



*Inspiring All to Excellence*



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**Edge Hill Academy**

# **Anti-Bullying Policy**

## Document Control

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## Introduction:

At Edge Hill, we are committed to ensuring that all children are safe and are cared for whilst in our school, ensuring that we build strong relationships and that the atmosphere is conducive to learning. **Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school.** If bullying does occur, children are expected to make staff aware of this so it can be dealt with promptly and effectively.

The school is aware of its legal obligations, including the Equalities Act 2010. We are aware of our role within the local community, supporting parents and carers and working with other agencies outside the school where appropriate.

Schools and the law: By law, schools must have a Behaviour Policy in place that includes measures to prevent all forms of bullying among pupils. Schools must also follow anti-discrimination law. This means staff must act to prevent discrimination, harassment, and victimisation within the school. This applies to all schools in England.

## Policy aims:

We do all we can to prevent bullying, by developing a positive and supportive ethos, culture and environment, linked to our school values, where children feel safe and know what to do if they are worried about something. We aim, as a school, to produce a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety, and measures are in place to reduce the likelihood of bullying.

Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Through our restorative approach to relationship education/behaviour and through raising awareness about the meaning of bullying, we aim to educate children effectively so that bullying is not part of the culture.

At Edge Hill, bullying, discrimination, harassment, sexual abuse and sexual violence (online or offline) are not tolerated. Any incidents will be dealt with quickly and effectively.

This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur. We aim to make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying, and we make clear each person's role and responsibility with regards to the eradication of bullying in our school.

## Reporting:

School staff will not tolerate bullying and any incidents need to be dealt with quickly and effectively.

School leaders will deal with bullying in school through consequences outlined in the behaviour policy, or they may report it to the police or social services if the severity of bullying is beyond normal school experiences.

Any disciplinary action must take account of special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils involved may have.

## Definition of Child-On-Child Abuse

Bullying between two young people can also be viewed as child-on-child abuse. A definition of child-on-child abuse is offered from The Safeguarding Network: "Inappropriate behaviours between children that are abusive in nature including physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, exploitation, sexual harassment, all forms of bullying, coercive control, hazing/initiation rituals

between children and young people, both on and offline (including that which is within intimate personal relationships)".

Staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers inside and outside of school and online. Even if there are no reports of abuse, it does not mean it is not happening. It might be that the abuse is happening, but not being reported and thus all concerns about child-on-child abuse must be taken seriously. Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter" or "part of growing up". Victims of child-on-child abuse should be supported as they would be if they were the victim of any other form of abuse, in accordance with this policy. However, perpetrators of child-on-child abuse are likely to need support as well. While much child-on-child abuse is gendered, all such abuse is treated as a serious matter.

Some types of child-on-child abuse are: bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying) sexual violence and harassment; physical abuse; causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent; abuse within intimate personal relationships between peers; sexting (i.e. the consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and videos); initiation/ hazing; prejudiced behaviour; online abuse and/or online bullying. In the case of online bullying, it is recognised that young people can be both victims and perpetrators of online abuse.

Both victims and perpetrators are likely to need support following an incident.

### Some Signs/ Indicators of Child-on-Child Abuse

- Disengaging from classes or struggling to carry out school related tasks to a standard ordinarily expected
- Physical injuries
- Experiencing difficulties with mental health and/ or emotional wellbeing
- Being withdrawn or shy
- Experiencing headaches, stomach aches, anxiety or panic attacks
- Suffering from nightmares or lack of sleep or sleeping too much
- Broader changes in behaviour including alcohol or substance misuse
- Changes in appearance and/or starting to behave in ways which are not appropriate to the child's age
- Abusive behaviour towards others

## Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children

Sexual violence and sexual harassment (or “unwanted conduct of a sexual nature”) can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can occur through a group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and the two may overlap; they can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable. All staff are advised to be vigilant and maintain the attitude of “it could happen here”. Addressing inappropriate behaviour early and adopting a zero-tolerance approach can be an important intervention in preventing more problematic, abusive, or even violent behaviour in the future.

