



EDUCATION MY LIFE MATTERS

Anti-bullying Policy

Approved by:	Independent Executive Board	Date: January 2024
Last reviewed on:	January 2024	
Next review due by:	December 2025	

Statement of Intent:

Education My Life Matters (EMLM) we aim to provide a supportive, caring and friendly environment which allows all our learners to learn in an atmosphere which is focused on improving their life chances and helping them to maximise their potential. We expect our learners to act safely and feel safe, in and outside of school -we do not tolerate any form of bullying and we are committed to preventing and tackling it. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone. We recognise that our learners will experience disagreements with their peers, but we are committed to supporting them to resolve these 'relational conflicts' and prevent them from progressing further. If an incident of bullying does occur, all learners, families/carers and staff should know who to report it to and know that all incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Bullying will not be tolerated at EMLM.

We encourage open discussions around differences between people, we actively challenge prejudice and we celebrate diversity. We adopt a contextual safeguarding, trauma-informed and strengths-based approach to bullying and child-on-child abuse, and we are committed to working with families and external agencies where appropriate.

What is bullying and how does it differ from relational conflict?

At EMLM we have adopted the definition of bullying provided by the Anti-Bullying Alliance:

“Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online.”

We recognise that bullying can take many forms and can affect any child. It is often motivated by prejudice against groups (for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs, or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities). Bullying can be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

However, we also recognise that incidents may occur between learners, which may not be deemed as 'bullying' but still require support or intervention from trusted adults. These incidents may be referred to as 'relational conflicts' or falling out. Relational conflict differs to bullying in the fact that it is usually between individuals or groups who are relatively similar in power and status (a power balance), and the behaviours or incidents occur occasionally (not repetitive) or occur by accident (not intentional). Usually, following a relational conflict incident, learners show remorse and there is a general willingness to make things right or to resolve the conflict.

Not all relational conflict or falling out leads to bullying, but we at EMLM are aware occasionally some can, and we are mindful that unresolved bad feelings or relationship problems left unaddressed can be the start of a pattern of behaviour in which the intention becomes to cause harm or distress.

Although bullying and relational conflicts can take place between individuals, we recognise that it often takes place in front of others (either physically or virtually), learners who witness these incidents/behaviours are often referred to as ‘bystanders’.

Regardless of whether an incident or situation is deemed as ‘relational conflict’ or ‘bullying’, at EMLM we will address the situation and support the learners to resolve any negative feelings. We school will monitor children following a relational conflict to ensure that the situation has been resolved and does not escalate to bullying. We will consider the context within which incidents and/or behaviour of concern occur. We will consider the motivation behind the behaviour and consider the age and stage of development of learners involved. Our focus will always be the safety and welfare of all the learners involved.

At EMLM we will challenge, address, and monitor any incidents of bullying, to ensure that it does not continue and that all pupils feel supported (this will include the target, the alleged perpetrator, any bystanders, and the wider school community).

There is no hierarchy of bullying, all forms of bullying are taken equally seriously and will be dealt with appropriately.

Aims of this policy:

- To assist in creating an ethos in which attending EMLM is a positive experience for all members of the school community
- To produce a consistent response to any bullying incident which may occur
- To make it clear that all forms of bullying are unacceptable
- To enable everyone to feel safe while at school and encourage pupils to report incidences of bullying
- To deal effectively with bullying
- To support and protect targets of bullying and ensure they are listened to
- To help and support bullies to change their attitudes as well as their behaviour and understand why it needs to change
- To liaise with Families/Carers and other appropriate members of the school community
- To ensure all members of the school community feel responsible for combating bullying

Bullying behaviour may include, but is not limited to:

Emotional (verbal)	Being unfriendly, name-calling, insulting, excluding, belittling, sarcasm, manipulation, coercion, tormenting (e.g., hiding books, threatening gestures, spreading rumours) or making racist or other deliberately hurtful remarks
Physical	Poking, pushing, punching, hitting, biting, kicking, hiding belongings or any use of violence
Racist	Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures

