately brushing up against someone or touching them inappropriately
- Offensive or sexual remarks about a person's appearance or clothing
- Offensive remarks about a person's gender, race, sexual orientation, disability, religious beliefs, marital status or age
- Shouting abuse or intimidating language
- Spreading rumours, allegations or gossip
- Excluding or ignoring an individual
- Intrusion by pestering, spying or stalking
- Punching, kicking or the use of any other form of violence
- Taking videos and pictures of an individual without consent
- Cyber-bullying; defined as the sending or posting of harmful, cruel or offensive text or images by email, internet, social networking websites or any other form of digital communication.

- 3.2 The actions listed above must be viewed in terms of the distress they cause the individual. It is the perceptions of the recipient that determines whether any action or statement can be viewed as bullying.

#### **4 Definition of Cyber Bullying**

- 4.1 Cyber bullying is any form of bullying which takes place online or through smartphones and tablets. Social networking sites, messaging apps, gaming sites and chat rooms such as Facebook, Xbox Live, Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat and other chat rooms.

#### **5 Types of cyberbullying**

- 5.1 Harassment - This is the act of sending offensive, rude, and insulting messages and being abusive. It includes nasty or humiliating comments on posts, photos and in chat rooms as well as being explicitly offensive on gaming sites.
- 5.2 Sexual harassment – This includes the non-consensual sharing of sexual images or videos; sexualised online bullying; unwanted sexual comments and messages and sexual exploitation, coercion and threats.
- 5.3 Denigration – This is when someone may send information about another person that is fake, damaging and untrue. Sharing photos of someone for the purpose to ridicule, spreading fake rumours and gossip. This can be on any site online or on apps.
- 5.4 Flaming – This is when someone is purposely using really extreme and offensive language and getting into online arguments and fights. They do this to cause reactions and enjoy the fact it causes someone to get distressed.
- 5.5 Impersonation – This is when someone will hack into someone's email or social networking account and use the person's online identity to send or post vicious or embarrassing material to/about others. The making up of fake profiles on social network sites, apps and online are commonplace and it can be really difficult to get them closed down.
- 5.6 Outing and Trickery – This is when someone may share personal information about another or trick someone into revealing secrets and forward it to others. They may also do this with private images and videos.
- 5.7 Cyber Stalking – This is the act of repeatedly sending messages that include threats of harm, harassment, intimidating messages, or engaging in other online activities that make a person afraid for his or her safety. The actions may be illegal too depending on what they are doing.
- 5.8 Exclusion – This is when others intentionally leave someone out of a group such as group messages, online apps, gaming sites and other online engagement. This is also a form of social bullying and a very common.

## **6 Procedures for Learners**

- 6.1 During induction you will be required to agree and sign a learner agreement. This will confirm your agreement to the College's commitment to a robust response to any incidents of bullying or harassment. Failure to comply with this learner agreement will result in behaviour sanctions.
- 6.2 If you feel you are being bullied or harassed, tell a Student Manager, Lecturer, Curriculum Leader, a member of Student Services or any other member of staff.
- 6.3 The member of staff will refer you to the appropriate Head of School who will take a written statement from you. The College has a Positive Behaviour Framework which may be used against the alleged bully/abuser.
- 6.4 If action is to be taken against the alleged bully, they will be interviewed separately.
- 6.5 Where appropriate the college will create a plan with the alleged victim to highlight increased ways to stay and feel safe at college, this may include access to additional resources and support.
- 6.6 If you are under 18 or a vulnerable adult, the College may inform your parents/carers of what has happened in line with your agreed contact. Where appropriate and for safeguarding purposes the College may contact parents and carers without consent and only in the best interest of the learner.
- 6.7 Confidential counselling sessions are available through Student Services if you would like additional support to help you through the incident.

## **7 Monitoring**

- 7.1 All incidents of bullying will be recorded centrally by Student Managers. The effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy will be monitored by the Support for Learners Team on behalf of the Executive Leadership Team on a regular basis, recommending changes where necessary.
- 7.2 Data from monitoring and feedback will be reviewed annually and used to update the policy if necessary.