

Anti-Bullying Policy

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Anti-Bullying Policy

(see also Good Behaviour and PSHE & C policies)

1. Introduction

EIFA International School will not tolerate any form of bullying whether it can be verbal, physical, racial, sexual, cyber or against a disability (including physical disability), regardless of motive. It can be very damaging to individual, its psychological effects can be very long lasting, sometimes life-long and it is highly destructive of community life.

Bullying presents a challenge for us all. Bullying usually takes place away from staff: it can also be difficult to establish what happened. We also recognise that bullying takes place in all schools and in society at large and that like all aspects of relationships between human beings we will need to work very hard at this aspect of pastoral care – and we must never be complacent about it.

The three main factors that reduce and remove bullying are as follows:

- above all creating attitudes within the student body that bullying is unacceptable and that any bullying should be reported – it is thus essential that students, staff and parents are involved in the formulation and implementation of our policy and feel some ownership
- EIFA showing that it will not tolerate bullying and will take action when it occurs
- staff awareness, concern and vigilance
- EIFA aims to provide an environment in which each student is personally involved and in which they can develop as a young person of integrity, social conscience and confidence
- we aim to establish a community in which everybody feels valued and safe and where legitimate individual differences are appreciated, understood and accepted
- schools which make clear their abhorrence of bullying and who take every incident seriously, tend to have less bullying.

We have some natural advantages: our students catchment areas, supportive parents, we are a co-ed multi ethnic school, we enjoy an attractive environment, and have a low student/teacher ratio, our caring non-denominational ethos and our respect and tolerance of other cultures – but we cannot be complacent.

This policy follows the DfE Guidance (2014) *'Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for School Leaders, Staff and Governors'* (June 2013), *'Ensuring Good Behaviour in Schools'* (April 2012), DfE Guidance (2014) *'Supporting Bullied Children'*, DfE guidance set out in *'Don't Suffer in Silence'* booklet, and the Equality Act (2010) and Equality Duty.

The School's Anti-Bullying policy is additionally available on the School's website. The policy is also available in hard copy, upon request to the School Office. In addition, a copy of the policy may be inspected at any point in the School day in the School Office. This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.

2. Aims

In line with the “Every Child Matters” framework, EIFA Mission Statement, Values and Ethos and the EIFA Rules, we aim through this policy to produce a safe and secure environment where all children can flourish, where bullying is unacceptable and measures are in place to reduce its likelihood.

The aims of this policy are:

- to assist the School in taking all reasonable steps to prevent bullying occurring in the first place
- to help staff and students to deal with bullying when it occurs.

3. Objectives

- ensure that we provide a safe, secure environment for all students
- EIFA aims to comply with the School's duties under the Equality Act 2010
- counter views that bullying is an inevitable part of school life
- increase awareness of bullying and to encourage debate and discussions amongst staff and students
- involve the whole staff and student body in combating bullying and making it unacceptable at EIFA
- create a supportive climate and break down the climate of secrecy that often surrounds bullying
- encourage students who are being bullied or who observe bullying to inform the staff
- highlight how we can educate students about bullying and relationships
- provide an agreed set of procedures
- move beyond crisis-management and above all try to prevent bullying from occurring in the first place
- complement the School's behaviour and discipline policies.

4. What is bullying

Definitions

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour often repeated over a period of time. There will usually be an imbalance in the bully/victim relationship such that the victim will have difficulty defending him or herself. It can be carried out by an individual or a group. Bullying can be physical and/or emotional. It may be racial, religious, cultural, sexual/sexist, based on sexual orientation, disability and cyber related.

These may include:

- physical – blocking the way, “bumping” hard against the victim, hitting, kicking, punching, damaging property
- verbal – name-calling, teasing, insults about one's appearance or family. Comments can be very cruel. Verbal bullying is the most common and destructive form of bullying.
- exclusion from social group

- racist, religious, cultural, sexual, sexist, homophobic, family economic status, academic ability, special educational needs, disability-related languages and comments or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities.
- offensive emails, text messaging, the creation of humiliating website, blogs and abuse via social network websites. Electronic devices have provided ideal methods for bullying
- racial and sexual harassment including harassment and bullying related to sexual orientation
- spreading of malicious rumour.