Sexual	unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, homophobic abuse, exposure to inappropriate films etc
Homophobic	Because of or focusing on the issue of sexuality including same sex parents
Verbal -direct or indirect	Name calling, spreading unpleasant stories/rumours about someone, talking/gossiping behind people's back and laughing at someone, excluding someone from social groups, in order to intimidate, sarcasm
Cyber-bullying	All areas of Internet, such as e-mail & Internet chat room misuse, mobile threats via text messaging and calls, misuse of associated technology, i.e., camera and video facilities and misuse of apps

Signs and Symptoms:

A learner may indicate by signs or behaviour that they are being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and they should investigate if a learner:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school
- Does not want to travel on the bus
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- Begins to truant
- Becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Feels ill a lot
- Has possessions which are damaged or go missing
- Becomes unusually aggressive disruptive or unreasonable...

Procedures:

- Report bullying incidents to staff
- Learners will know their concerns, however small, will be taken seriously
- All incidents will be recorded by staff
- Leaders in school will establish the facts of each incident and liaise with learners and their parents/carers
- In serious cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem
- If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.
- The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated, and the bullying stopped quickly
- An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour

- All cases of bullying and/or alleged bullying will be reported to the Board Members

We understand that some learners may find it difficult to tell a member of staff about their concerns verbally, we therefore have additional reporting mechanisms in place. We have a 'concern box' where the learner can put their name/a brief note about their concerns – this concern box is introduced to the learners at the start of the year and learners are reminded of them regularly.

Even if the behaviour/incident which has been reported is deemed 'not bullying' and is thought to be 'relational conflict', school staff will still support the learners involved and help them to resolve any concerns.

Outcomes:

- Talk to all learners involved in the reported incident -this may include the target, the alleged perpetrator, and any bystanders/witnesses
- Talk to the families/carers (of the target and/or alleged perpetrator)
- 1:1 Learning mentor support: short-term or long-term (depending on individual circumstances) to implement a range of follow-up support/interventions appropriate to the situation (this may include restorative work, solution focused meetings etc)
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- Discuss incident/report with other agencies and organisation when appropriate and make referrals to those organisations as/where necessary
- Liaise with the wider community if the bullying is taking place off the school premises (e.g. the Police/Children's services etc.)
- Monitor the effectiveness of actions taken and reassess/take more actions if appropriate
- Ensure all parties are kept informed of progress and any developments, but with due regard to GDPR

The nature and level of support will depend on the individual circumstances and the level of need. If bullying is persistent, EMLM will implement disciplinary sanctions. The consequences of bullying will reflect the seriousness of the incident so that other Learners see that bullying is unacceptable.

Strategies for preventing bullying

At EMLM, we are committed to the safety and welfare of our pupils, and therefore we have developed the following strategies to promote friendly and positive behaviours and discourage bullying behaviours. Throughout the academic year, the effectiveness of these strategies is reviewed, and the variety of strategies may be expanded to address specific concerns or meet the needs of all members of our community.

The strategies we use include, but are not limited to:

- All staff at EMLM promoting the emotional well-being of individual learners
- Staff proactively gathering intelligence about issues between the learners, which might provoke conflict
- Developing strategies to prevent bullying occurrence in the first place
- Creating an ethos of respect and equality
- Working in partnership with families/carers
- Safe space for Learners who may feel lonely or isolated

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- Teaching learners to treat one another and the school staff with respect
- 1:1 work with a Learning Mentor
- Writing stories or poems about the impact of bullying
- Robust RSHE/PSHE curriculum for all learners
- Specific curriculum input for online safety and cyberbullying
- Ongoing work to promote equality and tackle prejudice
- Using drama and role-play
- Read stories linked to bullying
- Having discussions about bullying and why it matters in PSHE/Personal Development lessons
- Specific interventions for identified individuals or groups
- Regular staff training and development for all staff
- All staff model expected behaviour

For help and advice on bullying and how to stay safe online, visit or call:

NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000

Childline 0800 1111

Learnerline 0800 1111

www.nspcc.org.uk

www.antibullyingalliance.org.uk

www.learnerline.org.uk

www.kidscape.org.uk

www.connectsafely.org

www.stonewall.org.uk

ChildNet International

Digizen

Internet Matters

Think U Know

UK council for Child Internet Safety