



## **Education-My Life Matters**

### **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY & GUIDELINES FOR STAFF**

Our anti-bullying policy sets out how we feel about bullying. What we will do to tackle it and how we will support our learners who experience or display bullying behaviour.

Your attention is drawn to the DfE guidance 2014 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' DfE website [www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk)

At EMLM, our community is based upon respect for others, good manners and a sense of decency. We are committed to providing a safe and caring environment that is free from disruption, violence and any form of harassment so that every one of our learners can develop their full potential. We expect our learners to treat members of staff with courtesy and co-operation so that they can learn in a relaxed but orderly atmosphere. All learners should care for and support each other.

Parents and guardians have an important role in supporting EMLM in maintaining high standards of behaviour. It is essential that EMLM and homes have consistent expectations of behaviour and that they co-operate closely together. Acceptance of this policy forms part of our standard terms and conditions. This policy is available to parents of learners and prospective learners on our website and on request. It is also available and known to staff and boarders, including junior and recently appointed staff.

At EMLM, we always treat bullying, including allegations of bullying very seriously, regardless of whether it is physical or emotional. It conflicts sharply with the EMLM's policy on equal opportunities, as well as with our social and moral principles. Bullying can be so serious that it causes psychological damage, eating disorders, self-harm and even suicide, and, whilst bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour. It is also noted that in the case of peer-on-peer abuse, bullying can also have safeguarding implications.

We reserve the right to investigate incidents that take place outside EMLM hours, on EMLM visits and trips and that occur in the vicinity of the EMLM, involving our learners.

#### **Guidance For Staff**

All new members of staff will be given guidance on the EMLM's anti-bullying policy and in how to react to allegations of bullying at Induction. They will be required to read the EMLM's policy as part of their induction. Further training will occur on staff INSET days.

Flagrant cases of bullying are fortunately not normal features of life at EMLM, but we should be aware that it can happen at any time, and that patterns of bullying, once established, can easily repeat themselves, even to the extent that those who have suffered themselves may in their turn cause others to suffer.

Discreet but constant vigilance is therefore essential and is an important part of our role in the EMLM. Teachers should arrive on time for lessons and be alert to signs of horseplay: the learner who waits alone outside the EMLM room (or who hangs about after the lesson) may well be a victim. Similar considerations apply to games, and other activities. The less structured times of the day, meal times, break and the weekend, are moments when bullying and unkindness can occur. There may also be places where learners are more at risk, such as changing rooms or dormitories and workrooms. It is therefore important for tutors or a trusted senior learner to keep an eye on things unobtrusively. We should be alert to any inappropriate language or behavior or other dubious practices and never acquiesce to them. We should always be aware of and reflect on our own behaviour in case it might unintentionally trigger bullying.

Peer-group bullying is most likely to occur among the younger learners - as the pecking order develops. We should also be aware that some learners could be more vulnerable than others; those who are shy, come from an over-protective background, are different in some way, behave inappropriately with others or even show off expensive possessions. They may well need our guidance about how to adapt their behaviour to avoid or deal with bullying and unkindness.

It is important that as a EMLM we act with consistency about bullying. Discussions between the strategic lead and operational lead should ensure that reaction is immediate before matters have a chance to escalate and that minor incidents are dealt with; this should reduce the occurrence of more serious bullying.

## **Bullying**

All forms of bullying will be acted upon. Everybody in the Education-My Life Matters Independent EMLM and Alternative Provision has a responsibility to work together to stop bullying, which can include online as well as offline behavior. Bullying behavior can also include –

- physically pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching etc.
- name calling, spreading rumours, persistent teasing and humiliation or the continual ignoring of others
- posting of derogatory or abusive comments, videos or images online or on social media (cyberbullying)
- racial, homophobic, transphobic or sexist comments, taunts or gestures
- sexual comments, suggestions or behaviour
- unwanted physical contact.

### **Education-My Life Matters Independent EMLM and Alternative Provision will –**

- recognise its duty of care and responsibility to safeguard all players from harm
- promote and implement this anti-bullying policy in addition to our safeguarding policy and procedures
- ensure that bullying behaviour is not tolerated or condoned
- require all members of the provision to sign up this policy
- take action to investigate and respond to any reports of bullying from learnerren and young people
- encourage and facilitate our learners to play an active part in developing and adopt a code of conduct for appropriate behaviour
- ensure that all staff are given access to information, guidance and training on bullying.

