



Elstree School

Including all of the Pre-Prep Department and Early Years
Foundation Stage

Anti-Bullying Policy

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Person responsible for Policy: **JCM** (**RS** – Responsible Governor)

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Elstree School is a Company Limited by Guarantee No 690450 (England)

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1. Introduction

The School has a very clear policy statement about bullying. We attempt to give pupils strategies to deal with problems in Personal and Social and Health Economic Education lessons, assemblies, House meetings, Form Periods and the time available with boarders. We believe that Elstree School is a pleasant, caring and well-disciplined school, where the incidence of bullying is rare, but that it is right to be vigilant. In this context, bullying will not be tolerated at Elstree. It is **everyone's** responsibility to prevent it happening and with this in mind this document lays down certain guidelines which all pupils, parents and staff should follow.

Bullying can in many instances cause psychological damage, which may in severe cases lead to extreme loss of self-esteem, even to a point of self-harm. Whilst bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws that apply to harassment and threatening behaviour. Every member of the Elstree community needs to be aware of this.

This policy is relevant to all boys at Elstree, including EYFS overseen by the Head of Pre-Prep and Boarding overseen by the Houseparents. This policy pays regard to the DfE advice '*Preventing and Tackling Bullying*' (July 2017).

2. Definition

Bullying is deliberately causing hurt or distress to someone else with no provocation and is repeated over a period of time. The bullying may focus on various areas which could include: racial, religious, cultural, sexual/sexist, homophobic, special educational needs, disability or when a child is adopted. It may occur directly or involve technology (cyber-bullying) for which there is a separate but linked policy. The bullying may take place inside or outside school. The hurt or distress may be caused in various ways:-

Violent action e.g., punching, kicking, etc.

Other action e.g., hiding a shoe, groaning at a mistake

In words e.g., name-calling, suggesting false ideas

Exclusion e.g., leaving out of a game/conversation.

In many cases, "having a bit of fun" at someone else's expense (teasing) is easily accepted by the recipient. Unfortunately, on some occasions, teasing is inappropriate or excessive and hurts the feelings of the victim; in certain situations this can be defined as bullying. Boys have to learn that there is a fine dividing line, and that excessive or inappropriate teasing causes more hurt than they may have been intended. The school recognises that bullying (both physical and emotional) can have serious psychological consequences for the victims. Support is given both to the victim and perpetrator in all identified instances to prevent long term damage and bolster confidence as well as prevent repeat behaviour.

Cyberbullying is a 'method' of bullying, rather than a 'type' of bullying. It includes bullying via text message, via instant-messenger services and social network sites, via email, and via images or videos posted on the internet or spread via mobile phone. It can take the form of any of the types of bullying listed below, i.e. technology can be used to bully for reasons of race, religion, sexuality, disability, and may be characterised by: name calling; making use of written notes, e-mails, mobile telephone messages or social networking, websites, including

threats of physical violence. It is worth noting that the use of social networking sites such as Facebook or MySpace are not available, through rigorous web-filtering software, to pupils at Elstree. The School still regards such activity between pupils outside of school as a serious offence, although it is felt to be more appropriate for parents to be disciplining the child/children concerned in this instance. Communication by email is monitored electronically, being 'swept' for target words but this procedure does not compromise the privacy of individual users.

How do bullies often behave/act?

- Sometimes alone, sometimes in groups.
- Bullies are not always obvious; sometimes they appear to be popular.
- Bullies often get others to do their bullying for them, they have the ideas but don't want to be caught bullying.
- They come in all shapes and sizes, all ages, boys, girls, men and women.
- Bullying is often about having power over other people.

What activities count as bullying?

- Words or actions intended to hurt
- Bullying can be physical – hitting, kicking, punching, pinching or any action intended to hurt, like breaking or hiding someone's possessions.
- Bullies can use words to tease about someone's shape, colour, looks, intelligence, or skills or to make fun of someone in an unpleasant way, groaning at a mistake.
- Bullies can use words to hurt by shouting, frightening someone into doing things they do not want to do; threatening or intimidating, preventing someone doing something they want to do.
- Bullies exclude another from a game, conversation or information, knowing that it will cause that person distress and may also encourage others to do the same; they leave people out of games, refuse to share a book or a seat, or lend a pencil.
- Deliberately ignoring someone can be termed bullying.