All reports by victims will be taken seriously, kept safe and never be made to feel like they are creating a problem for reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. It is recognised that sexual violence and harassment can happen anywhere - inside or outside of school, including online. Staff must be able to use their professional judgement in identifying when what may be perceived as “normal developmental childhood behaviour” becomes HSB (or Harmful Sexual Behaviour) or even CSE (or Child Sexual Exploitation). Other factors for staff to consider are: informed consent; any imbalance of power; possible coercion should be held in mind. Staff may need to consult with the DSL, or a DDSL, as well as consulting “Sexual violence & sexual harassment between children in schools & colleges” (DfE, Sept 2021) to help with their decision making. Four scenarios are likely: manage internally; refer for early help; refer to children’s social care; report to the Police. Similarly, four outcome decisions are possible: unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious.

As with bullying, we take a no-tolerance approach to child-on-child abuse. If any member of staff has any concerns, they should report these verbally to the Headteacher (DSL) or one of the DDSLs. A concern should also be raised on MyConcern.

### Definition of bullying:

There is no legal definition of bullying. However, it is usually defined as behaviour that is:

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation

Bullying is when one or more pupils systematically and repeatedly target another pupil over a sustained period of time. Bullying can be physical, verbal, or emotional, online, or face to face. Bullying is wrong and damages individual children. At Edge Hill, we therefore do all we can to prevent it, by fostering a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable and not tolerated.

Bullying can take place between:

- young people
- young people and staff
- between staff
- individuals or groups

**Bullying** is unwanted, aggressive behaviour among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behaviour is **repeated** or has the potential to be repeated over time. Children and young people who are bullied and/or who bully others may have serious and lasting problems.

To be considered bullying, the behaviour must be aggressive and include the following:

- an imbalance of power such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity to control or harm others. These imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- repetition as these behaviours happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.
- actions such as making threats, spreading rumours, attacking someone physically or verbally or for a particular reason, e.g., size, hair colour, gender, sexual orientation, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

### Why are children and young people bullied?

There is no hierarchy of bullying – all forms should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately. Specific types of bullying include, but are not limited to:

#### Prejudice Related Bullying

Under the Equalities Act 2010 it is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of:

- age
- being or becoming a transsexual person
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or having a child
- disability
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin including Gypsy, Roma, Travellers
- religion, belief or lack of religion/ belief
- sex / gender
- sexual orientation

These are called 'protected characteristics'. As part of the requirement on schools to promote fundamental British Values, schools must proactively challenge derogatory and discriminatory language and behaviour including that which is racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disablist in nature. We will record these types of bullying, even that which represents a one-off incident, and report them to governors for monitoring purposes.

Other vulnerable groups include:

- bullying related to appearance or health
- bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances

Although the above do not currently receive protection under the Equality Act 2010, bullying for these reasons is just as serious.

We acknowledge that bullying can be:

- Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting
- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist: racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic: because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber: all areas of internet, such as email and internet chat room misuse  
Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video facilities  
Mobile threats by text messaging and calls

## 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 walking to or from school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- 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 damaged property
- has possessions which " go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber-message is received

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

## What kind of behaviour is not bullying?

Often incidents happen between children, which cannot be deemed as bullying, although the children involved may have a different perception of the situation / event. Such incidents will be addressed using a restorative approach, where children are encouraged to reflect on their behaviour and settle misunderstandings or disagreements through discussion, leading to a mutual resolution. A shared understanding of what bullying means is important and addressed through assemblies, PSHE, School Council and consistent demonstration of our school values. Children will reflect upon and learn about the following behaviours in relation to non-bullying and bullying actions/behaviours:

- Occasional loss of temper
- Hurting by accident
- Joking which is received in good spirit, mutually understood, and there is no intention to hurt
- Falling in and out with friends, not being friends with someone, not inviting someone to a party
- Minor disagreements

## Prejudice Related Language

Racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disablist language includes terms of abuse used towards people because of their race/ethnicity/nationality; because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transsexual, or are perceived to be, or have a parent/carer or sibling who is; because they have a learning or physical disability. Such language is generally used to refer to something or someone as inferior. This may also be used to taunt young people who are different in some way or their friends, family members or their parents/carers.

