

Anti-Bullying Policy

Ellesmere College believes that all children and young people should learn and play in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied and that all adults and pupils should recognise that bullying is an antisocial behaviour which affects everyone, and will not be tolerated. To this end, the Anti-Bullying Policy sets out the school approach, roles and responsibilities with regard to all student-bullying matters.

The aims of the anti-bullying policy are:

- To prevent, de-escalate and/or stop any continuation of harmful behaviour.
- To react to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way.
- To safeguard the student who has experienced bullying and to trigger sources of support for the student.
- To apply disciplinary sanctions to the student causing the bullying and ensure they learn from the experience, possibly through multi-agency support.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is defined as “Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can involve verbal taunts, name-calling, physical injury, shunning or ridicule. It can be manipulative and can be done through mobile phones, websites and email.” (DfE ‘Safe to Learn’)

This can be further defined as:

- Physical - hitting, kicking, taking or hiding belongings including money.
- Verbal - name calling, teasing, insulting, writing unkind notes, cyber bullying, texting, disability, sexual, racial, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, faith, religion.
- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, spreading rumours.
- Material – damage to belongings, extortion.

Aims:

The aim of our anti-bullying policy is to reinforce for students and staff that bullying is always unacceptable. We wish to encourage an environment where independence is celebrated and individuals can develop without fear. Every student and member of staff has the right to be safe and happy in College, and to be protected when she/he is feeling vulnerable.

Ellesmere College also has a Disability Equality Policy which further protects the rights of the individual from racism, sexism, homophobia and religious inequality. See the Disability Equality Policy for further clarification.

The children and young people at Ellesmere College have a wide-range of needs. As a school community we understand that bullying in this context can have additional subtleties and raise issues that are in themselves complicated to resolve. Not all students at Ellesmere College will recognise bullying behaviour if they experience it; equally not all students would recognise their own behaviour as bullying towards another individual. Cognitive understanding and communication impairment are strong factors in how/what the children and young people communicate. As such,

the school uses the following strategies to support the children/young people to understand what is meant by the definitions above and how to resolve any bullying situation.

- Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy, nervous, feigning sickness, refusing to come to school, clinging to adults, refusing to remain in class. It is important that all school staff are alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against any form of bullying in line with the roles and responsibilities listed below.
- They may show changes in their work patterns, may lack concentration or abscond from/refuse to attend College.

Procedures

In the first instance, it is important to make clear to the victim that revenge is not appropriate. The bully has to know and understand that his or her behaviour is unacceptable, and has caused distress. Every effort is made to resolve the problem through counselling of both parties and it is recorded on CPOMS. This is regularly checked to see if there are patterns emerging or the same names are frequently occurring. All staff are informed.

Parents or Carers of both parties are informed of what has happened, and how it has been dealt with. It is important that everything that happens is carefully recorded. Weekly student information meetings inform staff of incidents and of students to monitor.

If the bullying continues, and counselling has not worked, then sanctions must follow. It is important that counselling continues even when sanctions have been applied. If it is deemed necessary any electronic devices can be examined for proof of bullying by the SSO and Assistant Principal.

It is the responsibility of everyone to fully promote respect and tolerance in Ellesmere College and outside of Ellesmere College. This includes the safeguarding of all students on school transport or independent transport.

Reporting Process

In the event that bullying behaviours are reported or observed; the member of staff who has that information should report it to the Student Support Officer (SSO) for follow up action. The SSO should then investigate to determine the facts behind any arising issue. In the event that bullying is taking place, there are two paths to follow:

- Any bullying behaviours should be written up SIMs
Or
- Where the issue is complex or not easily resolved the SSO should seek further advice from the Assistant Principal.
- Follow up actions should be devised, recorded and aimed at addressing bullying behaviours. These include –
Planned small group work through a personalised curriculum.
P.S.H.E. lessons.
Annual initiatives linked to Government National Bullying programme.

Ellesmere College signed up to the 'Bullying – A Charter for Action' from the Anti Bullying alliance.

Student Council involved in reviewing the Anti Bullying Policy.

Use of intervention programmes.