### **Each member of staff will –**

- encourage individuals to speak out about bullying behaviour
- respect every learner's need for, and right to, a work and play in an environment where safety, security, praise, recognition and opportunity for taking responsibility are available
- respect the feelings and views of all
- recognise that everyone is important and equal, and that our differences make each of us special and worthy of being valued
- show appreciation of others by acknowledging individual qualities, contributions and progress
- ensure safety by having rules and practices carefully explained and displayed for all to see
- report incidents of bullying behaviour they see – by doing nothing you are condoning the behavior.

### **Supporting learners –**

- we will let our learners know who will listen to and support them
- we will create an “open door” ethos where learners feel confident to talk to an adult about bullying behaviour or any other issue that affects them
- we will identify, acknowledge and address any potential barriers to learners talking (including those associated with a learner's disability or impairment) speaking
- we will make sure learners are aware of helpline numbers
- we will make sure that anyone who reports an incident of bullying will be listened to carefully and reports will be taken seriously
- we will ensure that any reported experience of bullying behavior will be investigated and will involve listening carefully to all those involved
- learners who experience bullying behavior will be supported and helped to uphold their right to learn in a safe environment
- those who display bullying behaviour will be supported and encouraged to develop
- we will make sure that sanctions are proportionate and fair.

### **Support to the parents/carers**

- parents or carers will be advised on the EMLM's bullying policy and practice
- any experience of bullying behaviour will be discussed with the learners' parents or carer
- parents/carers will be consulted on action to be taken (for both victim and bully) and we will agree on these actions together
- information and advice on coping with bullying will be made available
- support will be offered to parents, including information from other agencies or support lines

### **Peer On Peer Abuse**

Peer-on-peer abuse is abuse by one or more learners against another learner. It can manifest itself in many ways and can include bullying (including cyber bullying), physical abuse, initiation/hazing violence and rituals, sexting, sexual assault, gender-based issues and harmful sexual behaviours including sexual violence and sexual harassment. EMLM believes that all bullying and peer-on-peer abuse is unacceptable and must be dealt with in this context. Abusive comments and interactions should never be passed off or dismissed as “banter” or “part of growing up”. Nor will harmful sexual behaviours be dismissed as the same or “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”.

## **Detecting Bullying**

Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a learner is being bullied include:

- Unwillingness to return to EMLM
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually bad work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others
- Books, bags and other belongings suddenly go missing, or are damaged
- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary)
- Diminished levels of self - confidence
- Frequent visits to the Sanatorium with symptoms such as stomach pains, headaches
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class
- Choosing the company of adults
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact
- Difficulty in sleeping, experiences nightmares
- Talking of suicide or running away

Although there may be other causes for some of the above symptoms, a repetition of, or a combination of these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents and teachers.

## **Racism**

Examples of racism that we need to be alert to include:

- Verbal abuse by name-calling, racist jokes and offensive mimicry
- Physical threats or attacks
- Wearing of provocative badges or insignia
- Bringing racist leaflets, comics or magazines into EMLM
- Inciting others to behave in a racist way
- Racist graffiti or other written insults, even against food, music, dress or customs
- Refusing to cooperate in work or in play

## **Sexual bullying**

Sexual bullying can have the following characteristics:

- Sexual innuendoes and propositions
- Abusive name-calling
- Looks and comments about appearance, attractiveness (e.g. emerging puberty)
- Pornographic material, graffiti with sexual content
- In its most extreme form, sexual assault or rape

## **Homophobia**

We should be alert to sexual bullying based around sexual orientation, whether or not the person being bullied is gay, lesbian or bisexual. Generally Homophobic bullying looks like other sorts of bullying, but in particular it can include:

- Verbal abuse - including spreading rumours that someone is gay, suggesting that something or someone is inferior and so they are 'gay'- e.g. 'those trainers are so gay!'

- Physical abuse – including hitting, punching, kicking, sexual assault, and threatening behaviour.
- Cyberbullying – using on-line spaces to spread rumours about someone or exclude them. Can also include text messaging, including video and picture messaging.

### **Special Educational Needs & Disability**

We should be alert to the fact that learners with special educational needs or disabilities are often at greater risk of being bullied than other learners on the basis of their educational difficulties or disability.

With constantly advancing technology we must be alert to this unpleasant and particularly intrusive form of bullying. Cyberbullying can involve Social Networking Sites, like Snapshot, Instagram, Facebook and Twitter, emails and mobile phones, used for SMS messages and as cameras.

### **Banter**

It should be noted that abusive comments and interactions may not be passed off as mere 'banter'. Such comments referring to a person's race, religion, ethnicity, sexuality, culture, special educational needs or because a learner is in care, are not acceptable and will be treated as bullying matters.