In the case of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language particularly, dismissing it as banter is not helpful as even if these terms are not referring to a person's sexual orientation or gender identity they are using the terms to mean inferior, bad, broken or wrong.

We will challenge the use of prejudice related language in our school even if it appears to be being used without any intent. Persistent use of prejudice related language and/or bullying will be dealt with as with any other form of bullying.

## Online bullying

The ever-increasing use of digital technology and the internet has also provided new and particularly intrusive ways bullying can occur. Online bullying can take many forms and bullying online can often start online and influence behaviours in school or may start in school and then be progressed online.

Whilst most incidents of online bullying occur outside school, we will offer support and guidance to parents/carers and their children who experience online bullying and will treat online bullying with the same severity as any other forms of bullying.

Online bullying can include:

- Hacking into someone's accounts/sites
- Posting prejudice / hate messages
- Impersonating someone online
- Public posting of images
- Exclusion
- Threats and manipulation
- Stalking

We will ensure that our children are taught safe ways to use the internet and encourage children to stay safe online through our Computing lessons, PSHE programme, assemblies, school council and internet safety week.



## Reporting and response

When responding to bullying, staff are advised to follow the steps below linked to the 5Rs:

### Reassure - Report – Record – Review and Revisit

1. Take bullying seriously. **Reassure** the child(ren) who is being bullied and find out as much as you can relating to the incident(s) of bullying. Encourage the child(ren) using bullying behaviours to see the other child's point of view. Make the child who is using bullying behaviours aware that it is not acceptable.
2. **Report** any bullying incidents to the class teacher or SLT.
3. **Record** any incidents on MyConcern as these will be reported to the LGB.
4. **Review** the school's Behaviour Policy to ensure that it is followed. Where there are confirmed cases of bullying, next steps will be actioned as appropriate and parents of both parties will be informed and invited into school.
5. **Revisit** our school values and rules with the children.

Once we have completed the above process, we will look to consider further next steps in the form of:

- Restorative questions and conversations with relevant parties including reinforcing our belief that behaviour can be changed and help the person using bullying behaviours to change their behaviour.
- Reconciliation where possible
- The child(ren) using bullying behaviours will be asked to genuinely apologise
- Consequences from our Behaviour Policy will be put in place as appropriate
- Liaison with parent / carer / social worker
- Use of home/school diary
- Use of behaviour contract / behaviour reward chart / behaviour report
- Create a network of support for pupils who have experienced bullying
- Peer support
- HOPE, Nurture or 1-1s or referral to counselling
- Involvement of external agencies (police, ICT specialists)
- In serious cases, fixed term or permanent exclusion will be considered

## Prevention

We want to ensure that all of our children at Edge Hill foster the school values to ensure they are showcasing positive learning behaviours at all times. We promote a variety of ways to minimise bullying through a range of approaches.

Through delivery of PSHE, RE and school assemblies, children learn that we are all different and that all differences are respected and celebrated within school. Children develop a greater knowledge of what bullying is, identify different types of bullying and develop a better understanding of the effects of bullying for both the person being bullied and the person using bullying behaviours. Children learn about online safety as part of their computing lessons. The school PSHE programme contains specific units on bullying, friendships and peer pressure.

**Promoting British Values and SMSC** – Edge Hill Academy actively promotes the fundamental British values of: Democracy, The rule of law and Individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. This is achieved through the effective spiritual, moral and cultural development of our pupils, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum and extra-curricular activities, through links with the local community and the wider world. We will enable our learners to understand that while different people may hold different views about what is 'right' and 'wrong', all people living in England are subject to its law.

**Hope** – The HOPE Project trains school staff to understand the mental health needs of young people and helps develop trainee support skills. It complements a whole school approach to positive health and psychological wellbeing. It offers a safe space in an environment in which the child feels comfortable.

**Behaviour Reward system** – All staff in our school have high expectations of the children with regard to behaviour and they strive to ensure that all children behave to the best of their ability. We uphold the ethos of equity, consistency, respect and understanding. Children actively embrace the reward system and receive rewards, such as: a simple smile, house points, stickers, Wow Learner awards and Special Mention Certificates for. This information is all listed in the Behaviour Policy.

