

# Elmhurst School Anti Bullying Policy

## Aims:

It is the fundamental right of every boy at Elmhurst to learn within a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Bullying is serious and can potentially cause psychological damage and even suicide. We believe that all issues of bullying should be addressed so that our pupils are able to benefit fully from the opportunities available at Elmhurst.

## **Scope of this policy and links with other policies**

This policy includes:

- bullying of pupils by pupils within school
- bullying of and/or by pupils outside of school, where the school is aware of it
- bullying of staff by pupils within or outside school

Allegations about bullying of pupils by staff will be dealt with under the school's Safeguarding Policy.

This policy has links to the following school policies and procedures:

- Equal Opportunities and Appreciation of Diversity Policy
- SEN Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- ICT Acceptable Use Policy (internet safety)
- Child Protection Policy
- Discipline Policy
- Complaints procedure

This policy has been developed by the SMT and has been ratified by the staff.

## Definition/s

Elmhurst School chose to adopt the DCSF (Safe to Learn 2007):

**“Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.”** Specific types of bullying may include:

- Bullying related to special education needs (SEN) or disabilities
- Bullying related to appearance or health conditions
- Bullying related to sexual orientation
- Bullying related to home circumstances
- Bullying related to race
- Bullying related to religious/cultural background

Elmhurst will investigate if a pupil is feeling one or more of the following:

- Physically and/or mentally hurt or worried
- Unsafe and/or frightened
- Unable to do well and achieve
- 'Badly different', alone, unimportant and/or unvalued
- Unable to see a happy and exciting future for yourself

**When a boy, or group of boys, has been made aware of the effects of their behaviour on another person, and they continue to behave in the same manner, this will be considered to be an act of bullying.**

If someone is made to feel like this, or if they think someone they know feels like this, it should be investigated. This should happen straight away as it can take a long time to build up the courage to tell. However, at Elmhurst we are aware that many situations can make boys feel bad, sometimes it

depends on the situation they are in, and it is not always bullying – so we believe that the following definition, adapted from one written by the Anti-bullying Alliance, is also useful:

Bullying is any behaviour by an individual or group that:

- is meant to hurt – the person or people doing the bullying know what they are doing and mean to do it
- happens more than once – there will be a pattern of behaviour, not just a ‘one-off’ incident
- involves an imbalance of power – the person being bullied will usually find it very hard to defend themselves

It can be:

- Physical, e.g. kicking, hitting, taking and damaging belongings
- Verbal, e.g. name calling, taunting, threats, offensive remarks
- Relational, e.g. spreading nasty stories, gossiping, excluding from social groups
- Cyber, e.g. texts, e-mails, picture/video clip bullying, Instant Messaging (IM)

Bullying is particularly likely to happen in areas which are hidden away or unsupervised, so any such areas are constantly monitored and if possible denied access to boys. Eg the Year 6 boys’ changing room and the area by the side door are monitored carefully.

Where individuals or groups of boys bully others, this will be seen as a pattern of bullying behaviour and will be treated as such.

At Elmhurst we recognise that bullying is motivated by prejudice and for this reason is a particular concern. Any racist, sexist and homophobic behaviours and bullying related to perceptions about disability and/or special educational needs will be treated seriously. All staff will be provided with appropriate training in equality and diversity, so that they are equipped to tackle these issues on a wider scale as well as in relation to bullying. Further details of our commitment to this can be found in our Policy for Equal Opportunities and Appreciation of Ethnic Diversity Policy.

### **Identifying and reporting concerns about bullying:**

All concerns about bullying will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. We accept that boys who are being bullied may not report it. However, there may be changes in their behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration, feigning illness or absence from school. School teaching and ancillary staff will be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with this policy.

Pupils who are bullying others also need support to help them understand and change their own behaviour.

Pupils who are aware of bullying (‘bystanders’) can be a powerful force in helping to address it and will be encouraged to do so in a safe way.

All pupils will be encouraged to report bullying by:

- talking to a member of staff of their choice
- completing a ‘bullying concern’ form and placing it in the box at reception
- contacting local and national support agencies for advice/support
- Parents will be encouraged to report concerns about bullying and to support the school in tackling it. Trying to resolve bullying directly with pupils or their families can lead to an escalation of the problem.

### **Responding to reports about bullying:**

Elmhurst School will take the following steps when dealing with concerns about bullying:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, it will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been made aware of it.

