



# 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: **TDW** Responsible Governor - **Jane Lyons**

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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 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.

*The school will adopt a **zero tolerance approach** to any physical, discriminatory, prejudice-based bullying issues, that all staff will challenge any abusive behaviour between peers and that comes to their notice and will report to the DSL immediately any issues of this nature. Please see the **Safeguarding and Prevent Policy** for further details about dealing with peer-on-peer abuse.*

This policy is relevant to all children 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), 'Cyber-Bullying: advice for headteachers and school staff (2014) and Advice for parents and carers on cyber-bullying (2014).

## 2. Definition

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. This could include one off events. Put another way, bullying is the intentional hurting, harming, or humiliating of another person. It may take many forms, including physical (including any threat of or use of violence of any kind), sexual (including the sharing of nudes/semi-nudes), verbal (including cyberbullying via text messages, email, social media, gaming, or other instant messages, and can include the use of images and video), and/or emotional (including by excluding, being sarcastic, name-calling, tormenting or spreading malicious rumours). It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone, or actions that fall short of direct participation, where someone encourages others to bully, or joins in with laughing at a victim. Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and intimidating, and often involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator(s) and the victim(s) whether that be a physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), or intellectual imbalance, or by the perpetrator(s) having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate the victim(s).

Bullying can sometimes amount to peer-on peer-abuse, which is defined as abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil. It can be standalone or as part of wider abuse and can happen both inside and outside of school, and online. Further information about peer-on-peer abuse, including the procedures to follow when an incident on peer on peer abuse is reported can be found in the School's **Safeguarding and Prevent Policy**.

Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, and may involve actions or comments regarding a person's race, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, special education needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions, or because of a child's familial circumstances, such as they are adopted, in care or that they have caring responsibilities. Bullying may be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. For example, bullying can still be homophobic if directed towards a child that is perceived to be gay, whether or not this is the case. Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time and can involve anyone - pupils, other young people, staff, and parents. Where an incident of bullying causes or is likely to cause significant harm to a pupil, the School will follow the procedures set out in the School's Safeguarding and Prevent Policy.

It is also the school's responsibility to deal with bullying issues if pupils are involved outside the school setting.

It may occur directly or involve technology (cyber-bullying) for which there is a separate but linked policy. 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. Bullying on the basis of protected characteristics is taken particularly seriously; 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. The Anti-Bullying policy is on the school website and upon request via the Front Office.

### **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 pupils 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 Pupils, 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. Threshold for reporting Bullying to an external Agency**

In all cases of bullying, cyber-bullying, pupil-on-pupil abuse and bullying outside of school, staff must follow the school's reporting procedures and ensure the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the Headmaster are aware of such incidents. The Headmaster and Deputy Head will decide whether it is appropriate to take the matter further and report the incident to outside agencies such as the police or Local Safeguarding Partners (See Safeguarding and Prevent Policy for more details). The DSL will take advice from a Local Authority Designated Officer on the investigation of such allegations and will take all appropriate action to ensure the safety and welfare of all pupils involved, including the pupil or pupils accused of abuse. A pupil against whom an allegation of abuse has been made may be suspended from the School during the investigation and the School's policy on behaviour, discipline and sanctions will apply. If it is necessary for a pupil to be interviewed by the police in relation to allegations of abuse, the School will ensure that, subject to the advice of a Local Authority Designated Officer, parents are informed as soon as possible and that the pupil is supported during the interview by an appropriate adult. In the case of pupils whose parents are abroad, the pupil's Education Guardian will be requested to provide support to the pupil and to accommodate him / her if it is necessary to suspend him / her during the investigation. Staff should refer to the School's Safeguarding and Prevent Policy for further details.

## **6. Prevention**

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

Our school values underpin much of our PSHE work and serve to give pupils 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 children in Years 6 and 7 and this issue is also addressed as part of IT lessons. PSHE is also mapped across other subject areas (e.g. Drama Scholars Assembly) 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 children 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.

## **7. 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.**

## **8. Record Keeping and Monitoring**

Records of incidents of bullying, cyber-bullying and bullying outside school are kept by the Deputy Head in the Bullying Log. These records are used to evaluate the effectiveness of the approach adopted by the school and to enable patterns to be identified. Any bullying incident where there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm will be treated by the school as a child protection concern and the school's Safeguarding (Child Protection) policy will be followed.

Records of incidents of unkindness, bullying, cyber-bullying, bullying outside school are identified through the stars, conduct marks and incident report system on iSAMS (school management system) 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 Pastoral Committee Weekly Meeting (FRIDAY) is another time where children's welfare issues are discussed, actioned and logged.

Other related policies:

Promoting Positive Behaviour  
Cyber-Bullying Policy  
Safeguarding and Prevent Policy  
Acceptable Use Policy  
IT Policy  
Behaviour Log  
Bullying Log  
Serious Incidents Register