Cyber-bullying relates to malicious, upsetting, repeated emails, photographs, texts and/or other messages or postings sent direct to, or about, an individual. Cyber bullying may involve the use of mobile telephones, email, internet messaging services (such as MSN, Snapchat) social websites (such as Facebook, Instagram, Tumblr and Twitter), and other technologies and applications which may be developed and become available in the future

Cyber-bullying is not restricted by time or location. Victims may not know who the bully is and there is also a potentially large audience which can participate in the bullying.

Preventing and Tackling Bullying, Advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies, 2012, defines what is bullying:

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case.

Some children with SEN and disabilities may not recognise that they are being bullied or that their own behaviour may be seen by someone else as bullying.

Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are some forms of harassment, communications and threatening behaviour that could be criminal offences, for example, under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003 and the Public Order Act 1986.

Bystanders

Bullying situations usually involve more than the bully and the victim. They also involve bystanders—those who watch bullying happen or hear about it. An important new strategy for bullying prevention focuses on the powerful role of the

bystander. Depending on how bystanders respond, they can either contribute to the problem or the solution. Bystanders rarely play a completely neutral role, although they may think they do.

Hurtful Bystanders

Some bystanders . . . instigate the bullying by prodding the bully to begin.

Other bystanders . . . encourage the bullying by laughing, cheering, or making comments that further stimulate the bully.

And other bystanders . . . join in the bullying once it has begun.

Most bystanders . . . passively accept bullying by watching and doing nothing. Often without realizing it, these bystanders also contribute to the problem. Passive bystanders provide the audience a bully craves and the silent acceptance that allows bullies to continue their hurtful behaviour.

Helpful Bystanders

Bystanders also have the power to play a key role in preventing or stopping bullying.

Some bystanders . . . directly intervene, by discouraging the bully, defending the victim, or redirecting the situation away from bullying.

Other bystanders . . . get help, by rallying support from peers to stand up against bullying or by reporting the bullying to adults.

Examining the Effects on The Bystander

Why don't more bystanders intervene?

They think, "It's none of my business."

They fear getting hurt or becoming another victim.

They feel powerless to stop the bully.

They don't like the victim or believe the victim "deserves" it.

They don't want to draw attention to themselves.

They fear retribution.

They think that telling adults won't help or it may make things worse.

They don't know what to do.

Bystanders who don't intervene or don't report the bullying often suffer negative consequences themselves. They may experience:

Pressure to participate in the bullying

Anxiety about speaking to anyone about the bullying

Powerlessness to stop bullying

Vulnerability to becoming victimized

Fear of associating with the victim, the bully, or the bully's pals

Guilt for not having defended the victim

Preparing Children to Become Helpful Bystanders.

Adults can prepare children to become helpful bystanders by discussing with them the different ways bystanders can make a difference, and by letting them know that adults will support them, if and when they step forward. Adults can also provide examples of how helpful bystanders have shown courage and made a difference in real-life situations and in their own experiences.

Consequences of Bullying

Bullying may lead to physical injury.

Children who are bullied suffer great psychological stress and there are a number of well-known symptoms, especially if they are the victim of a persistent campaign of bullying. Children may:

- feel confused, ill, nervous and experience recurring memories or nightmares
- feel powerless, rejected, isolated
- suffer from impaired concentration, sleep difficulties and depression. Some children may suffer from a loss of appetite or start eating excessively
- become withdrawn, suffer from loss of self-esteem and a negative self-image.

Please also see Appendix 1 to this policy for signs of bullying.

The impact on the child's school career may also be significant:

- some play truant as a result
- a school phobia may result
- work will inevitably suffer.

Generally, children who are bullied risks failure at school. Even worse, sometimes, bullying endangers the whole child.

5. The duties and responsibilities of the School

The Head of School and the Board of Directors have a legal duty to:

- encourage within EIFA community good behaviour and respect for others
- to prevent all forms of bullying among students.