- A clear account of the concern will be recorded and given to the Principal. In the Principal's absence the Bursar will assume the Principal's role.
- The Principal will interview everyone involved and keep a detailed record. This will be held in line with the school's data protection policy/practice. Where possible the Deputy Head and Head of Upper of Lower School will be involved in this process.
- Class, subject and support teachers will be informed.
- Parents and other relevant adults will be kept informed.
- Where bullying occurs outside school, any other relevant schools or agencies (e.g. after school club) will be informed about the concerns and any actions taken
- Punitive measures will be used as appropriate and in consultation with all parties involved.
- Support will be offered for the victim of bullying and also for the bully/ies.
- Reports of bullying will be filed centrally and held by the Principal to enable any patterns in bullying to be considered.

Investigations will always be conducted using a caring listening approach; it is acknowledged that bullies can often be victims too. Discussions will be held at length with the victim, potential bully/bullies and potential witnesses. A sensitive approach will be employed with all parties.

However, during discussions with a boy or boys accused of bullying it will be made clear that bullying of any sort is not acceptable at Elmhurst School. Boys accused of bullying will be confronted with the details and asked to tell the truth about the situation/incident.

Boys who have been bullied will be supported by:

- the offer of an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff of their choice
- the provision of reassurance that the bullying will be addressed
- the offer of continuous support
- the restoration of self-esteem and confidence
- the use of specialist interventions and/or referrals to other agencies e.g. school councillor, where appropriate

Boys who have bullied will be helped by:

- discussing what happened
- discovering why the boy became involved
- establishing the wrong doing and need to change
- informing parents to help change the attitude of the boy
- the use of specialist interventions and/or referrals to the school councillor where appropriate

The following disciplinary steps may be taken:

- official warnings to cease offending
- loss of privileges
- detention
- exclusion from certain areas of school premises
- confiscation of mobile phones, in line with our Acceptable Use (internet safety) policy
- minor fixed-term exclusion
- major fixed-term exclusion
- permanent exclusion

### **Parents**

At Elmhurst we believe that most concerns about bullying will be resolved through discussion between home and school. However, where a parent feels their concerns have not been resolved, they are encouraged to use the formal Complaints Procedure.

Where a boy is involved in bullying others outside school, e.g. in the street or through the use of the internet at home, parents will be asked to work with the school in addressing their son's behaviour, for example restricting/monitoring their use of the internet or mobile phone.

Referral of the family to the school councillor will be made where appropriate.

The contact details of organizations that might be able to offer additional support will be made available to parents.

### **Staff/INSET**

All staff will be provided with training on a biannual basis.

### **Preventative measures**

In order to reduce the risk of bullying, the school will:

raise awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in PSHE, form period time, assemblies, subject areas and informal discussion, as appropriate, in an attempt to eradicate such behaviour.

participate in initiatives such as Anti-bullying Week

seek to develop links with the wider community that will support inclusive anti-bullying education – eg Croydon Council – Life Bus

consider the use of specific strategies, for example peer mentoring, on a regular basis and implement them if appropriate, subject to available resources.

All staff will:

watch for early signs of distress in boys.

listen to children's complaints – no matter how trivial they initially may seem.

School Council/Prefects:

The School Council representative/Class Prefect may serve as a boy's first contact point, if he feels he cannot tell an adult. In such cases, notice should be taken of information passed to teachers from School Council Representatives/Prefects.

Worry Boxes:

Worry Boxes will be placed in all classrooms/outside the School Office where boys can post their concerns without having to verbalise them. Boys will also be encouraged to report incidents of bullying against others; the worry boxes will enable them to do this anonymously if they wish.

All other action will follow our procedures in the Discipline Policy.

### **Promotion of this policy**

The policy and methods for reporting bullying concerns will be promoted throughout Elmhurst School, for example in information packs for new pupils and staff and through regular awareness raising activities with existing pupils and their families. Staff will receive INSET every two years.

### **Monitoring, evaluation and review**

THE SMT will take the lead on the implementation of the policy.

Parents will be asked about bullying through the annual parental survey. After an incident parents will be asked to complete a 'Satisfaction Survey' so that we might evaluate our practice.

The Principal/Bursar will prepare an annual report, including statistics about:

the number of reported concerns

monitoring information about the pupils involved

motivations for bullying

actions taken and outcomes

Statistical information will be provided to the proprietor as required.

Elmhurst School will review the policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness.

Updated January 2011 – Henry Wickham/Claudia Lazell  
Review due January 2012