

# Student Behaviour and Support Policy

**Learning together for success and progression**

*Approved by Academy Trust Board: 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025*

# Student Behaviour and Support Policy

Trustee Committee Responsible:	Curriculum and Quality Committee
Nominated Lead Member of Staff:	Assistant Principal – Safeguarding and Support
Status and Review Cycle:	Every 3 Years
Current Review:	May 2025
Next Review Date:	May 2028

## Introduction

The College vision is to be a successful, vibrant, learning community. This Policy sets out our expectations of our students but central to this policy is that we expect all members of our College community to behave in a polite, courteous and supportive manner.

We empower our students to develop resilience and autonomy to best facilitate their learning. We believe that behaviour occurs for a reason, and we understand that it is part of education, working in conjunction with parents and external agencies, to aid young people in recovering from mistakes and addressing issues of behaviour which interfere with their learning or that of other students. This stems from our firmly held belief that all students have a right to attend College and learn in a safe and supportive environment. To accomplish this the College must provide a positive, supportive framework for students and staff to work within as well as a clear understanding of the consequences if the Student Code of Conduct is not adhered to.

## Scope

The Behaviour and Support Policy is designed to provide the supportive framework for students to work within, but which also sets out the boundaries for acceptable behaviour and support.

The College shall use its best endeavours to provide a learning environment of exceptional quality to its students, its teaching and support staff, having regard not only to the quality of its teaching but also to its teaching environment, and the support it provides to all members of the College community.

This policy applies to incidents of misconduct which take place offsite, where there could be repercussions for the reputation of the College, or which pose a threat to another student or member of the public, or where the incident could bring the College into disrepute in line with the Student Code of Conduct.

## Legislative Framework

This policy and its complementary procedures have been developed to ensure the College complies with statutory guidance: 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'. The policy also takes account of the DfE's 'Behaviour and Discipline in Schools - Advice for headteachers and school staff' (2024), 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation' (2023) and 'Use of Reasonable Force' (2025). The Equality Act (2010) provides an overarching framework to cover protected characteristics.

## Roles and Responsibilities

**All students** are responsible for adhering to this policy to maintain a safe, respectful community, both physical and online. All students are required to sign a copy of the Student Code of Conduct upon enrolment to agree to adhere with the Student Code of Conduct in conjunction with this policy and its accompanying Behaviour and Support Procedures.

**All staff** have responsibility for implementing this policy and procedures linked to maintaining positive student behaviour.

The **Academy Trust Board** is responsible for ensuring that the College has appropriate policies and procedures, which promote high standards of behaviour and wellbeing and minimises the risks of misconduct occurring.

**Principal** – The Principal has responsibility for ensuring these policies and procedures are fully implemented, that sufficient resources are allocated for training and must be informed and involved in any decision to exclude, including temporary suspension.

**Assistant Principal for Safeguarding and Support** – is responsible for regularly updating this policy and procedures in line with DfE guidance. They are also responsible for ensuring that the policy and procedures for exclusions and suspensions are followed by all College staff when dealing with an incident of Gross Misconduct. They will also ensure appropriate resources are allocated for staff training and ensure the Safeguarding Team and wider Student Guidance staff receive enhanced training in relation to managing child on child abuse, harassment, substance misuse and online abuse.

**Directors of Safeguarding and Intervention** the **Senior Tutor Team** and the **Support Officers**, assisted by the other members of the Upper Management Team as required, are responsible for implementing the Behaviour and Support Procedures, the accompanying document to the Behaviour and Support Policy. These staff are also responsible for ensuring all aspects of unacceptable behaviour are considered before deciding on any course of disciplinary action - this may involve taking statements from students/staff and may also mean removing the student(s) from the scene or from College whilst the investigation takes place. The Directors of Safeguarding and Intervention should also ensure parents/carers, the police and other external agencies and partners are notified as appropriate.

**The EDI officer** – is responsible for ensuring that the implementation of this policy and procedures is fair, inclusive, and non-discriminatory. The EDI Officer also monitors misconduct cases to identify any patterns of discrimination or inequality, and works to foster a supportive environment where all students feel respected and valued

## Terminology

**Staff** applies to all individuals employed by the College regardless of their role, or responsibility. The term staff could include Teachers, Support Staff, Temporary and Supply Staff, Volunteers and Student Placements (e.g. PGCE students).

**Persistent absence** occurs when overall absence equates to 10 per cent or more of a student's timetabled commitments. The DfE recognises any attendance below 90% as persistent absence.

**Sustainable Study** refers to the student's capacity to engage fully with their studies to meet the learning outcomes of their courses (with reasonable adjustments where necessary) or standards of behaviour due to a health, mental health or personal circumstances which place the student or others at risk

**Reasonable adjustments** are made to avoid, as far as possible by **reasonable means**, the disadvantage which a student experiences because of their ill-health given the necessary limitations of the College resources

**Reasonable means** are defined by the guidelines the College must work within as set out by the Department for Education, the JCQ, staff employment contracts, etc. The College must consider how decisions will affect staff and other students without disadvantaging them.

