



# ST EDMUND'S SCHOOL

## CANTERBURY

### Anti-Bullying Whole School Policy (including Early Years)

#### AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

At St Edmund's, the community is based upon respect, good manners and fair play. We celebrate success. 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 pupils can develop his/her full potential in accordance with *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (2019). We expect our pupils to treat members of staff with courtesy and co-operation so that they can learn in a relaxed, but orderly, atmosphere. All pupils should care for and support each other.

St Edmund's prides itself on its respect and mutual tolerance. Parents/guardians have an important role in supporting us in maintaining high standards of behaviour. It is essential that school 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 pupils and prospective pupils on our website and on request. It is also available and known to staff and boarders, including recently appointed staff.

Bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination will not be tolerated. We treat all our pupils and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff and the School. Any kind of bullying is unacceptable. The school involves parents and pupils in helping to prevent bullying and feels that both have a part to play, including when they find themselves as bystanders. This policy applies to all day and boarding pupils in the School, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The school believes that having a clear policy which is communicated to pupils, parents and staff and which is implemented in full, will create an environment of good behaviour and respect, where good examples are set by staff and older pupils. A bullying incident will be treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

## DEFINITION OF BULLYING

“Bullying may be defined as: “Behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group, either physically or emotionally”. *Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for School Leaders, Staff and Governing Bodies, DFE 2017.*

Bullying is the intentional hurting, harming, intimidating or humiliating of another person by physical (including sexual), verbal (including email, chat room and SMS messages), and emotional means (by excluding, tormenting, spreading malicious rumours or interfering with possessions). It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It can involve complicity that falls short of direct participation, making someone act against their will or better judgement. Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and intimidatory.

Bullying may involve actions or comments motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example: race, sex, gender, homophobia, religion, culture, special educational needs, disability, physical attributes (such as hair colour or body shape), because a child is adopted or is a carer. It may occur directly or through cyber-bullying. (eg. social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email). Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time and can involve everyone - pupils, other young people, staff and parents.

So called “peer on peer abuse” (defined as “any form of physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, and coercive control, exercised between children and within children’s relationships” - *Firmin, 2017, Abuse Between Young People: A Contextual Account*) is not acceptable and will not be treated by the school as “banter” or “part of growing up”.

Useful information on bullying and cyberbullying can be found at the following locations:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

<https://www.childnet.com/>

<http://www.kelsi.org.uk/child-protection-and-safeguarding/e-safety/cyberbullying>

## THE SCHOOL’S RESPONSE TO BULLYING

At St Edmund’s, we always treat bullying, including allegations of bullying, very seriously. It conflicts sharply with the School’s policy on equal opportunities, as well as with its social and moral principles. Bullying, both physical and emotional, 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 violence or assault, theft repeated harassment or intimidation, eg name calling, threats and abusive phone calls, emails or text messages and hate crimes.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of:

- The Head to communicate this policy to the school community, to ensure that disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, and that a member of the senior leadership team has been identified to take overall responsibility
- School Governors to take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy
- All staff, including: governors, senior leadership, teaching and non-teaching staff, to support, uphold and implement this policy accordingly
- Parents/carers to support their children and work in partnership with the school
- Pupils to abide by the policy

## SIGNS OF BULLYING

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

- Unwillingness to return to school
- 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 Medical Centre with symptoms such as stomach pains, headaches etc
- 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, experiencing nightmares, bedwetting etc
- 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.

## PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

We take the following preventative measures in order to ensure that bullying does not become a problem which is associated with St Edmund's:

### 1. Training

- All new pupils (including boarders and our youngest pupils) are briefed thoroughly on the school's expected standards of behaviour. They are told what to do if they encounter bullying. We guarantee that whistle-blowers who act in good faith will not be penalised and will be supported.