**Yellow Hats and Sports Leaders** - Children from Year 6, support the development of all children in the playground and are committed to the following responsibilities:

- to listen, to help, to look out for, to treat kindly, to teach fun games and to organise activities.
- to help solve low-level disagreements at playtimes without the need for teacher/other adult intervention.

**School Council** - they reflect the views of their peers and provide further channels of communication for children.

**Year 6 transition** - learners undergo a period of planned transition activities in order to ensure that they are fully prepared for, and not worried about their transition to the High School.

**Display work** – throughout the year, displays will be renewed on a regular basis to reflect British values linked to the Current Affairs topic assembly

**Outside agencies** - certain professional bodies are invited to speak to the children, such as: PCSOs, Barnardos, NSPCC, as the opportunities arise.

**Circle time and**– to support children's understanding of school life and to support any worries or problems in school.

**Character Education Assembly** – raising awareness of the character virtues 'Building Blocks of Character', which breaks virtues down into four 'types', namely intellectual virtues, moral virtues, civic virtues, and performance virtues.

**Singing Assembly (High Spots / Low Spots)** – Children share any positive messages about school life to enthuse their peers. Equally, any areas of need are also discussed and key messages given.

**Anti-bullying Week** – this year we are linking our anti-bullying week to poetry in English to ensure there is a whole school focus on issues related to anti-bullying, emphasising the importance of working together and celebrating difference. This can be used to reinforce a culture of inclusiveness and acceptance.

**Physical Environment** - bullying can take place both inside and outside of school. All staff are aware of the limitations of the environment and places where children are expected to be more independent. Environments both inside and out need to offer children:

- ❖ safety;
- ❖ engaging activity
- ❖ access to adults for immediate help.

Staff are aware of potential 'danger spots' around the building such as the toilets. Most importantly, the children themselves are made aware of these as well as strategies for maintaining their own personal safety. Mrs Foster supports children by identifying these areas and making a list of where these areas are.

## The Role of Governors

- The Local Governing Board and the Fierté Trust Board supports the Headteacher in all endeavours to eliminate bullying from the academy. The Local Governing Board and the Fierté Academy Trust will not make any allowances for bullying at all, and any incidents of bullying that do occur will be taken very seriously and dealt with appropriately and in line with policy.
- The Local Governing Board monitors incidents of bullying that do occur and review the effectiveness of this policy regularly. The Governors require the Headteacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying, and to report to the governors on request about the effectiveness of school antibullying strategies.
- A parent who is dissatisfied with the way the school has dealt with a bullying incident can ask the Chair of Governors to investigate the matter. The Local Governing Board must respond in writing within ten days to any request from a parent to investigate incidents of bullying.
- In all cases, the governing body notifies the Headteacher and asks him/her to conduct an investigation into the case, and to report back to a representative of the Local Governing Board.

## The Role of the Headteacher

The head teacher sets the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

- It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to implement the school anti-bullying strategy, and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy and know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying.
- In the first instance, the class teacher is responsible for the implementation of the school anti-bullying strategy. He/she will take note of any isolated cases of name calling or physical or verbal incidents against any particular child. If it becomes apparent that a child is becoming systematically and repeatedly targeted (several times), then the Headteacher will be informed. The Headteacher will then note any other incidents that may take place between the child and his/her peers. If a child is being bullied over a period of time, then the Headteacher will inform the parents of the children concerned following the school behaviour policy in line with this.

- The Headteacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour. The Headteacher draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments, for example, if an incident occurs, the Headteacher may decide to use an assembly as the forum in which to discuss with other children why this type of behaviour is wrong.
- The Headteacher ensures that all staff, including lunchtime staff, receive sufficient training to be equipped to identify and deal with all incidents of bullying on a regular basis.
- Headteacher reports to the Local Governing Board about the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy on request.
- The Headteacher has a record of any incidents/complaints of bullying including online bullying. This record is updated as and when complaints occur. Any incidents are communicated to the Local Governing Board and Trust Board on a termly basis.