### **Sharing Any Concerns**

Learners should be encouraged to "tell" when bullying occurs, if not the Strategic lead or Operational lead or another adult, then a senior learner. Friends of victims should be encouraged to do the telling, if necessary: this is difficult and learners often balk at it, but the more it occurs the more acceptable it becomes. We should guarantee that whistle-blowers who act in good faith will not be penalised and will be supported. Others in a year group should be reminded how important it is to let someone know if a problem recurs.

Any staff or senior learners who witness any form of bullying, however minor or who are at all concerned about any behaviour should report it to the learners' strategic lead or strategic lead. These incidents may be part of a bigger picture of which the strategic lead strategic lead may be aware.

Members of the community (learners, staff and parents) need to be mindful that the EMLM expects any knowledge of bullying to be reported. A bystander who does not report bullying is complicit in the act.

Parents should be made aware on their learner's arrival in the EMLM of the importance of keeping lines of communication with the Strategic lead or Operational lead open so that any unhappiness of which they hear can be investigated and where necessary dealt with quickly.

### **PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH REPORTED BULLYING**

If an incident of bullying is reported, the following procedures are adopted –

1. The member of staff or senior learner to whom it was reported or who first discovers the situation, will control the situation, reassure and support the learners involved.
2. He/she will inform the strategic lead or the operational lead, as soon as possible.
3. The victim will be interviewed on their own and asked to write an account of events.
4. The alleged bully, together with all others who were involved, will be interviewed individually and asked to write an immediate account of events.

5. The incident should be recorded on an Incident form and signed and dated before forwarding to the strategic lead.
6. The victim will be interviewed at a later stage, separately from the alleged perpetrator. It will be made clear to them why revenge is inappropriate. They will be offered support to develop a strategy to help them.
7. The alleged bully will be interviewed at a later stage, separately from the victim, and it will be made clear why their behaviour was inappropriate and caused distress. They will be offered guidance on modifying their behavior. If appropriate a disciplinary sanction will be given as set out in the EMLM's Behaviour Policy.
8. The parents/guardians of all parties should be informed and invited into EMLM to discuss the matter. Their support should be sought.
9. A way forward, including disciplinary sanctions and counselling, should be agreed. This should recognise that suitable support is needed both for learnerren who are being bullied and for learners who bully others.
10. A meeting involving all the parties, with close staff supervision, could be helpful in developing a strategy for all concerned to close the episode.
11. A monitoring and review strategy will be put in place.

In very serious cases, and only after the strategic lead has been involved, it may be necessary to make a report to the Police or to the Social Services. In line with Keeping Learnerren Safe in Education 2018 a bullying incident should be addressed as a Safeguarding concern where a learner is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm.

In line with KCSIE 2018 all peer-on-peer abuse will also be treated as a Safeguarding matter.

It is the policy of EMLM to attempt to resolve such issues internally under the EMLM's own disciplinary procedures, unless the matter is of such gravity that a criminal prosecution is likely. If this is the case, then the EMLM's Safeguarding Policy should be referred to for guidance with regards to making a submission to the MASH.

### **Recording & Monitoring Incidents Of Bullying**

All bullying incidents and response to them should be recorded on an Incident form, which should be forwarded to the strategic lead. A central record of all incidents will be kept, so that patterns of behaviour can be identified and monitored. The incident record will record the name of the learner who was bullied, the perpetrators and details of what occurred.

### **Measures To Help Victims Of Bullying**

It can be helpful to try to identify those likely to be bullied and try if possible to minimise the characteristics that might make them susceptible. This can be either preemptive action or part of the way victims can be helped not to attract bullying in future. The literature identifies "passive" (unassertive in their peer groups) and "provocative" (hyperactive) victims.

Discussion might help them to:

- Realise that they need to help themselves
- Be positive and assertive
- Be less selfish
- Be less aggressive
- Maintain friendships
- Understand non-victim body language

Regular meetings with an adult to discuss progress can help. Reference to the Kidscape booklets such as 'You can beat bullying' and 'Stop bullying' may be useful.

Staff should remind learners that if they find that they are bullied again then they should:

- Try to remain calm and look as positive as they can
- Be firm and clear – look the bully in the eye and tell them to stop
- Get away from the situation as quickly as possible
- Tell an adult or monitor what has happened straight away.

## **Cyber Bullying**

Cyberbullying is the use of Information Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else.

Cyberbullying can have a serious impact because of a number of factors including:

- Invasion of personal space
- The anonymity (at least initially) of the bully
- The ability to broadcast upsetting messages and images rapidly to a potentially huge audience and to continue to do so repeatedly over a long period of time.