- Pupils are taught that every pupil has the right to enjoy his or her learning and leisure time free from intimidation and bullying.
- All staff and pupils are expected to be alert to the possibility of bullying occurring.
- All new members of staff in their first week at St Edmund's are given guidance on the school's anti-bullying policy and in how to react to allegations of bullying. They are required to read the school's policy as part of their induction. We use appropriate assemblies to explain the school's policy on bullying. Our PSHEE, tutorial and assembly programmes are structured to give pupils an awareness of their social and moral responsibilities as they progress through the school. The programme is structured to enforce the message about community involvement and taking care of each other.
- Effective staff training raises awareness, makes clear the principles of the school policy and reinforces the legal responsibilities involved. Staff must act upon instances of bullying in order to resolve and prevent problems, and to access sources of support.
- Other lessons, particularly RS, English and Drama highlight the issue of bullying and reinforce this message by teaching moral and spiritual values that show bullying to be unacceptable, by developing social skills, by discussing differences between people and the importance of avoiding prejudice-based language.
- Pupils are taught to understand that bullies often try to recruit others and, as a result, weaker characters can be drawn in. They are taught that to stand by when someone is being bullied is to support bullying.

## 2. Reporting

- All pupils are encouraged to tell a member of staff at once if they know or suspect that bullying is taking place in line with our policy on whistle-blowing.
- All suspected or reported incidents of bullying are recorded and investigated at once. We always monitor reported incidents. Records of any incidents are kept securely on 3SYS and regularly reviewed in order that patterns of behaviour can be identified and monitored.

## 3. Support

- We have a strong and experienced pastoral team of Tutors, Deputy Housemasters, and Housemasters and boarding staff who assist the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and are trained in handling any incidents as an immediate priority, and are alert to possible signs of bullying.
- Our pastoral team gives support and guidance to other staff on handling and reporting incidents, and on the follow-up work with both victims and bullies. Inset sessions are held regularly using outside experts.
- Our trained Senior School School Counsellor is an important part of our pastoral support service, providing specialist skills of assessment and counselling. She is available to give confidential advice and counselling support to pupils who can refer themselves to her when they have social, emotional or behavioural concerns. On occasion, a member of our pastoral team may refer a pupil to her.
- In Junior School, staff may suggest referring specific pupils to the Junior School School Counsellor, however, prior to commencing sessions with the children, she will contact parents to gain permission to see the children. In addition, the choristers have regular

meetings with a well-being coach who helps them to manage the significant demands on their time outside those other pupils might face due to the nature of their role.

- The School Chaplain will give support and guidance to pupils of all faiths. Pupils can refer themselves to him, for example, at a time of family break-up, sickness or bereavement. The Chaplain will provide confidential advice and seek to encourage the development of tolerance, understanding and respect for others in a multi-faith community.

#### 4. Awareness

- Staff are always on duty at times when pupils are not in class and patrol the School site, particularly areas where bullying might occur. They are trained to be alert to inappropriate language or behaviour.
- Staff are aware of the possibility of verbal or emotional bullying occurring in lessons through the attitude and reactions of other pupils. They are alert to the importance of understanding the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender pupils.

#### 5. Boarding

- In boarding houses, there are strong teams of tutors supporting the Director of Boarding, Houseparents and the Matrons, who act *in loco parentis*. The informal house environment is important in reinforcing a pupil's standards and values providing the opportunity for friendly, informal discussion of matters of concern to the individual pupil outside the formal classroom. A member of the boarding house staff is always on duty to supervise the pupils.
- We encourage close contact between the Director of Boarding, the Houseparents and parents/guardians, and would always make contact if we were worried about a pupil's well-being.
- All boarders and their parents are made aware of the contents of the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and are aware that they can download copies from the school's website. All boarders know how to report anxieties to the Director of Boarding and Boarding Houseparents or to another member of the pastoral team.
- Our Medical Centre and all our boarding houses display advice on where pupils can seek help, including details of confidential helplines and websites connecting to external specialists, such as Childline, Kidscape, Get Connected, Samaritans etc.
- All pupils have access to a telephone helpline enabling them to call for support in private.

