



Anti-Bullying Strategy and Policy

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1. The EMLM Compass Approach

At Education My Life Matters (EMLM), our work with learners is underpinned by the EMLM Compass Approach. This provides a consistent, trauma-informed and relational framework for responding to safeguarding concerns, behaviour, attendance, wellbeing, bullying, medical needs and all matters relating to the safety, welfare and inclusion of our learners.

This approach provides a consistent, trauma-informed and relational framework for how we respond to all concerns about learners' safety and wellbeing.

It ensures that every member of staff follows a shared, values-led process:

-  **NOTICE** – Identify concerns early through professional curiosity
-  **LISTEN** – Respond to disclosures in a safe, respectful and trauma-informed way
-  **PROTECT** – Take immediate safeguarding action where needed
-  **RESPOND** – Investigate, intervene and restore harm appropriately
-  **RECORD** – Record concerns accurately on CPOMS within 24 hours
-  **REVIEW** – Monitor outcomes and learn from incidents to improve practice

The Compass Approach applies to all forms of concern including bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, discrimination, child-on-child abuse, harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment, sexual violence and wider safeguarding concerns.

It ensures consistency, professional accountability and a clear safeguarding pathway across the organisation.

2. Statement of Intent

At Education My Life Matters (EMLM), we are committed to creating a culture where bullying, harassment, prejudice and discrimination are never accepted as part of everyday life. We believe every child has the right to feel safe, respected, valued, listened to and included, enabling them to thrive academically, socially and emotionally.

Our approach is preventative as well as responsive. Through an inclusive curriculum, positive relationships, restorative practice, clear expectations and a strong safeguarding culture, we actively promote kindness, respect, equality and belonging whilst challenging prejudice, discriminatory language and harmful behaviour at the earliest opportunity.

We recognise that bullying is a safeguarding concern that can have significant and lasting effects on a child's emotional wellbeing, mental health, attendance, engagement and educational outcomes. In some circumstances, bullying may constitute child-on-child abuse, discriminatory abuse or other forms of significant harm and will be managed in accordance with our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

EMLM acknowledges that some children are disproportionately vulnerable to bullying, including children with SEND, care-experienced children, children in kinship care, young carers, children with social workers, those experiencing disadvantage, and children with protected characteristics. We also recognise that children may experience multiple, intersecting vulnerabilities and harms, including those occurring both online and offline. Our practice is child-centred, trauma-informed, inclusive and anti-discriminatory, recognising the unique experiences and voice of every child.

We understand that bullying behaviour often reflects unmet needs, adverse experiences, social influences or emotional difficulties. Whilst these factors never excuse harmful behaviour, they inform our graduated and restorative approach, which combines clear accountability with education, support and appropriate intervention to reduce the likelihood of recurrence.

The Anti-Bullying Alliance recognises that bullying incidents often involve a range of roles, including those initiating bullying, assistants, reinforcers, defenders, bystanders and the child being targeted. These roles are fluid and can change over time. At EMLM we encourage every member of our community to become an active and responsible bystander by safely challenging bullying, reporting concerns and supporting others to seek help.

Learners are supported to develop trusted relationships with adults and are encouraged to report concerns, whether they relate to themselves or another person. Every report of bullying or harassment is taken seriously, listened to respectfully, recorded appropriately and investigated promptly. Decisions are informed by the wishes, feelings and lived experience of the child alongside professional judgement and safeguarding responsibilities.

Support is provided for everyone affected by bullying, including the child who has experienced bullying, those displaying bullying behaviours and any wider individuals impacted. Where appropriate, restorative approaches, education, targeted interventions and multi-agency working will be used to repair relationships, address underlying causes and promote positive behavioural change while ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all involved.

This document provides the framework for preventing, identifying, recording and responding to bullying involving learners and, where appropriate, adults within the school community. It should be read alongside our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Behaviour Policy, Online Safety Policy, Equality Policy and SEND Policy.

This policy reflects our duties under the Equality Act 2010, the Children Act 1989 and 2004, the Education and Inspections Act 2006, Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026), Keeping Children Safe in Education and all other relevant statutory safeguarding guidance. Through these responsibilities, EMLM is committed to maintaining a safe, inclusive and nurturing environment where every child is protected, respected and able to flourish.

3. Aims

In line with EMLM Compass approach, we are committed to preventing bullying, harassment, discrimination and harmful behaviour in all its forms. We recognise that positive relationships are fundamental to safeguarding, wellbeing and successful learning. Through a whole-school, trauma-informed and relational approach, we aim to create an environment where everyone feels safe, respected, valued and able to thrive.