**Bullying** can be defined as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power that undermines, humiliates, denigrates, or injures the recipient (emotionally or physically) - but it does not have a legal definition.

**Online (Cyber) Bullying** is any form of bullying that is carried out online using electronic media devices such as computers, laptops, smartphones, tablets, or gaming consoles. It can take place on social media platforms such as (but not limited to) Snapchat, Instagram, Discord, Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, and through email, text message or online collaboration sites such as Microsoft Teams or Zoom.

**Harassment** may include bullying behaviour, and it refers to harsh treatment that is related to a protected characteristic, such as age, sex, disability, race, gender, religion, or sexual orientation. More specifically, the law defines it 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.' It can include behaviour that individuals find offensive even if it is not directed at them, and even if they do not have the relevant protected (or personal) characteristics themselves.

**Sexual Harassment** is a form of sex discrimination and is illegal and under the 2010 Equality Act it is an offence to bully an individual on the grounds of their protected characteristics. It can occur in a variety of situations but always has a distinctive feature: the inappropriate introduction into the work or learning environment of unwelcome actions or comments of a sexual nature.

**Victimisation** broadly refers to harsh treatment directed towards someone who has made, is likely to make or is believed to have made or supported a complaint under the Equality Act.

**Child-on-Child Abuse** is any form of physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, and coercive control, exercised between students, and within student's relationships (both intimate and non-intimate), friendships and wider peer associations. Child-on-Child abuse can take various forms, including (but not limited to): serious bullying (including cyber-bullying), relationship abuse, domestic violence and abuse, child sexual exploitation, youth and serious youth violence, harmful sexual behaviour, and/or prejudice-based violence including, but not limited to, gender-based violence. Examples of online Child-on-Child abuse would include sexting, online abuse, Child-on-Child grooming, the distribution of youth involved sexualised content, and harassment.

**Coercive Behaviour** is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, frighten, or create dependence. Examples may include making direct or implied threats.

**Gaslighting** is the manipulation by psychological means of a person (or group) which causes them to doubt themselves, their capabilities or their sense of reality. Examples may include an individual being made to feel that their opinions, concerns, thoughts and feelings are incorrect or lack validity.

**Banter** is the exchange of teasing remarks. Communication which some may consider to be banter is not acceptable if it falls into the categories of bullying and/or harassment. Banter may affect the person the comments are directed towards, and others who overhear the comments.

**Substance Misuse:** Attending College or College-related activities under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances. Carrying, using, or distributing prohibited drugs, alcohol, or illegal substances, on or within the vicinity of the College campus. Involvement in the use or distribution of prohibited drugs or illegal substances outside College.

**Computer Misuse:** Using College computers or devices to send abusive, scandalous, obscene, or defamatory communications of any kind, or attempting to access or download obscene or pornographic images on the college network or otherwise being in possession of such material.

**Misconduct** is any behaviour which does not meet the expectations of the Student Code of Conduct. This includes behaviour which may disrupt the learning environment, is disrespectful, or constitutes a threat to the safety and/or wellbeing of other people, is illegal or dishonest, or brings the College into disrepute. It could also be compromising the integrity of public examinations, including plagiarism of coursework

**Gross Misconduct** is defined as misconduct on the College premises or on an approved College activity, serious enough to make the further working relationship or trust impossible. Gross Misconduct is any action that is a serious contravention of the Student Code of Conduct. Gross Misconduct can include, but is not limited to:

- Any threatening or violent act against a student or member of staff
- Verbal/physical/sexual abuse or harassment in contravention of our Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy
- Theft or other breaches of trust
- Being under the influence of, consumption, and/or bringing into College, drugs or alcohol or intoxicants of any kind
- Criminal damage
- Dangerous driving
- Possession of an offensive weapon

In cases of Gross Misconduct, exclusion, either temporary or permanent, is a sanction that is likely to be applied.

## Policy Aims

First and foremost, we aim to educate and support students to meet expected standards of conduct. Formal disciplinary sanctions, including temporary and/or permanent exclusion from the college, will only be used where supportive strategies have been unsuccessful or in cases where there has been a serious breach of the Student Code of Conduct.

Students on signing their Student Code of Conduct and Learning Agreement, are confirming that they will meet the expectations of this Policy and will:

- **Ensure a Safe Learning Environment:** Upholding a collective responsibility to maintain a safe, secure, and effective learning environment where students can focus on their studies without disruptions or fear of bullying.
- **Foster a Respectful and Kind Community:** Encourage students to respect the rights, privileges, and property of others, promoting a culture of mutual respect and understanding.
- **Complete academic work to the best of their ability:** Maintain academic integrity with high standards of honesty in all academic work, ensuring that students take responsibility to submit work that is their own, not generated by an external source or other person and reflects their best efforts.