### The Role of All Adults (including teachers, support staff and lunchtime supervisors)

All adults in our school take all forms of bullying seriously and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. They keep records of concerns of bullying, reported bullying or witnessed bullying using the school's MyConcern system and ensure that a member of SLT is informed of their concerns (see Appendix 1 for what must be included in the MyConcern incident report).

If adults witness an act of bullying, they do all they can to support the child who is being bullied. Teaching Assistants, Lunchtime Supervisors and other adults inform class teachers of any concerns.

Incidents which are considered to be of a bullying nature are recorded as such on MyConcern (see Appendix 1 for what must be included). Where parents contact school to make allegations of bullying, a parent meeting will be arranged and a record of the conversation and actions to be taken will be recorded on MyConcern.

Teachers attempt to support all children in their class and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. By praising, rewarding and celebrating the success of all children, we aim to prevent incidents of bullying.

If, as teachers, we become aware of any bullying taking place between members of a class, we deal with the issue immediately. This may involve support for a child being bullied, and a consequence for the child who has carried out the bullying. We spend time talking to the child who has used bullying behaviours: we explain why the action of the child was wrong, and we endeavour to help the child change their behaviour in future. A member of SLT should be informed if bullying behaviours are repeatedly observed or reported. In more extreme cases, for example where initial discussions with parents have proven ineffective, the head teacher may contact external support agencies such as the Social Services.

### The Role of Parents

Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be displaying bullying behaviours, should contact their child's class teacher immediately. Parents have a responsibility to support the academy's anti-bullying policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school.

- Parents have opportunities to engage with staff about how we deal with 'bullying' and increase their awareness through discussion.
- Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's class teacher immediately. If they are not satisfied with the response, they should contact the Headteacher. If they remain dissatisfied, they should follow the academy's complaints procedure.
- Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy, actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the academy.
- Parents can report their concerns related to a suspected incident of bullying to the Headteacher.

## The Role of Pupils

- Pupils are encouraged to tell anybody they trust if they are being bullied, and if the bullying continues, they must keep on letting people know including school leaders and trusted members of staff.
- Pupils are encouraged to use the different methods in school for sharing concerns e.g. worry box or talking to an adult.
- Pupils are invited to tell us their views about a range of school issues including bullying, through pupil questionnaires and pupil conferencing.
- Pupil voice is part of our teaching and learning monitoring and Trust monitoring including Collaborative Monitoring and Strategic Peer Reviews always taking pupil voice into account, ensuring that the pupil voice, regarding keeping safe/ bullying, is heard on a regular basis.

## School Behaviour Policy

Edge Hill Academy has a Behaviour Policy, which underpins the rules of conduct for pupils before and after school as well as during the school day.

In addition, the policy states the process/procedures undertaken to report and prevent bullying. A copy of the Behaviour Policy is available online. A hard copy can also be requested through the school office.

## Where to get further help or advice

There are lots of organisations that provide support and advice if you are worried about bullying:

- [Anti-Bullying Alliance](#)
- [Bullying UK](#)
- [Childline](#)
- [The Diana Award](#)
- [Internet Matters](#)
- [Kidscape](#)
- [The UK Safer Internet Centre](#)
- [UK Council for Child Internet Safety \(UKCCIS\)](#)

## Appendix 1

### Recording and reporting an Incident of Bullying on MyConcern

Incidents of bullying MUST be recorded on MyConcern. Staff can use the following to support them with what should be included when they record a MyConcern to report an incident of bullying.

- 1. Remember to include the date and location of the incident, for example, recording clearly if the incident occurred:**

Inside School/Classroom

On playground or sports field

Away from school e.g. school trip

Travelling to/from school

Outside the school gates

- 2. Include information about the person being bullied and the child(ren) who is(are) bullying as well as any other people involved, such as staff that witnessed the incident.**
- 3. Provide a description of what happened, and the action taken. If further action is required, record it within the concern.**
- 4. Record any conversations with parents/carers of the child being bullied and the child(ren) displaying bullying behaviours.**
- 5. DSL and DDSL to check MyConcern and add relevant categories e.g. Behaviour, Child on Child Abuse, Bullying, Cyber Bullying etc**