



## **Policy: Anti-Bullying**

**Philosophy:** Bullying is a problem which exists in many schools. Left unchecked, it can have a devastating effect on children's self esteem and educational prospects. All institutions, both large and small, contain a number of pupils who are capable of bullying behaviour. Acknowledging that bullying exists and creating a climate where people talk about it, alongside the promotion of good citizenship, can help to minimise its occurrence, as can a whole school focus on emotional health and well being.

At Elizabeth College Junior School we work to eliminate any form of bullying – mental or physical – and do not tolerate any threatening or coercive behaviour. Our Managing Bullying Behaviour Policy exists to identify the types of bullying that may occur in our school and to clarify the procedures that are followed by staff when an incident of bullying becomes apparent.

Bullying is a whole school issue and, as such, may be encountered and dealt with by any member of the school team. The Deputy Head Teachers are always informed and are usually involved, as they are responsible for Pastoral Care issues within each department of the school.

Our aim is to foster an atmosphere of tolerance and mutual respect, providing a safe and caring environment in which each pupil is afforded the opportunity to maximise his/her potential in all areas of school life. In order to do this, we feel it is essential to create an awareness of bullying issues, as well as promoting an environment where bullying is considered to be socially, totally unacceptable.

We believe that the most effective way of preventing bullying is to create an atmosphere in which it is talked about openly and all pupils feel sufficiently empowered to refuse to tolerate it.

It is vital to have a clear written policy to promote this belief, where pupils, staff and parents are fully aware that any bullying complaints will be dealt with firmly, fairly and promptly.

## **Bullying Guidance and Checklist.**

### **What is bullying?**

A range of behaviours and incidents can be described as bullying. Commonly, it revolves around the issue of power – the more powerful person or group will be engaging in the bullying from a physical, emotional or psychological stance. It is often chronic rather than a one-off incident and is a deliberate intent to harm an individual or a group of people.

### **Bullying behaviours:**

- 1) **Physical aggression** – includes pushing, shoving, kicking, punching, spitting.
- 2) **Verbal** – the voice is used as a weapon. It may be in the form of persistent name calling, directed at the same individual which taunts, humiliates, hurts or insults.
- 3) **Intimidation** – this is based on the use of aggressive body language and tone of voice. Threats are consistently used to undermine the victim's confidence.

- 4) Exclusion – initiated by the bully, this purposely excludes and isolates the victim from his / her peers. It may be exacerbated by circulating notes, whispering insults which can be overheard by the victim or by writing derogatory remarks on whiteboards or in public places.
- 5) Cyber bullying – any form of bullying that takes place using electronic technology.
- 6) Damage to property – the focus is on the victim’s property. Clothing, books or other personal property may be damaged, stolen or hidden.
- 7) Extortion / blackmail – where the bully uses a range of tactics to ensure the victim behaves in the way that he wants him to.
- 8) Sexual Bullying - talking to or touching someone in a sexually inappropriate way.
- 9) Racial or Cultural Bullying – Offensive action and behaviour, deliberate or otherwise, relating to race, colour, ethnic or national origin directed at an individual or group.
- 10) Homophobic or Sexual Orientation Bullying – bullying directed at persons on the grounds of a perceived or actual sexual orientation.
- 11) Disability Bullying – bullying in respect of a person’s disability or impairment or in relation to a student’s special educational needs.

### Children who are likely to bully.

Bullying can be carried out by an individual or a group. Research has identified that children who are likely to bully have the following characteristics.

They often tend to:

- Be impulsive
- Have a need to dominate others in social situations
- Be anti-social in school and the community
- Be generally aggressive with peers
- Might be aggressive with adults, but also may be very socially skilled with adults appearing biddable and helpful.

Common reasons for bullying include:

- Aggressive behaviour which is deemed acceptable
- The gaining of status in front of peers
- The gaining of attention from significant adults
- Boredom
- To compensate for failure
- Can be symptomatic of a victim of child abuse / neglect / aggression.

### Effects of Bullying

Although victims often remain silent, changes of mood and behaviour can be indicative of their suffering. Victims of bullying may feel helpless and overwhelmed by the power that the bully exercises.

This leads to insecurity, increased fear, loss of confidence and lowering of self-esteem. Some of the following signs and symptoms may be evident:

- Becoming withdrawn, isolated or quiet
- Anxiety about coming to school
- A pattern of physical illness (e.g. headaches, stomach aches)

- Changes in temperament and/or behaviour
- Signs of anxiety or distress (not eating, not sleeping)
- Possessions or clothing damaged or missing
- Unexplained bruising or cuts
- Deterioration in educational performance or loss of enthusiasm or interest in school
- Reluctance and / or refusal to discuss the above

These signs and symptoms do not necessarily mean that a pupil is being bullied, but if there is a combination of them or a repetitive occurrence of these, then further investigation is warranted.