When a school accepts a new student onto its roll, it takes responsibility for his/her physical, psychological and educational welfare. The focus should not just be on the students' educational attainment but on nurturing their emotional growth and making sure that they are safe.

The School will act in *loco parentis*. It therefore has a clear Promoting Good Behaviour Policy in which we promote intolerance of bullying and harassment. In addition, our Anti-Bullying Policy will be regularly reviewed by the Board of Directors, clearly understood by staff and students and available to parents on the School's website.

6. Staff procedure

- all reported cases will be investigated. Student must be confident that bullying will be taken seriously and investigated. Students may see failure to respond to incidents or allegations, as toleration of bullying. It is vital that we act promptly and firmly to combat it whenever and wherever it occurs. Records must be kept at School and centrally
- cases of bullying or suspected of bullying that are observed in class or around the School should be acted on immediately by the member of staff involved. The event should be recorded in the "Incident Log" located in Reception and inform the relevant staff such as the classroom teacher and the Head of School. A written record may also be placed in the students' file

- every effort should be made to follow up each case to ensure the victim is given support and to prevent recurrence. We must keep monitoring.

7. Staff Awareness

- staff need to be very aware of areas of the School where bullying might take place and be sensitive to the times and situations when it is more likely to happen e.g, at break time in or outside the building, when students are waiting to enter a classroom, meal queues, on School transport, etc. Bullying can take place discretely in classrooms situations: teachers should be observant and act firmly and swiftly if they suspect or uncover evidence of bullying:
- staff should be aware that cyber technological developments mean that cyber bullying can take place inside or outside school, at all times of day and night, with a large potential audience and that more students can become involved as comments and content can be shared and forwarded quickly and easily. The wider search powers included in the Education Action 2011 gives teachers wider powers to tackle cyber bullying by including specific powers to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images or files from electronic devices, including mobile phones
- staff are asked to watch for early signs of distress in students – deterioration of work, spurious attendance. This may be caused by bullying
- staff should be aware of racist, sexist and homophobic language and actions
- staff must particularly be vigilant when safeguarding vulnerable students, (SEN students, new students, students with bereavement, long term illness, students with disability, etc).

8. Education

We can prevent and reduce bullying by making use of various strategies:

- use all students as a positive resource in countering bullying (the key factor)
- our stance on bullying can be asserted regularly through talks and presentations including assemblies, PSHE lessons
- there will be numerous opportunities through the curriculum, especially in English, French, Drama and Social Studies' lessons. All staff can make use of the opportune moments
- students can also be used to help shy children or newcomers feel welcome and accepted

We should emphasise to students the importance of:

- conflict resolution and negotiating skills
- rights and responsibilities
- respect for others and their property
- courtesy to others.

9. Communication

Throughout a case of bullying, good communication is vital, especially with those students involved. Staff should make clear to parents of victims and bullies the actions we are taking, why we are taking them and what they can do to help and enforce our actions. Poor communication simply add to the problem and can create the impression the School is not taking matter seriously enough.

10. Students (Who to turn to)

It is of paramount importance that students should know who to turn to, for example their classroom teacher or Head of School. Students are reminded by their class teachers to whom they can talk to in confidence, to know it will be acted upon discreetly and sensitively via our counseling procedures.

11. Staff working with victims

Anyone can be bullied but certain students can be particularly vulnerable:

- those from ethnic minorities
- those with special educational needs
- those who stammer or may have some disability
- those who may lack confidence in peer group situations
- children who may seem different in some way – quiet, shy, alone, physically smaller.

It must be recognised that the first priority is to support and protect the victim of bullying i.e. to raise their self-esteem, to offer support to counter feelings of inferiority and guilt. Ongoing support is crucial.

It is also important to support witnesses; they can be deeply affected. So too can those who join in on the fringe because they may feel they may be the next target. They can experience feelings of guilt.

12. Staff working with bullies

Bullying is often caused by insecurities within the bully such as a need to gain power over another person. Bullies have sometimes learnt to bully at home, copying others, some bully because of problems at home; some are naturally aggressive. They are usually bigger and older, impulsive, have poor school records and are often aggressive to teachers and siblings. In later life, bullies may bully in the workplace, perform below-potential throughout life, abuse their spouse and children in the home and generally become aggressive parents and citizens. Like an alcoholic they often need persuading there is a problem.

