

PANGBOURNE

— A community where you can flourish —

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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Date created	January 2022
Version	5.1
Reviewed by	Education & Welfare Committee
Date of last review	February 2026
Review frequency	Annually
Next review date	February 2027
Date of governor agreement	February 2027

1. Introduction and Ethos

Pangbourne College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of its pupils. We are a community where the individual matters, and bullying will not be tolerated. All pupils have a fundamental right to feel safe and protected from any form of abuse. This policy should be read in conjunction with the **Safeguarding Policy** and the **Behaviour Policy**.

2. Definition of Bullying

Bullying is defined as behaviour by an individual or group, **repeated over time**, that **intentionally hurts** another individual or group either physically or emotionally. It often involves an **imbalance of power**, where the perpetrator has control over the relationship, making it difficult for the target to defend themselves.

The College recognises that bullying is a form of Child-on-Child Abuse.

- **Relational/Indirect Bullying:** The College recognises that "social" bullying—such as intentional exclusion, spreading rumours, or social manipulation—is as damaging as physical harm.
- **Conflict vs. Bullying:** It is important to distinguish between "bullying" and "accidental harm" or "peer conflict." Bullying is persistent and deliberate. One-off instances of unkindness, while disciplined under the Behaviour Policy, may not necessarily be classified as bullying.
- **The "Bystander" Responsibility:** We foster an "Upstander" culture. Pupils who witness bullying but do not report it or intervene (where safe) are considered to be condoning the behaviour and may be subject to pastoral intervention.

Specific types of bullying include:

- **Protected Characteristics:** Racial, religious, cultural, sexual/sexist, and homophobic, biphobic, or transphobic (LGBTQ+) bullying.
- **Vulnerability-Based:** Bullying of those with disabilities or Special Educational Needs (SEN).
- **At-Risk Groups:** Staff must be especially alert to the bullying of **looked after children (children in care)**, who are often vulnerable as "the newcomer," as well as children who are adopted or have caring responsibilities.
- **Cyberbullying:** The use of electronic media (mobile phones, social websites, etc.) to intimidate, upset or humiliate. This includes **Non-Consensual Image Sharing** (sharing private or sexual images), which is treated as a severe safeguarding breach and potential criminal matter..

3. Jurisdiction: Bullying Outside School Premises

Under the **Education and Inspections Act 2006**, school staff have the **legal power to discipline pupils** for misbehaviour or bullying that occurs outside the school premises. This includes incidents on school or public transport, in the community, or online. The College will investigate any reported off-site bullying where it is reasonable to regulate the pupil's behaviour.

4. Cyberbullying and Legal Powers

The College takes a whole-school approach to cyberbullying, viewing it as a community issue.

- **Power to Search and Delete:** Under the **Education Act 2011**, if an electronic device is seized and there is a "good reason" to suspect its use in bullying, authorised staff have the **legal power to examine data or files and delete them without parental consent**.
- **Police Involvement:** If the device contains material suspected to be evidence of a criminal offence (such as illegal images or harassment), the device must be handed to the police without deleting data.
- **Legal Framework:** Cyberbullying may be a criminal offence under the **Malicious Communications Act 1988** (sending grossly offensive or threatening messages) and the **Protection from Harassment Act 1997**.

5. Support and Protection for Staff

The College makes it clear that **bullying of staff by pupils, parents, or colleagues is unacceptable**.

- **Employer Duty:** The College has a statutory duty to protect the physical and mental health of its employees.
- **Staff Guidance:** Staff targeted by bullying (including denigration on social media) should not retaliate. They must save evidence (screenshots), report the incident to their line manager, and may seek support from the **Professional Online Safety Helpline**.
- **Parental Conduct:** While parents have the right to raise concerns, they must do so in an appropriate manner; denigrating staff via social media is considered a breach of this trust and will be addressed.

6. Procedures and Intervention

The College provides multiple, low-barrier channels for reporting:

1. **Direct Reporting:** To any member of staff, the Deputy Head Pastoral (DHP) or the Pastoral Divisional Lead (PDL).
2. **Anonymous Reporting:** Via the 'I think you should know' form.
3. **Peer Support:** Through the Sixth Form leaders/Peer Mentor system.

The Tiered Response (Traffic Light System):

- **Level 1 (Green):** For information only
- **Level 2 (Light Amber):** Managed by the PDL; focus on mediation and parental notification.
- **Level 3: (Dark Amber):** managed by the PDL or a senior staff member and possibly involve an external agency
- **Level 4 (Red):** Managed by the Deputy Head Pastoral or DDSL; signifies serious/persistent harm or safeguarding risks.

7. Sanctions and Mediation

Sanctions are applied fairly and consistently, reflecting the seriousness of the incident.

- **Disciplinary Range:** Includes mediation, good behaviour contracts, suspension, or exclusion.
- **Mediation:** A restorative process to restore relationships and eliminate the "revenge" factor.
- **Reintegration:** Support is provided to both the victim and the perpetrator following a serious incident to ensure long-term behavioural change.

8. Prevention and Awareness

- **Education:** Delivered via PSHCE, assemblies, and the 'Digital Citizens' programme.
- **Data Monitoring:** The College logs all incidents to track trends (e.g., increases in cyberbullying or prejudice-based incidents) to inform future assemblies and curriculum changes.
- **Annual Review:** This policy is reviewed annually in consultation with the **Student Council** to ensure it addresses current trends and technologies.

9. External Resources for Pupils and Parents

- **Childline:** 0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk
- **Kidscape:** Help for families dealing with bullying. www.kidscape.org.uk
- **YoungMinds:** Support for mental health impact. www.youngminds.org.uk



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