### Preventing Bullying

Bullying behaviour is not tolerated at Elizabeth College Junior School and every effort is made to ensure that it does not occur.

However:

- We remain open to the fact that it may, on occasion, happen in our school.
- We challenge the attitude that accepts bullying as part of growing up.
- We have a policy that is regularly reviewed, of which all members of staff, parents and pupils are aware.
- We use the PSHE programme, circle time, Assemblies and other resources to raise pupil awareness of, and provide strategies for dealing with, bullying.
- We do not assume that we will 'find out' without it being reported.
- We are a 'telling' school – anyone who knows that bullying is happening is encouraged to tell any member of staff.
- We investigate reports of bullying thoroughly.
- We try to identify vulnerable children.
- We ask parents to take responsibility outside school by helping us to promote the Elizabeth College Junior School code of Aim high, Be kind, Be brave.

### When bullying has happened.

Even in the most vigilant of schools, bullying will happen on some occasion. The speed and style within which it is dealt, will have a direct impact on the likelihood of it recurring.

Bullying can be brought to the attention of staff by the target(s), their friend(s), their parent(s) or colleagues. It is important that school procedures are followed from this point.

### Dealing with the target:

In all situations, their welfare should be of paramount importance.

- Reassure them that the matter will be taken seriously and will be acted upon.
- Refer the matter to the Deputy Head Teacher who will meet with them, discuss what has happened and establish a course of future action.
- The Deputy Head and Class Teacher will help them to plan self-protective strategies and a response if any incident should re-occur.
- All involved will agree the action that will be taken and set a date to review the situation.
- The Deputy Head will report the action taken to the parents of the target(s).

### Strategies for dealing with the bullying child.

- All children should be referred to the Deputy Head who will meet with the individual(s) as soon as possible and make a note of what has happened.
- It will always be stressed that it is the behaviour and not the person that is unacceptable.
- Alternative, appropriate forms of behaviour will be suggested, highlighting any good behaviour that has already been shown.
- The child / children will be encouraged to accept responsibility for any harm / hurt / damage that has been done.
- The action and sanctions to be taken will be agreed.
- When necessary, the events and the actions taken will be reported to parents.
- A review date will be set to allow for positive changes to be acknowledged.
- Target Cards can be used to support the child further.

As a staff team, we take responsibility for ensuring a prompt, supportive response, using good pastoral procedures and liaison. This should minimise any potential effects of bullying and reduce reoccurrence of the problem.

## **Anti-bullying Statement**

The ECJS community will not tolerate any unkind actions or remarks, even if these are not intended to hurt.

Bullying makes a person unhappy. It can be verbal or physical abuse, exclusion from a group, or any form of racial or sexual harassment. It can be damaging or hiding possessions, writing unkind notes or spreading rumours. Any exploitation of younger or weaker pupils is also bullying.

### **BULLYING IS TOO IMPORTANT NOT TO REPORT**

#### **What to do:**

If you are being bullied, or feel tempted to bully, you should tell someone you trust.

Either tell:

another pupil (your best friend or a prefect)

your parents

any member of staff

your class teacher

the headteacher or deputy head

In some cases a person who is being bullied may not want to tell an adult because:

he/she does not want to tell tales

he/she is afraid of what the bully will do if they find out

he/she does not want the bully to suffer

he/she is hoping it will all go away

If you know someone who is being bullied, you should tell an adult you trust. The victim may be to scared or lonely to tell. To do nothing supports the bully.

#### **What happens next?**

Trusted adults can advise and support you and explain how the matter can be taken further. In the first instance, the bullies will be asked to talk about their behaviour and encouraged to find ways to change it. Everyone involved has responsibility for helping them to do this. Sometimes bullies do not realise how upsetting their behaviour has been. However, bullies who do not change their behaviour will have to leave ECJS. Victims may need help to deal with their feelings and will be offered methods of support. When bullying has been reported and action has been taken, the situation will be monitored carefully to prevent it recurring.

### **A GAME IS ONLY A GAME IF EVERYONE ENJOYS IT**

### **IF IT WAS FOR A LAUGH, WHO WAS LAUGHING?**

### **TO DO NOTHING SUPPORTS BULLYING**

If you are worried about anything at home or at school, you can also contact the people below for help. The Childline number is a freephone number which means you can call from any phone and will not have to pay for the call.

1. Childline 0800 1111

2. [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)