We need to consider:

- the antecedent conditions that make the bully behaves as she or he does
- the behaviour itself
- that are the consequences of the behaviour and whether this might be perpetuating the bullying.

Aggressive behaviour may be a sign that the child is abused.

13. Staff working with parents

Bullying is a highly emotive issue and little else can rival it in this regard. Parents of victims can rightly become very upset on behalf of their child, very protective and very angry. Parents of victims often feel helpless; parents of bullies often do not know and also feel very vulnerable and defensiveness when they find out.

Certain forms of bullying should normally be reported to parents, even if it is to inform them of what has happened and that we have taken action. It is important to be fully open with parents.

- not every single case of bullying will necessarily be reported to parents but the expectation is that most will be. It will depend on circumstances and severity
- staff should make clear to parents of victims and bullies, the actions we are taking, why we are taking them and what they can do to help and re-enforce our actions
- we urge parents to contact us immediately if they have any suspicion of bullying; sometimes schools may be unaware of a problem.

14. Communication

Informal Discipline

Bullying is rarely solved by punishments; listening and talking to students should not be seen as a sign of weakness. Punishments are not always the best way to repair relationships and to overcome bullying. Sometimes it is important to do a lot of talking and listening to children and take considerable time in fact-finding and reaching a resolution. Unless there is imminent danger to a child, instant action and an attempt at magic-wand solution rarely works. Indeed, this can leave the victim isolated and the remedy worse than the complaint.

Many students, when confronted with bullying, will not repeat the behaviour. However, for any other than 'low-level' bullying', the full range of School punishments can and should be used.

As with all discipline, we must be consistent and fair. However, perhaps of all disciplinary problems bullying calls for adaptable and flexible thinking and real creativity.

Formal Discipline

As always, any punishment must be proportionate to the offence and should allow the child to make amends where appropriate.

- **Minor Offences** Discipline for minor offences might include a reprimand, withdrawal of privileges, a formal warning, recording the event and placing it on record
- **Serious Offences** A range of sanctions may be used such as a behaviour detention, a Head of School's Detention, through to Suspension, Exclusion and involvement of police if appropriate. Permanent exclusion must be a last resort. Only the most serious and persistent cases particularly those using violence would justify permanent exclusion.

15. If staff come across bullying – what should you do?

First steps:

- remain calm. Reacting emotionally may add to the bully's fun and give the bully control of the situation
- take the incident seriously and take action
- think hard about whether your action needs to be private or public
- reassure the victim; don't make them feel inadequate or foolish
- offer concrete help, advice and support to the victim, including coping strategies
- make it plain to the bully that you disapprove
- encourage the bully to see the victim's point of view
- punish the bully if you have to, but be very careful how you do this. Reacting aggressively or punitively gives the message that it is all right to bully if you have the power
- explain clearly the punishment and why it is being given.

Various courses are available to staff and these are published. Bullying will also form a regular part of Staff INSET days.

Involving others

Do:

- inform all relevant staff
- inform colleagues if the incident arose out of a situation where everyone should be vigilant
- inform parents, where appropriate, calmly and concisely; reassure both sets of parents that the incident will not linger on or be held against anyone.

Final Steps

Do:

- ensure incident doesn't live on through reminders from you
- try to think ahead to prevent a recurrence of the incident, if you uncover the trigger factor
- if you have to deal with bullying, what should you avoid?

Don't:

- be over-protective and refuse to allow the victim to help him/herself
- assume that the bully is bad through and through; try to look objectively at the behaviour, with the bully
- keep the whole incident a secret because you have dealt with it
- try to hide the incident from the parents of the victim of the bully
- call in parents without having a constructive plan to offer either side.

16. If Students or Parents come across bullying

All our students are encouraged to tell a member of staff at once if they know that bullying is taking place, whether it is affecting them directly or not. If they do not feel confident they can always drop a note in the 'Post Box'. This box will be checked by the Head of School daily.

Parents who are concerned that another student might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact the Head of School directly.

Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy, actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the School.