**Godalming College will take action to:**

- Support positive behaviour from all members of the college community through setting high standards and expectations, role modelling, challenging negative behaviours, and responding swiftly to tackle unacceptable behaviour.
- Promote good learning behaviour and provide teaching, learning and assessment opportunities that are challenging and motivating, enabling students to make good progress and achieve well.
- Give students a good start to their studies through Orientation and First Friday induction programme and then provide ongoing support by giving clear targets and monitoring progress.
- Ensure all actions related to unacceptable behaviour are managed in line with this or related college policies and procedures.
- Provide opportunities through the Shaping Futures tutorial programme and wider college awareness-raising to promote knowledge and understanding of key issues in relation to behaviour such as: the risks associated with the misuse of substances, harmful sexual behaviours, the impact of bullying and harassment and online safety.
- Ensure all staff (teaching and support) have access to training and resources so that they are equipped to recognise signs of unacceptable behaviour and respond appropriately.
- Ensure that individuals have the confidence to complain in the knowledge that their concerns will be dealt with in confidence, appropriately and fairly.
- Work in collaboration with parent/carers, external agencies and members of the public to uphold this policy when relevant to do so.

**Study Related Misconduct** - The College aims to ensure that all students understand that if they do not behave in a courteous manner which indicates respect for others, and adhering to the Code of Conduct, then there are consequences, and action will be taken by the college in line with the Behaviour and Support Procedures. The college endeavours to support all students to achieve their potential and to ensure student behaviour does not impact negatively on students' health, wellbeing, ability to learn and achieve in college.

**Bullying and Harassment** - The College has a firm commitment to equality and diversity and will not tolerate the bullying or harassment of any members of its community. The aim is to assist all staff and students to develop a working environment in which bullying and harassment are known to be unacceptable and where individuals have the confidence to raise concerns in the knowledge that their complaint will be dealt with in confidence, appropriately and fairly.

**Substance Misuse** - The College adopts a 'whole college approach' with a range of information made available to students via Shaping Futures, pastoral support and links to resources and websites on the Student Portal. Students are supported and encouraged to talk about drugs so that appropriate services e.g. Catch 22 can be accessed if required. It is recognised that some young people may be at greater risk of drug use and the college will provide relevant, up to date information and training for all staff, with more specific training provided for the Safeguarding Team.

**Computer Misuse** – The College aims to provide students with clear guidelines about how to use the College IT facilities. Students undergo an IT induction and sign the 'IT Acceptable Use Policy' which outlines the legal responsibility for the college to safeguard its users against harassment, abuse, defamation or discrimination and ensure that all users of IT within the College are working within the requirements of the relevant acts, including Data Protection. The College provides network and internet access as an educational tool and access to the networked resources is therefore a privilege, not a right. The College will filter and monitor all internet usage within the College in a responsible and transparent way in order to ensure and maintain the safety of staff and students.

### **Godalming College will adhere to DfE Guidance on “Teachers’ Powers” - Key Points**

Teachers have statutory authority to discipline students whose behaviour is unacceptable, who breach the Student Code of Conduct or who fail to follow a reasonable instruction. The authority applies to all paid staff with responsibility for students. Staff can discipline students at any time they are in college or elsewhere under the charge of a teacher, including trips and visits. Staff can also discipline students in certain circumstances when a student’s misconduct occurs outside of College in line with the Scope of this policy.

### **Godalming College will ensure staff abide by what the law allows:**

The general power to discipline enables a member of staff to confiscate, retain or dispose of a student’s property for the purposes of maintaining the Student Code of Conduct or as a safeguarding measure, so long as it is reasonable in the circumstances. The law protects staff from liability for damage to, or loss of, any confiscated items provided they have acted lawfully.

Use of reasonable force can be applied for staff who have received appropriate training to prevent a student from attacking a member of staff or another student, to stop a fight on the college campus, to restrain a student at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts or to prevent a student leaving the classroom where allowing the student to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others;

Trained staff also have the power to search without consent for “prohibited items” including:

- knives and weapons,
- alcohol, illegal drugs, tobacco and cigarette papers,
- stolen items,
- fireworks,
- pornographic images,
- any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property.

## **Monitoring**

This policy will be reviewed every three years unless a more frequent review is necessary, for example to ensure compliance with legislation or new statutory guidance. The Behaviour and Support procedures will be reviewed on annual basis in keeping with student behaviour trends or updates to KCSIIE. Records of concerns, investigations and disciplinary sanctions will undergo regular checks to ensure consistent implementation of policy and procedures. Analysis of Behaviour Logs, CPOMS incidents, Action Plan data and Training Records will inform the annual Student Support SAR and QIP.

The Assistant Principal shall provide a report to the Curriculum and Quality Committee of student behaviour, including any temporary or permanent exclusions made under this Policy.

### **Other relevant policies and documents include:**

Student Behaviour and Support Procedures (Annex to this Policy)  
Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy  
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy  
Learning Support Policy  
Health and Safety Policy  
Exams Access Arrangements Policy  
Progression Policy  
Data Protection Policy  
Complaints Procedure  
IT Acceptable Use Policy (Students)  
NEA/Malpractice Policy