



<b>Policy Name and Number:</b>	Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Misconduct – Students
<b>Version Number:</b>	1
<b>Approval date:</b>	5 <sup>th</sup> May 2026
<b>Exec Lead:</b>	Deputy Principal Curriculum, Performance & Student Experience
<b>a. Responsible Person for policy review:</b> <b>b. Responsible Manager for policy implementation (if different):</b>	Vice Principal Safeguarding, Quality & Student Experience
<b>How does the policy link to the Strategic Plan Aims and Themes:</b> <u><b>Aims:</b></u> 1. <i>Outstanding Teaching, Learning and Assessment</i> 2. <i>Beneficial Partnerships</i> 3. <i>Sustainable SMART Campuses</i> 4. <i>Inclusive, Thriving Community</i> 5. <i>Financial Sustainability</i> <u><b>Themes:</b></u> a. <i>Sustainability and the environment</i> b. <i>Happiness and wellbeing</i> c. <i>Digital transformation</i> d. <i>Equality, diversity and inclusion</i>	<b>Outstanding Teaching, Learning and Assessment</b> - This policy supports outstanding teaching, learning and assessment by promoting a safe, respectful and inclusive environment in which effective learning can take place. By setting clear expectations around behaviour, professional conduct and respectful relationships, the policy removes barriers to engagement, supports positive classroom culture and enables staff to focus on high-quality teaching and learner progress. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Inclusive, Thriving Community</b> - The policy underpins the College’s commitment to an inclusive and thriving community by setting clear standards that promote dignity, respect and belonging. It reinforces shared responsibility for behaviour, protects students from bullying, harassment and abuse of power, and supports positive relationships across the College community.</li> <li>• <b>Happiness and Wellbeing</b> - This policy contributes directly to student happiness and wellbeing by prioritising safety, emotional security and support. Through clear reporting routes, safeguarding-led responses and access to pastoral support, the policy ensures that students feel confident to raise concerns and are supported to thrive personally as well as academically.</li> <li>• <b>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion</b> - The policy strengthens equality, diversity and inclusion by embedding zero tolerance of discrimination, harassment and victimisation. It promotes fair, transparent and consistent expectations for all students, protects those with protected characteristics, and reinforces the College’s commitment to creating an</li> </ul>

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	environment where difference is valued and everyone is treated with dignity and respect.
<b>a. Related Policies and Procedures:</b> <b>b. Related Legislation:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Positive Behaviour Policy</li> <li>• Safeguarding Policy</li> <li>• Equality &amp; Diversity Policy</li> </ul>
<b>Consultation Process:</b>  <i>eg, FRCP / CPSE / HR / SPBD / Exec</i>	CPSE – Approved 21/4/26 Exec – Approved 05/05/2026
<b>Approving Authority:</b>	Exec Approval <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Corporation/Committee Approval <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Policy Review Frequency:</b>	Annually
<b>Effective Date:</b>	05/05/2026
<b>Date of Next Revision:</b>	30/03/2027
<b>Scope:</b> <i>(Describe what and to whom the policy applies, and any exemptions. i.e. staff, students, stakeholders, visitors, volunteers, contractors)</i>	<p>This policy applies to all students enrolled at Oaklands College, including those studying on full-time, part-time and higher education programmes, apprenticeships, work-based learning, residential provision and students undertaking work placements or off-site activities linked to their course.</p> <p>The policy also applies to all staff, regardless of role or contractual status, in so far as they have responsibilities for promoting a safe and respectful environment, recognising bullying, harassment or sexual misconduct, maintaining professional boundaries, and responding appropriately to concerns or disclosures.</p> <p>In addition, the policy applies to stakeholders, visitors, volunteers, contractors and third-party providers who engage with students or operate on College premises or College-related activities. Such individuals are expected to uphold the standards of behaviour set out in this policy and may be subject to action if concerns arise.</p> <p>This policy applies to behaviour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On College premises</li> <li>• During College-organised activities, trips, events and residential provision</li> <li>• During work placements or work-based learning</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through digital platforms, including online learning environments, social media and electronic communications, where the behaviour impacts the College community</li> </ul> <p>Any exemptions from this policy must be explicitly stated and approved through appropriate College governance processes. Where concerns involve potential safeguarding risks, abuse of power or sexual misconduct, this policy takes precedence and must be followed regardless of role, status or location.</p>
<p><b>Policy classification:</b></p>	<p><b>Public (website):</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p><b>Internal:</b>          SharePoint <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>          Governor Portal <input type="checkbox"/>          Canvas <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p><b>Key Updates/Changes from previous policy:</b></p>	

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. Oaklands College is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and respectful learning environment where all students are treated with dignity and respect. Bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct are not tolerated in any form. The College recognises its statutory safeguarding responsibilities and its duty to protect students from harm, abuse of power and unfair treatment, particularly where imbalances of authority or vulnerability exist.