#### 6. Older Pupils

- We provide leadership training to our Captains of School and their team of Prefects which specifically covers the importance of offering support and assistance to younger and to vulnerable pupils.

#### 7. Additional

- No initiation ceremonies, often designed to cause pain, anxiety or humiliation, are tolerated.
- We reserve the right to investigate incidents that take place outside school hours, on school visits and trips and that occur in the vicinity of the school, involving our pupils.

- We welcome feedback from parents and guardians on the effectiveness of our preventative measures.

### **CYBERBULLYING – DEFINITION**

Kent County Council define cyber-bullying: “as the use of technologies by an individual, or by a group of people, to deliberately and repeatedly upset someone else. Cyberbullying is a method of bullying and should be viewed and treated the same as “real world” bullying and can happen to any member of the school community. Educational setting staff, parents and young people have to be constantly vigilant and work together to prevent and tackle bullying wherever it appears” (KCC website: <http://www.kelsi.org.uk/child-protection-and-safeguarding/e-safety/cyberbullying>)

The NSPCC provide the following useful examples of cyberbullying activity:

- sending threatening or abusive text messages
- creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos
- 'trolling' - the sending of menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games
- excluding children from online games, activities or friendship groups
- setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child
- encouraging young people to self-harm
- voting for or against someone in an abusive poll
- creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name
- sending explicit messages, also known as sexting
- pressuring children into sending sexual images or engaging in sexual conversations

(NSPCC website: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/bullying-and-cyberbullying/what-is-bullying-cyberbullying>).

The school’s E-Safety policy details its expectations of pupils and staff, and is available on the policies area of the school intranet.

Cyberbullying can involve Social Networking Sites, like Instagram, Facebook and Titter, emails and mobile phones used for SMS messages and as cameras. Cyberbullying is particularly pernicious as it can occur 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and can affect the victim in his/her home or wherever a mobile device is accessed.

### **CYBERBULLYING AND MOBILE PHONE ABUSE – PREVENTATIVE MEASURES**

In addition to the preventative measures described above, the school:

- Expects all pupils to adhere to and to sign its E-safety Rules document for the safe use of the internet. Certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and our IT Department monitors pupils’ use.

- May impose sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse of the internet.
- Offers guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and cyberbullying in PSHEE lessons and through the tutorial system which covers blocking, removing contacts from 'buddy lists' and sharing personal data.
- Offers guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details safe.
- Does not permit the use of mobile phones in classrooms, public areas of the school, or where they may cause annoyance to others.
- Does not allow the use of cameras or mobile phones in washing and changing areas, or in the bedrooms of boarding houses.

### **PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH REPORTED BULLYING, INCLUDING CYBER-BULLYING, MOBILE PHONE BULLYING AND BULLYING OUTSIDE SCHOOL**

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

- The member of staff to whom it was reported, or who first discovers the situation, will control the situation, reassure and support the pupils involved (including witnesses and possible additional victims).
- He/she will inform an appropriate member of the pastoral team as soon as possible.
- The member of staff will calmly explain the range of disciplinary measures that are potentially involved.
- The victim will be interviewed on his/her own and asked to write an account of events.
- The bully, together with all others who were involved, will be interviewed individually and asked to write an immediate account of events.
- The incident should be recorded on 3SYS. These records are kept in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's approach and to enable the school to identify any patterns.
- In the Senior School, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) will inform the Tutors, Housemaster and, where relevant, Director of Boarding of both the bully/bullies and the victim[s] as soon as possible. In very serious incidents, the Head should be informed. In the Junior School, the Head will inform the relevant members of staff. In the Pre-Prep, the Head of the Pre-Prep will inform the relevant members of staff
- The victim will be interviewed at a later stage by a member of the pastoral team separately from the alleged perpetrator. It will be made clear to him/her why revenge is inappropriate. He/she will be offered support to develop a strategy to help him or herself.
- The alleged bully will be interviewed at a later stage by a member of the pastoral team, separately from the victim, and it will be made clear why his/her behaviour was inappropriate and caused distress. He/she will be offered guidance on modifying his or her behaviour, together with any appropriate disciplinary sanctions as set out in the school's Behaviour Management Policy; for example, detention, withdrawal of privileges or suspension. In particularly serious and/or persistent cases, the bully should expect permanent exclusion.
- The parents/guardians of all parties should be informed and invited into School to discuss the matter. Their support should be sought.
- A way forward, including disciplinary sanctions and counselling, should be agreed.

