

Eridge House

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

“Every child should be able to learn in a school environment free from bullying of any kind and in which they feel safe and supported. There is no place for bullying in our schools and communities and each of us involved in education has a role in creating a culture in schools where bullying is not tolerated. No child deserves to suffer the pain and indignity that bullying can cause. We recognise the negative impact it has on the educational experiences and wider development of so many of our children and young people. Bullying has no place anywhere in the school community, and this applies both to the bullying of pupils and teachers.”

The Rt Hon Ed Balls MP
Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families
‘Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools’, DCSF: 2007

Statement of Intent

At Eridge House, we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our children, so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe that relationships are based on mutual respect, trust, caring and consideration for others, rather than on power and strength. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. In the unlikely event that bullying does occur, all children should be able to tell an adult at Eridge House and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *TELLING* school. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Children who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. Schools have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

The Headteacher, Mrs Janie Richardson, has overall responsibility for behaviour. This policy has had regard to the guidance *“Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools”* (DCSF, 2007). If the Headteacher is not present, second in charge takes on the responsibility.

Legal Requirements

There are various legal requirements on and powers for schools that relate to bullying. In particular, the Education and Inspections Act 2006 requires that headteachers must determine measures on behaviour and discipline that form the school’s behaviour policy. Measures, in this context, include rules, rewards, sanctions and behaviour management strategies. The policy determined by the headteacher must include measures to be taken with a view to “encouraging good behaviour and respect for others on the part of pupils and, in particular, preventing all forms of bullying among pupils”.

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What Is Bullying?

The publication 'Safe To Learn: Embedding antibullying work in schools' describes bullying as:

'Behaviour by an individual or group usually repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.'

[para 1.6]

Bullying includes:

name calling; taunting; mocking; making offensive comments; kicking; hitting; pushing; taking belongings; inappropriate text messaging and emailing; sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet; producing offensive graffiti; gossiping; excluding people from groups; and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours. Although sometimes occurring between two individuals in isolation, it quite often takes place in the presence of others. [para 1.7]

The Anti-Bullying Alliance has produced this easy-to-read definition of bullying:

<p><i>People doing nasty or unkind things to you on purpose, more than once, which it is difficult to stop</i></p>

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types of bullying including:

- Bullying related to race, religion or culture.
- Bullying related to having learning difficulties or disabilities.
- Bullying related to appearance or health conditions.
- Bullying related to sexual orientation.
- Bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances.
- Sexist or sexual bullying.
- Cyber bullying.

Bullying is not an appropriate term to describe losing your temper, not getting your own way, retaliating, having cross words, making people be friends with you, not agreeing or falling out with your friends.

Bullying can take place:

- between pupils.
- between pupils and staff.
- between staff.
- between staff and parents.
- between parents.
- by individuals or groups.
- face to face or indirectly.
- using a range of cyber bullying methods.

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What is racist and religious bullying?

In racist and religious bullying, a person is targeted for being perceived as being a member of a different ethnic, cultural or religious, group. People do not have to be of that group to suffer racist and religious bullying. This bullying not only impacts on the individual person, but on their families and others perceived to be from that same or similar group. Inappropriate assumptions may be made about some one's religion or belief because of their ethnic origin.

Incidents may include:

- verbal abuse by name-calling, offensive mimicry
- pretending not to understand/using gibberish
- physical threats or attacks
- mockery of physical appearance
- wearing of provocative badges or insignia
- having racist leaflets, comics or magazines
- defacing of property
- graffiti
- inciting others to behave in a racist way
- mockery of a person's demeanour or way of speaking
- mockery of person's contributions to work
- refusing to co-operate in work and play (refusing to sit next to someone)
- mockery of dress, religious observance, dietary habits
- mockery of country of origin.

What is bullying related to learning difficulties or disabilities?

People with Special Educational Needs or disabled people may be less able or more reluctant to articulate experiences as well as others. However, they are often at greater risk of being bullied, both directly and indirectly, and usually about their specific difficulties or disability.