Assemblies to underpin a clear, anti-bullying message.

Pastoral Support meetings linked to work with Intervention T.A.s./Student Support Officers.

Meetings with staff, parent and student.

Intervention TAs run Anti Bullying workshops.

Use of restorative justice by staff and students.

Student Council actively engages and encourages all students to talk about bullying.

- In the event that bullying behaviour is not successfully changed or prevented; and that agreed strategies do not show indications of working then the matter should be referred to the Executive Vice Principal. It is expected, through the SIMs system, that the Principal would be kept informed of bullying-related issues.
- In the event that the bullying is being undertaken by students from more than one school parents will be signposted to the police

To Students

If you are a victim of bullying, or know someone who is, please tell us straight away.

You can talk to: -

- Teacher or Teaching Assistant
- Another Student
- Counsellor
- Office Staff
- Premises Officers
- Parents/ carers
- Dinner staff
- Student Support Officers

Roles and Responsibilities/strategies

The Governing Body

- Creating the right ethos for the school that ensures it is an inclusive environment.
- Ensure regular review of anti-bullying policy and practice including analysis of data published under its single equality scheme.
- Ensure the school is promoting equality for its whole community.

The Executive Principal

- To determine, publicise and ensure implementation of the school's measures on behaviour support and anti-bullying.
- To consider what adjustments may be needed to policy and practice in this area.
- Ensure the whole school is promoting equality and inclusion.
- To ensure the anti-bullying behaviour policy is kept up to date.

The Executive Vice Principal and Assistant Principals

- To deliver and organise any necessary training for staff to ensure they understand and implement the anti-bullying policy.
- Plan appropriate interventions either at an individual or whole school level.
- Promote anti-bullying week and anti-bullying work in general. Ensure the curriculum covers anti-bullying.
- Work with families so that they are aware of the school's policy/practice and specific circumstances if they arise.
- To act as a port of call to advise staff on any bullying related matter
- To liaise with external agencies as necessary in partnership to support anti-bullying strategies
- To ensure bullying is factored into any analysis of student behavior

All school staff

- To be constantly monitoring the students for bullying-related behaviour and follow the correct procedure where evidence points towards bullying taking place.
- To be constantly modelling high standards of behaviour and to have high expectations for all the students.
- To record all incidences of bullying using SIMs and report them directly to a member of the Senior Leadership Team

The Students' Voice

There are a number of ways that pupils can communicate to express their feelings and thoughts. These include the school council, annual reviews, Education Health Care Plans, everyday communication with school staff and small group consultation. School staff should be constantly vigilant for signs that a student may be subject to bullying behaviour expressed either through a student voice or from signs such as distress, change in mood, injury and change in behavioural norms.

Claims or expressions of bullying made by students will be taken seriously.

Parents / Carers:

Parents / Carers are fully involved in helping Ellesmere College be a safe place for all. For individual matters relating to bullying, advice should be sought from the relevant Assistant Principal on how to proceed. Efforts should be made to conduct conversations sensitively, bringing family members into college where necessary. Informing and working with families whose child was the victim of bullying should follow standard reporting procedure for involvement in an incident, ensuring a record is kept of any phone call. Pupils who are receiving additional behaviour support because they are perpetrating bullying behaviour should be subject to joint working with their parents to ensure all parties understand the approach being taken. Parents/Carers have a responsibility to let the school know if their child/young person is being bullied and work with the school to resolve any issues arising from an incident the child/young person is anxious about. If as a parent/carers you are concerned about your child/young person being bullied you should:

- Contact the school immediately and ask to speak to the Assistant Principal for the

keystage your child is in or the Head of Centre. If you are told he/she is unavailable please ask to speak to either of the Executive Vice Principals. If neither are available please leave a message asking for a call back.

- Contact the school if the bullying is taking place on home to school transport.
- If the bullying involves students from 1 or more different schools the parents should contact the police

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

Safeguarding Policy
Behaviour Policy
Allegations against staff
Child Protection Policy

Rebecca Tobitt is responsible for this policy.

Review Anti Bullying Policy – October 2024