It is not bullying, for example when:

- Two people have the odd dispute;
- Senior pupils are given responsibilities to supervise others, carrying out daily routines to ensure the smooth running of Prep, Form Room, Changing Room, Music Practice Room or any other part of the School;

3. Principles

- a. All pupils have an absolute right to be educated in a safe, secure environment and to be protected from others who wish to harm, degrade or abuse them
- b. There is no justification whatsoever for bullying behaviour and it should not be tolerated in any form. Difference of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, ability is absolutely repudiated as a reason for bullying.

- c. Bullying is most likely to occur in places of reduced supervision, in the changing room, in class before or after a lesson. Staff need to be particularly vigilant at these times and act promptly, firmly and proportionately.
- d. Bullying behaviour is a problem for both the bully and the victim and should be addressed in a positive, constructive way which provides opportunities for growth and development for the bully and victim alike.
- e. Effective management of bullying is a shared responsibility and strategies should involve school staff, parents/guardians and other professionals involved with children who are victims or perpetrators of bullying behaviour.
- f. It is important to invest time and resources in the prevention and management of bullying and staff require advice, training and support to manage it all with confidence.
- g. Information about the School's policy and procedures should be readily available in 'user-friendly' form to children and their parents/guardians.

4. Opposition to all Bullying

The school is strongly opposed to bullying in any and every form and will do all it can to encourage boys to behave in a friendly and considerate way towards others. The staff and Prefects will watch out constantly for signs of bullying, and will do all in their power to deny a bully the freedom and opportunity to operate.

The school will do all it possibly can to explain to the perpetrators of bullying why their behaviour is unacceptable. He/ She can expect:

1. To be seen by a member of staff. Serious cases will be passed on to form Tutors, Senior Master, the Deputy Head and the Head.
2. To have the problem explained and to be warned about their future behaviour.
3. To be made to take responsibility for their actions by changing their behaviour and apologising to their victim.
4. To undergo appropriate sanctions (such as loss of free time, detention) and to have their behaviour recorded.
5. To have their parents and the staff informed of their behaviour.
6. If they repeat their behaviour after a clear warning, to suffer more serious sanctions (including Headmaster's Detention, suspension from school, or, in the worst possible case, to be asked to leave the school).

5. Prevention

Elstree takes a proactive approach to preventing bullying. Strategies for dealing with bullying are given throughout the school as part of PSHEE periods and discussion of these issues take place as part of our tutor time.

Our school values underpin much of our PSHEE work and serve to give boys the strength of character they need to avoid being bullies themselves but also to stand up to bullying behaviour if it is observed. These values underpin many of our assemblies which often contain messages relevant to anti-bullying (Kindness Week). Posters for the 'Thought of the Week' often back up the anti-bullying message.

E-Safety and Cyber-Bullying seminars are held regularly for boys in Years 6 and 7 and this issue is also addressed as part of ICT lessons (e.g. Karl Hopwood – Summer 2018). PSHEE is also mapped across other subject areas (e.g. Drama Scholars Assembly –Autumn 2017) at Elstree and topics relevant to bullying are covered in various curriculum areas throughout the school.

Staff are constantly updated on ongoing issues to be aware of and are also given guidance on individuals, times and places to look out for. They also provide the example to follow in their own dealings with others in the Elstree community. Prefects are also involved (where appropriate) in preventing bullying and meet regularly with the Deputy Head to discuss how they can help in this area. Older boys play a vital role in setting the tone around school and this is made clear to them at key points such as the Leadership Days at the end of Year 7 and as they start Year 8.

6. How to report bullying

It is the duty of every member of the Elstree community, whether or not they are directly involved, to report any incident of suspected unkindness to a member of teaching staff. This will then be investigated to ascertain if it is indeed bullying. The 'Are you feeling Happy?' posters give details of the various adults a boy could talk to in the event of any concern.

The member of staff may deal with the matter immediately or pass it to the Headmaster or Deputy Head. In all cases, the Form Tutor, should be fully briefed on the incident.

The idea of 'sneaking' is an invention of bullies to help keep their deeds secret. Reporting is right; remaining quiet is wrong.

7. Recording and Monitoring

Records of incidents of unkindness or bullying identified through the stars and conduct marks system are recorded by the Senior Master (boys). Incidents of this type, with the action taken, including informing parents, are collated regularly by the Deputy Head and any patterns are noted and acted upon if necessary. The Senior Masters' Meeting (Wednesday) is another time where boys' welfare issues are discussed, actioned and logged.