Incidents may include:

- verbal abuse by name-calling, offensive mimicry
- physical threats or attacks
- defacing of property
- graffiti
- inciting others to behave in a disabilist way
- mockery of specific difficulty or disability
- mockery of person's contributions to work
- refusing to co-operate in work and play (refusing to sit next to someone).

What is homophobic bullying?

In homophobic bullying, a person is targeted for being perceived as a lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered (trans) person. People do not have to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans to suffer homophobic bullying. This bullying not only impacts on the

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individual person, but on their families and others perceived to be from that same group. It may be based on gender stereotyping.

Incidents may include:

- verbal abuse by name-calling, offensive mimicry
- physical threats or attacks
- mockery of subject and career choice
- defacing of property
- graffiti
- inciting others to behave in a homophobic way
- mockery of a person's demeanour or way of speaking
- mockery of person's contributions to work
- refusing to co-operate in work and play (refusing to sit next to someone).

What is sexist bullying?

In sexist bullying, a person is targeted for being perceived as being a member of a particular gender. This bullying impacts on the individual person and on all men and women.

Incidents may include:

- verbal abuse by name-calling, offensive mimicry
- physical threats or attacks
- inappropriate and uninvited touching
- sexual assault
- display of pornographic material
- mockery of physical appearance
- wearing of provocative badges or insignia
- having sexist leaflets, comics or magazines
- sexual innuendo
- defacing of property
- graffiti
- inciting others to behave in sexist way
- mockery of a person's demeanour or way of speaking
- mockery of person's contributions to work
- refusing to co-operate in work and play (refusing to sit next to someone)
- mockery of clothing
- mockery of subject and career choice.

Whilst all the above constitute some manifestations of bullying, it should be remembered that an incident of bullying is anything that the victim or anyone else perceives to be such an incident.

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Aims and Objectives of this Policy

The aims of the school anti-bullying policy and intervention systems are:

- To prevent, de-escalate and/or stop any continuation of harmful behaviour
- To react to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way
- To safeguard the pupil who has experienced bullying and to trigger sources of support for the pupil
- To apply disciplinary sanctions to the pupil causing the bullying and ensure they learn from the experience, possibly through multi-agency support
- To ensure all teaching and non-teaching staff, children and parents have an understanding of what bullying is and know what to do when bullying arises

As a school we take bullying seriously. Children and parents should be assured that they will be supported if bullying is reported.

Bullying will not be tolerated.

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of or unwilling to go to school
- changes their usual routine
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened or refuses to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Prevention

We use KIDSCAPE methods for helping children to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

- Continually reinforcing school rules
- signing a behaviour contract

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- writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying
- reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly
- making up role-plays having discussions about bullying and why it matters

Additional preventative strategies include:

- Effective school leadership that promotes an open and honest antibullying ethos
- Use of curriculum opportunities (in particular, PSHE and Citizenship classes can be used to discuss issues around diversity and draw out anti-bullying messages)
- Use of opportunities throughout the school calendar and at certain times of the school day to raise awareness of the negative consequences of bullying (e.g. Anti-Bullying Week in November of each year; and whole-school assemblies).
- Engaging pupils in the process of developing the school anti-bullying policy and promoting open and honest reporting
- Improving the school environment, looking in particular at staff supervision patterns; the physical design of the building(s); and joint work with partners such as transport service providers.
- Targeting our attention on key times and locations where bullying is more prevalent; and working with pupils to establish when and where those times and locations are.

Responding to bullying

If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident must be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached.

The following steps should be taken when dealing with alleged incidents of bullying:

- **Listen carefully to the child and ascertain the facts.**
Further discussions and counselling of a victim may be required even where bullying behaviour is perceived rather than proven.
- **Investigate the incident as soon as possible.**
- **Identify the bully/bullies.**
- **Obtain witnesses if possible.**

Discussions with the alleged bully / bullies should focus on the facts. They should be encouraged to tell the truth about the situation / incident. Make it clear that bullying is not acceptable at Eridge House.

