



Elstree School

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

Cyber Bullying Policy

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1. Introduction

Elstree School believes that all people in our community have the right to teach and learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. We believe that every individual in school has a duty to report an incident of bullying whether it happens to themselves or to another person. Pupils are not allowed mobile phones in school and must comply with the Acceptable Use Policy, which they sign each year. If we find that a pupil's wellbeing is compromised by cyber-bullying which has taken place outside school, we will take action to help that pupil. This may mean contacting other parents if we find their son or daughter is involved.

*The School will adopt a **zero tolerance approach** to any cyber bullying, issues, that all staff will challenge any abusive behaviour between peers 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.*

2. What is Cyber-Bullying?

Cyber-bullying is the use of Information & Communication Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the Internet, to deliberately upset someone else. Technology can allow the user to bully anonymously or from an unknown location, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week thus following pupils beyond the School walls. Cyber-bullying leaves no physical scars so it is, perhaps, less evident to a parent or teacher, but it is highly intrusive and the hurt it causes can be severe. There are many types of cyber-bullying and here are the more common in no particular order:

1. Text messages —that are threatening or cause discomfort including the sending of anonymous messages over short distances using wireless technology e.g. AirDrop.
2. Picture/video-clips via mobile phone cameras - images sent to others to make the victim feel threatened or embarrassed. Images via SnapChat or other group messaging services are included here.
3. Mobile phone calls — silent calls or abusive messages; or stealing the victim's phone and using it to harass others, to make them believe the victim is responsible.
4. Emails — threatening or bullying emails, often sent using a pseudonym or somebody else's name.

5. Chatroom bullying — menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in a web-based chatroom or an on-line gaming scenarios including exclusion from chat rooms/games.
6. Instant messaging (IM)— unpleasant messages sent while children conduct realtime conversations online using services such as WhatsApp, iMessage etc.
7. Bullying via websites — use of defamatory blogs (e.g Tumblr), online Social Media sites (e.g. Facebook) or the setting up of fake profiles on Social Media including adding inappropriate comments/hashtags.
8. Sexting- sending (someone) sexually explicit photographs or messages.

3. Elstree School Procedures

At Elstree we take this bullying as seriously as all other types of bullying and, therefore, will deal with each situation individually. In cases of cyber-bullying, as with all bullying, the procedure will fall under the anti-bullying policy. Pupils are taught within ICT and PSHEE lessons how to:

- understand how to use these technologies safely and know about the risks and consequences of misusing them.
- know what to do if they or someone they know are being cyberbullied.
- appreciate the upset and unhappiness that cyber-bullying causes.
- report any problems with cyberbullying. If they do have a problem, they can talk to the school, parents, the police, the mobile network (for phone) or the Internet Service Provider (ISP) to do something about it. If preferred this can be done anonymously.

4. Elstree School:

- has an Acceptable Use Policy for pupils that includes clear statements about e-communications and behaviour.
- uses a variety of security tools to ensure that the programmes and websites most frequently used for cyber-bullying are unavailable on the school network.

- provides information for parents on e-communication standards and practices in schools, what to do if problems arise, what's being taught in the curriculum and regularly holds internet safety talks.
- gives support for parents and pupils if cyber-bullying occurs by: assessing the harm caused, identifying those involved, taking steps to repair harm and to prevent recurrence.
- has a clear disciplinary framework for dealing with any behavioural issues. Once the person responsible for cyber-bullying has been identified, the school will take steps to change their attitude and behaviour as well as ensuring access to any support that is needed.

5. Advice to pupils (whether at school or elsewhere) who are victims of cyber-bullying:

- Remember, bullying is never your fault. It can be stopped and it can usually be traced.
- Don't ignore the bullying. Tell someone you trust, such as a teacher or parent, or call a help line. Your form tutor or your Designated Safeguarding Lead (Mrs Attwood) will be especially well placed to help you.
- Try to keep calm. Don't retaliate or return the message. If you show that you are angry, it will only make the person bullying you more likely to continue.
- Don't give out your personal details online – don't give out information about where you live, the school you go to, your email address etc. Your friends already know all of this.
- Keep and save any bullying emails, text messages or images. Then these can be used as evidence.
- If you can, make a note of the time and date bullying messages or images were sent, and note any details about the sender. There's plenty of online advice on how to react to cyberbullying.

For example, <http://www.bullying.co.uk/cyberbullying/> and www.wiredsafety.org have some useful tips.

6. Text/video messaging

- You can easily stop receiving messages for a while by turning off incoming messages for a couple of days. This might stop the person texting you as you won't respond to them.
- If the bullying persists, you can change your phone number or messaging accounts. Ask your mobile service provider or a teacher/parent to help with this.
- Don't reply to abusive or worrying text or video messages. Your mobile service provider or Social Media website will have a number for you to ring or text to report phone bullying.
- Don't delete messages from cyberbullies. You don't have to read them, but you should keep them as evidence.
- Text harassment is a crime. If the calls are simply annoying, tell a teacher or parent. If they are threatening or malicious and they persist, report them to the police, taking with you all the messages you've received.

7. Phone Calls

- If you get an abusive or silent phone call, don't hang up immediately. Instead, put the phone down and walk away for a few minutes. Then hang up or turn your phone off. Once they realise they can't get you rattled, callers usually get bored and stop bothering you.
- Always tell someone else: a teacher or parent.
- Be careful to whom you give personal information such as your phone number especially online forms – a free prize giveaway is rarely free as they want your personal information in return.
- If you have a mobile phone, make sure set a passcode then others cannot use your phone to send message once the phone is locked Emails.
- Never reply to unpleasant or unwanted emails ('flames') — the sender wants a response, so don't give them that satisfaction.
- Keep the emails as evidence. Tell an adult about them.
- Ask an adult to contact the sender's Internet Service Provider (ISP).

- Never reply to someone you don't know, even if there's an option to 'unsubscribe'. Replying simply confirms your email address as a real one. Web bullying.
- If the bullying is on a website (e.g. Facebook) tell a teacher or parent, just as you would if the bullying were face-to-face – even if you don't actually know the bully's identity. Serious bullying should be reported to the police - for example threats of a physical or sexual nature. Your parent or teacher will help you do this. Chat rooms and instant messaging.
- Never give out your name, address, phone number, school name or password online.
- It's a good idea to use a nickname. Don't give out photos of yourself.
- Don't accept emails or open files from people you don't know. Remember it might not just be people your own age in a chat room.
- Stick to public areas in chat rooms and get out if you feel uncomfortable.
- Tell your parents or a teacher if you feel uncomfortable or worried about anything that happens in a chat room.
- Think carefully about what you write or say; don't leave yourself open to bullying.
- Don't ever give out passwords to your mobile or email account. Three steps to stay out of harm's way:
- Respect other people - online and off. Don't spread rumours about people or share their secrets, including their phone numbers and passwords.
- If someone insults you online or by phone, stay calm – and ignore them.
- 'Do as you would be done by.' Think how you would feel if you were bullied. You're responsible for your own behaviour – make sure you don't distress other people or cause them to be bullied by someone else.

Remember the law is on your side. The Protection from Harassment Act, the Malicious Communications Act 1988 and Section 43 of the Telecommunications Act may be used to combat cyber-bullying.