This should recognise that suitable support is needed both for children who are being bullied and for pupils who bully others, as well as dealing with appropriate disciplinary measures in accordance with the school's Behaviour Management Policy. Disciplinary sanctions will reflect the seriousness of an incident and are intended to convey a deterrent effect.

- A meeting involving all the parties, with close staff supervision, could be helpful in developing a strategy for all concerned to close the episode.
- A monitoring and review strategy will be put in place.
- The school will keep records of cases or allegations of bullying to evaluate the effectiveness of the approach adopted or to enable patterns to be identified.
- The designated safeguarding lead will be informed of all bullying issues where there are safeguarding concerns.
- If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved, such as: the police (if a criminal offence has been committed) or other local services including early help or children's social care (if a child is felt to be at risk of significant harm).
- However, it is the policy of St Edmund's to attempt to resolve such issues internally under the School's own disciplinary procedures, unless the matter is of such gravity that external agencies must be informed.
- The school may exclude a pupil, either temporarily or permanently, in cases of severe and persistent bullying and in the event that the support put in place for the bully does not result in the modification of behaviour to an acceptable level.
- If concerns exist regarding possible bullying by a member of staff, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) will immediately investigate to establish whether a legitimate grievance or concern has been raised. Disciplinary action may follow as required in accordance with the Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures for Teaching and Support Staff Policy.

## EYFS CHILDREN

Even the youngest children are encouraged to behave towards each other with kindness and consideration. They have to learn to look after their own possessions and to respect other's possessions. We expect them to be honest, helpful and polite, and to work hard and to listen to others. They should respect everyone and learn to value differences and diversity. The Head of the Pre-Prep is also the Head of EYFS, and is in overall charge of the management of behaviour.

We explain to children why some forms of behaviour are unacceptable and hurtful to others. We rarely need to impose sanctions but sometimes we may remove a treat for hurtful behaviour. Parents are always informed via a note in the homework diary when any sanction or reproof is needed and, in cases of repeated instances of hurtful or inappropriate behaviour, they will be invited into the School to discuss the situation with their child's Teacher and the Head of the Pre-Prep and to agree a joint way of handling the difficulty.

Copies of our Behaviour Management Policy for our EYFS children are available to parents on request from the Head of the Pre-Prep, and an abridged version can be found in the Pre-Prep Parents' Handbook and on the school website.



## COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Parents and pupils are encouraged to use our Complaints Policy (which is published on our website) if they feel that their concerns about bullying (or anything else) are not being addressed properly. Parents of EYFS children should be aware that they have the right to refer a complaint directly to Ofsted if they are unhappy with the way in which their complaint has been handled. The Complaints Policy explains how to complain to Ofsted.

## FURTHER GUIDANCE

The school has made reference to *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (2019), the non-statutory DfE advice '*Preventing and Tackling Bullying*' (July 2017) and '*Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff*' (2014) in creating this policy. The school has also made reference to the Kent County Council guidance for schools (located at <http://www.kelsi.org.uk/child-protection-and-safeguarding>), the NSPCC website (located at <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/bullying-and-cyberbullying/>), DfE advice '*Preventing and tackling bullying*' (2017) and '*Cyberbullying: advice for headteachers and other school staff*' (2014) Cyberbullying, Understand, Prevent and Respond Guidance for Schools <https://www.childnet.com/ufiles/Cyberbullying-guidance2.pdf>.

Edward O'Connor  
September 2019

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman of Governors

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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