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All discussions with the children should address the issues appropriate to the incident and to their age and level of understanding. If the incident is not too serious, a problem-solving approach may help. The adult should remain neutral and deliberately avoid direct, closed questioning which may be interpreted as accusatory or interrogational in style. Each pupil must be given an opportunity to talk and the discussion should remain focused on finding a solution to the problem and stopping the bullying from recurring

Procedures

The school's reactive strategy is the use of disciplinary sanctions and learning programmes to deal with those pupils who are found to be bullying. As recommended by the DCSF, we ensure that sanctions are applied fairly, proportionately, consistently and reasonably, taking account of any special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities that pupils may have and taking into consideration the needs of vulnerable children.

Disciplinary penalties have three main purposes, namely to:

- impress on the perpetrator that what he/she has done is unacceptable;
- deter him/her from repeating that behaviour; and
- signal to other pupils that the behaviour is unacceptable and deter them from doing it.

Sanctions for bullying are intended to hold pupils who bully to account for their behaviour and ensure that they face up to the harm they have caused and learn from it. They also provide an opportunity for the pupil to put right the harm they have caused.

Pupils will not be excluded from school for being bullied, even if the school believes that this may be for the child's benefit. The legislation on exclusion in the Education Act 2002 makes clear that "*exclude...means exclude on disciplinary grounds*".

Additional Strategies

In conjunction with disciplinary sanctions, there are a range of other strategies that the school may use to combat bullying. These include:

- Engaging with parents promptly when issues of bullying come to light, whether their child is the one being bullied or the one doing the bullying.
- Ensuring parents are aware of the school's Complaints Policy and procedures
- Developing the roles that pupils can play (e.g. as trained peer mentors)
- Establishing Safer School Partnerships with local police.
- Restorative justice approaches which hold pupils to account for their behaviour and engage with them to agree the actions to be taken to repair the harm caused.

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Monitoring and review

In addition to immediate short-term monitoring, the school will review, over two or three months, whether the action has prevented recurrence of the bullying and ensured that the pupil being bullied feels safe again.

Reporting and recording incidents of bullying

We encourage pupils to report bullying in confidence using a variety of methods. Any incidents of bullying are recorded, including by type, and may be reported to the local authority on request.

Keeping records of bullying incidents will enable the school to:

- manage individual cases effectively
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of strategies
- celebrate the anti-bullying work of the school
- demonstrate defensible decision making in the event of complaints being made
- engage and inform multi-agency teams as necessary.

Staff professional development

The school will review general and specific staff induction and continuing professional development (CPD) and identify how to ensure staff training reflects the anti-bullying policy and practice. Where specific training needs have been identified for particular members of staff, the headteacher will ensure that those members of staff have access to the advice, training and development opportunities appropriate to their needs.

Links to other policies

This anti-bullying policy should be read in conjunction with the following related policies:

Behaviour Policy
E-Safety Policy
Exclusions Policy
Equality Policy
Pastoral Care Policy
Safeguarding Children Policy

Help Organisations & Links:

DfES 'Don't suffer in silence' materials	www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying
Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)	020 7354 8321
Children's Legal Centre	0845 345 4345
KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline (Mon-Fri, 10-4)	0845 1 205 204
Parentline Plus	0808 800 2222
Youth Access	020 8772 9900
Bullying Online	www.bullying.co.uk

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REPORT OF BULLYING

Date:.....

Member of staff reporting:

Parent reporting please tick

Persons involved:

Witnesses:

What happened?:

Action taken following incident(s):

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Appendix 1

Important factors about children to take account of:

Key Stages 1 and 2 (five to 11 years)

Most children make an easy **transition** when they start school, but for some it can be a daunting experience. Children who have not had any pre-school education may find it especially hard. Some children just take a little longer to 'settle in' and to make new friends. They may need support in doing so. Bullying affects all age groups but it is especially hard for young children to ask for help or know how to deal with it.

There are growing pressures for children to **do well at school** with the introduction of standard testing at ages seven and 11. Failure can lead to a sense of personal disappointment, especially if there are pressures from the family to achieve high standards.

Family break-up is a reality for many children and may cause mental health problems, making them feel anxious, guilty or responsible for the situation. Children of this age may find it hard to express how they feel. Even very young children need the chance to talk about what is going on and to be reassured that they are not to blame.