Review and further policies

- this policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Head of School.
- the Board of Directors undertake a formal annual review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than one year from the date shown below, or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

Please see other policies:

The School's Code of Conduct

The School's PSHE & C Policy

Appendix 1

Signs of Bullying

A child may indicate by their behaviour that he or she is being bullied. If a child shows some of the following signs, bullying may be responsible and staff, parents/carers might want to ask if someone is bullying or threatening them.

Children may :

- be frightened of walking to and from school
- change their usual route
- not want you to go on the school bus
- beg you to drive them to school
- be unwilling to go to school (or be 'school phobic')
- feel ill in the mornings
- begin truanting
- begin doing poorly in their school work
- come home regularly with clothes or books destroyed
- come home starving (bully taking dinner money/food trays)
- become withdrawn, start stammering, lack confidence
- become distressed and anxious, stop eating
- attempt or threaten suicide
- cry themselves to sleep, have nightmares
- have their possessions go missing
- ask for money or start stealing (to pay the bully)
- continually 'lose' their pocket money
- refuse to talk about what's wrong
- have unexplained bruises, cuts, scratches
- begin to bully other children, siblings
- become aggressive and unreasonable
- appears upset or angry after using the computer or being online
- appears upset or angry after viewing a text message on a mobile phone
- give improbable excuses for any of the above.

Appendix 2

Resources

Additional sources of guidance and information:

Outside agencies who can offer support are:

Childline: 0800 1111 a freephone, confidential helpline for children and young people providing advice and support by phone and online 24 hours a day.

NSPCC: 0800 800 5000 a helpline for parents, adults and young persons for advice and support to report suspected or incidents of bullying.

Samaritans: 08457 90 90 90 a helpline for advice for parents, adults and young persons. **EACH:** 080 8100 0143 a freephone actionline for children and young people experiencing

homophobic bullying Monday to Friday 10am to 5pm.

Map safe routes to school (software available from MAP IT Ltd 01487 813745)

Advisory Centre for Education

LC Aberdeen Studios, 22 Highbury Grove, London N5 2DQ.

Tel: 0207 704 9822 Tel helpline: 0207 354 8321 (Mon-Fri 2-5 pm). Advice line for parents on all matters concerning schools

Anti Bullying Campaign

185 Tower Bridge Road, London SE1 2UF. Tel: 0207 378 1446 (9.30 am - 5.00 pm). Advice line for parents and children.

Children's Legal Centre

Tel: 01206 873 820

(Mon-Fri: 10 am - 12.30 pm and 2 pm - 4.30 pm). Publications and free advice line on legal issues.

Kidscape

2 Grosvenor Gardens, London, SW1W 0DH.

Tel: 0207 730 3300 Fax: 0207 730 7081

Has a wide range of publications for young people, parents and teachers. Bullying counsellor available Monday to Friday, 10-4.

Parentline Plus

520 Highgate Studios, 53-79 Highgate Road, Kentish Town, London, NW5 1TL.

Tel: 0808 800 2222.

National helpline for parents: (Mon-Fri 9-9; Sat 9.30-5; Sun 10-3).

Websites:

There are numerous useful sites for which updated links can be found on the DfE website at www.education.gov.uk/

Eyes on Bullying
<http://www.eyesonbullying.org/>

The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP)
<http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

Social networking site for young people affected by bullying Cybermentors social networking site at www.cybermentors.org.uk

Mobile information service GoGetInfo at www.gogetinfo.com

Useful reading:

'Bullying; Wise Guide' by Michele Elliott
'Don't Pick on Me: How to Handle Bullying' by Rosemary Stone
'Your child bullying' by J Alexander
'101 Ways to deal with bullying' – a guide for parents, by M Elliott
'Keeping Safe: A practical guide to talking with children, by Kidscape
'Helping children cope with bullying' by S Lawson
'Confident children: a parents' guide to helping children feel good', G Lindenfield
'Bullying and how to fight it: A Guide for families', by A Mellor
'Fighting, teasing and bullying: Simple and effective ways to help your child', by J Pearce
'The bullying problem: How to deal with difficult children, by A Train