## **Forms of Cyberbullying**

Cyberbullying may take different forms:

- Threats and intimidation via electronic means • Harassment or 'cyberstalking' • Sexting • Vilification/defamation
- Setting up website pages to invite others to post derogatory comment about a learner • The sending of insulting and vicious text messages • Exclusion or peer rejection • Impersonation
- Unauthorized publication of private information or images (including 'happy slapping') • The posting of fake and/or obscene photographs of the victim on a social networking site • Hacking into social networking sites and removing and circulating material which may embarrassing or personal • Manipulation • "Chatting" on line e.g. through Social Network/Gaming Sites etc.

Whilst some cyberbullying is clearly deliberate and aggressive, it must be recognized that some incidents of cyberbullying may be unintentional and the result of simply not thinking about the consequences.

Learners may need reminding that under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.

## **Preventing Cyberbullying**

Members of the EMLM's community will understand and discuss cyberbullying through:

- The sharing of the definition of cyberbullying
- The discussion of cyberbullying and its forms
- The learning of our responsibilities in the use of ICT, and the sanctions for its misuse.

Agreed rules will be followed when using ICT. The prevention of cyberbullying will be promoted through discussion and learner activities around what cyberbullying is and how it differs from other forms of bullying. Cyberbullying education will be delivered through PSHE

lessons, Year Group Events and through ICT lessons. EMLM's EMLM reserves the right to monitor learners' use of the internet on a routine basis and to examine mobile phones where there is reason to suspect abuse.

The misuse of technology will be subject to the EMLM's disciplinary regime and will be considered a serious offence. Learners will be held personally responsible for all material that they have placed on a web site and for all material that appears on a web site of which they are an account holder.

Misconduct of this kind outside of EMLM will be liable to EMLM discipline if the welfare of other learners or the culture or reputation of the EMLM is placed at risk and sanctions may include confiscation of mobile phones or restrictions on the use of the internet.

## **Education**

Education and discussion around the responsible use of technologies and e-safety are key to preventing cyberbullying and helping learners deal confidently with any problems that might arise, whether in or out of EMLM. EMLM will publicise progress and cyberbullying prevention activities to the whole-EMLM community.

Members of the EMLM community will be encouraged to follow the following advice which is displayed throughout the EMLM.

- Always respect others - be careful what you say on line and what images you send.
- Think before you send - whatever you send can be made public very quickly and could stay online forever
- Think before you post
- Treat your password like your toothbrush - keep it to yourself. Only give your mobile number or personal website address to trusted friends
- Block the bully - learn how to block or report someone who is behaving badly.
- Don't retaliate or reply
- Save the evidence - learn how to keep records of offending messages, pictures or online conversations
- Make sure you tell:
  - An adult you trust, or call a helpline like Learnerline on 0800 1111 in confidence
  - The provider of the service; check the service provider's website to see where to report incidents.

## **Responding to Cyberbullying Investigating incidents - the aggrieved**

The person being bullied should keep examples of texts or emails received to aid an investigation. To contain the spread of cyberbullying consideration must be given to -

- Contact the service provider or host (e.g. the social networking site)
- Confiscate phones
- Contact the police (in relation to illegal content)

Members of the EMLM community will be advised on steps they can take to avoid recurrence. This will include –

- Not to retaliate or reply

- Being provided with appropriate contact details of service providers
- An awareness of changing contact details, blocking contacts, or leaving a chatroom.

All allegations of bullying will be taken seriously.

### **Working With the Perpetrator & Sanctions**

Steps should be taken to change their attitude and behaviour as well as ensuring access to any support that is required. The following factors should be considered when determining the appropriate sanctions:

- The impact on the victim: was the bully acting anonymously?
- Was the material widely circulated and humiliating?
- How difficult was controlling the spread of the material?
- The motivation of the bully: was the incident unintentional or retaliation to bullying behaviour from others?

Technology-specific sanctions for learners engaged in cyberbullying behaviour could include limiting internet access for a period of time or removing the right to bring a mobile phone into EMLM. Professional judgment will be used in choosing from a range of strategies to remind individuals and groups of their responsibility to prevent bullying and help deal with it if it happens. Parents of both the aggrieved and the perpetrator (where known) will be informed so that the process of restorative justice can be implemented at an early stage. External agencies will be involved when this is deemed appropriate especially where there has been a breach of criminal law.

### **Useful contacts**

NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000

Learnerline 0800 1111 / [www.learnerline.org.uk](http://www.learnerline.org.uk)

Kidscape [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)

Anti-Bullying Alliance [www.antibullyingalliance.org](http://www.antibullyingalliance.org)