## 2. College Vision, Mission, KPIs and Objectives

- 2.1 **Vision:** To be a sustainable educational trailblazer inspiring our learners and our wider community to achieve their potential in a changing world.

- 2.2 **Mission:** To prepare every learner for work, a rewarding career, and life's opportunities. By treating every student as the individual they are, with care, passion and understanding in a professional, contemporary and community-focused environment they'll value and enjoy.

- 2.3 This policy aligns with **Strategic Aim 1.**

Deliver continuous outstanding teaching, learning, and assessment to all learners and employers.

This policy also aligns with **Strategic Objectives:**

- a. Deliver outstanding teaching, learning, assessment and enrichment providing an environment that builds skills and knowledge
- b. Inspire our learners to attend, learn and achieve above the national quartile
- c. Drive a professional culture of continuous improvement through high quality training, coaching and performance management to sustain outstanding quality of education
- d. Achieve high levels of satisfaction among all key stakeholders to raise the profile of Oaklands

- 2.4 This policy aligns with **Strategic Aim 4.**

Further enhance our caring, accessible, inclusive, and thriving college community, committed to fairness, health, and success.

This policy also aligns with **Strategic Objectives:**

- a. An educational group that is at the forefront of, and leading in Equality, Diversity, and Inclusivity by embedding effective practices in all we do
- b. Nationally accredited as an employer of choice that promotes a consistent culture of trust, innovation, enterprise, and teamwork, where both staff and students feel valued and recognised
- c. Renowned for delivering a safe and secure environment that allows learners to thrive
- d. Delivering more than just a qualification, through enrichment and work experience activities that develops a portfolio of skills learners require to progress to their chosen destination

**3. Purpose/Policy Statement**

3.1. This policy sets out Oaklands College’s expectations and procedures relating to bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct involving students. It applies to all students enrolled at the College, including those on work-based learning, higher education, apprenticeships and residential provision, and is relevant to all staff in their interaction with students.

**4. Implementation/Communication/Training**

4.1. **Implementation** - Oaklands College will implement this policy through a whole-college, safeguarding-led approach, ensuring that expectations relating to bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct are consistently applied across all areas of the student experience.

Key implementation measures include:

- Clear alignment with safeguarding, behaviour, staff disciplinary and equality policies
- Defined roles and responsibilities for staff, including Personal Tutors, Student Advice Teams, Safeguarding Leads and Senior Leaders
- Consistent recording and reporting of incidents through College systems
- Proportionate, timely responses that prioritise student safety, wellbeing and fairness

The policy operates alongside robust safeguarding procedures and will be applied consistently, with appropriate escalation where concerns involve sexual misconduct, abuse of power or risk of harm.

4.2. **Communication** - The College will ensure that this policy is clearly communicated, visible and accessible to students, staff and relevant stakeholders.

This will include:

- Publication on the College’s website and internal policy platforms
- Clear signposting during student induction, tutorials and enrichment activities
- Communication through staff briefings, training sessions and safeguarding updates
- Accessible guidance for students on how to report concerns and seek support

Key policy updates or revisions will be communicated promptly, and historical versions will be retained to ensure transparency and accountability.

4.3. **Training** - The College will provide appropriate and proportionate training to ensure staff and students understand their responsibilities under this policy.

This includes:

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- Mandatory safeguarding training for all staff, including recognising and responding to bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct
- Targeted training for staff in student-facing and leadership roles on responding to disclosures, maintaining professional boundaries and managing power imbalances
- Student education through tutorials, inductions and digital learning on respectful behaviour, consent, online safety and reporting routes

Training effectiveness will be reviewed through safeguarding audits, student feedback and incident trends, ensuring continuous improvement and compliance with statutory and regulatory expectations.

## 5. Monitoring Impact

5.1. Oaklands College will monitor the effectiveness and impact of this policy to ensure it is operating as intended and continues to protect students, promote positive behaviour and meet statutory and regulatory requirements.

Monitoring will include:

- Recording and analysis of reported incidents of bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct, including trends, themes and repeat concerns
- Safeguarding oversight by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Safeguarding Team, with appropriate escalation where risks are identified
- Review of data from student reporting systems to ensure concerns are responded to promptly and appropriately
- Consideration of student voice, complaints, and feedback relating to safety, wellbeing and respectful behaviour
- Review of staff compliance with reporting procedures and professional boundary expectations

5.2. The impact of the policy will be reviewed regularly through safeguarding reviews, quality assurance processes and senior leadership oversight. Summary reports and emerging themes will be shared with senior leaders and governors as appropriate to provide assurance and inform continuous improvement.

5.3. Where monitoring identifies concerns, gaps or areas for development, the College will take timely action, which may include additional training, enhanced communication, policy updates or changes to practice.

5.4. This policy will be formally reviewed on a scheduled basis, or sooner where required due to changes in legislation, regulatory requirements or identified risk.

## 6. Guidance for Students

6.1. Oaklands College is committed to providing a safe, respectful and inclusive environment where everyone is treated with dignity. Bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct are not tolerated.

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## 6.2. What you should do if you are experiencing or witnessing bullying, harassment or sexual misconduct:

If you feel that you are being bullied, harassed, or subjected to sexual misconduct, it is important that you **tell someone as soon as possible**. You can speak to:

- Your Personal Tutor
- A member of the Student Advice or Safeguarding Team
- Any member of staff you trust

You can also report concerns through the College's reporting systems if you would prefer not to speak face to face initially.

## 6.3. What will happen next:

- Your concern will be taken seriously and treated sensitively
- Information will only be shared with staff who need to know in order to support you and respond appropriately
- You will be offered support and advice, regardless of whether a formal process is followed
- Where appropriate, the College will investigate the concern and take action in line with behaviour, safeguarding or disciplinary procedures

## 6.4. Support Available

The College can provide:

- Emotional and pastoral support
- Advice on your options and next steps
- Reasonable adjustments to support your safety, wellbeing or learning

In some circumstances, particularly where there are safeguarding concerns or risk of harm, the College may need to involve parents/carers or external agencies. This will always be handled carefully and with your welfare as the priority. You will never get into trouble for reporting a concern honestly.

## 7. Procedures for Staff

7.1. All staff have a responsibility to help create a safe learning environment and to act if they become aware of bullying, harassment or sexual misconduct involving students.

### If a Student Discloses a Concern Staff must:

- Listen carefully, calmly and without judgement
- Reassure the student that they have done the right thing by speaking up
- Not promise confidentiality — explain that information may need to be shared to keep them or others safe
- Record factual information accurately, using the College's agreed recording systems (e.g. CPOMS / ProMonitor)

- Report the concern promptly to the Student Advice Team and/or Safeguarding Team

The safety and wellbeing of the reporting student must always be the overriding priority.

## 7.2. Responding to Allegations

- All allegations of bullying, harassment or sexual misconduct must be treated seriously and sensitively
- Staff should not investigate independently or attempt to resolve serious concerns informally without guidance
- Where an informal resolution is appropriate, this must only be done with the agreement of those involved and where there are no safeguarding concerns
- Any concerns involving sexual misconduct, abuse of power or staff–student boundaries must always be escalated immediately through safeguarding routes

## 7.3. Professional Boundaries

Staff must maintain clear professional boundaries with students at all times.

- Any behaviour that could reasonably be interpreted as exploitative, coercive or inappropriate must be avoided
- Staff must comply with the College’s prohibition on intimate personal relationships between staff and students
- Any concerns about boundary breaches or conflicts of interest must be reported immediately

Failure to follow these procedures may result in disciplinary action.

7.4. All reported incidents are recorded and reviewed through safeguarding and quality assurance processes. Trends and themes are monitored to inform training, student support and continuous improvement, with appropriate reporting to senior leadership and governors.

## 8. Key definitions/glossary

8.1. Below are the definitions of bullying and harassment:

### 8.1.1. Bullying

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group that is repeated over time and is intended to hurt another individual or group either physically, emotionally or psychologically. Bullying can take many forms, including verbal abuse, intimidation, social exclusion, physical aggression and online behaviour. Bullying may be motivated by perceived or actual differences, including protected characteristics.

### 8.1.2. Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place through digital devices or online platforms, including social media, messaging apps, online gaming, email or

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learning platforms. Cyberbullying may involve the sharing of harmful messages, images or videos and can occur at any time, both on and off campus.

#### 8.1.3. Harassment

Harassment may be directed at an individual or a group. Under The Equality Act 2010, harassment is defined as “Unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual’s dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.”

#### 8.1.4. Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that makes a person feel offended, humiliated or intimidated. This may include sexual comments, jokes, gestures, messages, images or physical behaviour.

A single incident may constitute sexual harassment. Intent is not required — it is the impact on the individual that is decisive.

#### 8.1.5. Sexual Misconduct

Sexual misconduct refers to any unwelcome behaviour of a sexual nature that does not meet acceptable professional or social standards. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Sexual harassment
- Sexual assault or coercion
- Non-consensual sharing of sexual images or content
- Sexualised behaviour linked to abuse of power or authority

Sexual misconduct may occur in person or through digital platforms.

#### 8.1.6. Consent

Consent means freely given, informed, enthusiastic and ongoing agreement to a specific activity. Consent cannot be assumed and may be withdrawn at any time. Consent is not valid where there is pressure, coercion, intoxication or a power imbalance.

#### 8.1.7. Intimate Personal Relationship

An intimate personal relationship is a romantic, sexual or emotionally intimate relationship. Within Oaklands College, intimate personal relationships between staff and students are prohibited where there is any position of trust, authority or influence, regardless of the student’s age.

#### 8.1.8. Power Imbalance

A power imbalance exists where one person holds authority, influence or control over another. In an FE setting, this may include roles involving teaching, assessment, supervision, pastoral support or decision-making authority, and increases the risk of coercion or exploitation.