Our aims are to:

Foster a safe, inclusive and respectful environment where learners, staff, families, carers and visitors are treated with dignity and feel a strong sense of belonging

Prevent bullying, harassment and discrimination by promoting positive relationships, empathy, diversity, equality, inclusion and mutual respect throughout the school community

Develop learners' understanding of bullying in all its forms, including physical, verbal, relational, discriminatory, racist, sexist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, disability-related and cyberbullying, through an age-appropriate curriculum and wider educational opportunities

Ensure all members of the school community understand how to recognise, report and respond to bullying and harassment through clear, accessible and child-centred reporting procedures.

Encourage learners to speak to trusted adults and empower staff, families, carers and bystanders to report concerns without fear of retaliation.

Respond promptly, proportionately and consistently to all reports of bullying or harassment by ensuring concerns are listened to, recorded, investigated, monitored and reviewed appropriately

Provide timely, appropriate and individualised support for children who have experienced bullying, alongside education, intervention and support for children displaying bullying behaviour, with the aim of preventing recurrence, promoting accountability and enabling positive behavioural change

Recognise when bullying or harmful behaviour may constitute a safeguarding concern, including child-on-child abuse, and respond in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, seeking advice from external agencies where appropriate

Adopt a contextual safeguarding approach by recognising that bullying may occur within school, online or in the wider community, and that the environments in which children live, learn and socialise can influence both vulnerability and behaviour

Work collaboratively with parents, carers and partner agencies to promote positive outcomes, safeguard children and provide coordinated support where required.

Monitor, analyse and review bullying incidents and emerging themes to identify patterns, evaluate the effectiveness of interventions and continually improve practice.

We recognise that disagreements and fallouts between peers are a normal part of childhood and adolescent development. Most incidents of relational conflict can be resolved through restorative conversations, relationship-building and supportive adult intervention. We are committed to helping learners develop the knowledge, skills and emotional resilience needed to manage conflict respectfully and prevent relational conflict from escalating into bullying.

Where bullying does occur, every learner can expect to be listened to, taken seriously and supported. Parents and carers will be informed where appropriate, and all concerns will be managed promptly, fairly, consistently and in accordance with our safeguarding responsibilities.

EMLM adopts a contextual safeguarding, trauma-informed, strengths-based and restorative approach to preventing and responding to bullying and child-on-child abuse. We recognise that bullying can be both a cause and indicator of wider safeguarding concerns. We will always consider the needs, wishes and lived experiences of all children involved, while ensuring that those displaying bullying behaviour are held accountable through proportionate educational and restorative interventions. Where behaviours meet the threshold for child-on-child abuse or indicate a risk of significant harm, safeguarding procedures will take precedence and appropriate referrals will be made.

This policy should be read alongside the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Behaviour Policy, Online Safety Policy, Equality Policy, SEND Policy and Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy. Allegations or concerns that meet the threshold for child-on-child abuse will always be managed in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and current statutory guidance.

4. What is bullying and harassment?

4.1 Bullying is:

Education My Life Matters (EMLM) adopts the definition of bullying used by the Anti-Bullying Alliance:

"The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power."

Bullying may be physical, verbal, emotional, psychological, relational or online. It is behaviour that intentionally causes another person to feel frightened, unsafe, intimidated, humiliated, excluded or distressed. The imbalance of power may be based on age, physical strength, popularity, social status, disability, special educational needs, protected characteristics, access to technology or other vulnerabilities.

Bullying can have a significant impact on a child's emotional wellbeing, mental health, attendance, relationships and educational outcomes.

EMLM recognises bullying as a safeguarding concern. In some circumstances, bullying may constitute child-on-child abuse and will be managed in accordance with our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. However, not all bullying meets the threshold for child-on-child abuse, and not all child-on-child abuse is bullying. Staff will always consider the nature, severity, frequency and impact of behaviour when determining the appropriate response.

We also recognise that prejudice-related incidents can contribute to an unsafe environment and increase the likelihood of bullying. A prejudice-related incident is defined as:

"Any incident which is perceived to be prejudice-related by the person experiencing it or by any other person."

By identifying, recording and responding to prejudice-related incidents, EMLM demonstrates its commitment to equality, inclusion and respect. We challenge all forms of discrimination and prejudice to ensure that every learner feels safe, valued and included.

Relational conflict is not bullying

EMLM recognises that disagreements, fallouts and friendship difficulties are a normal part of growing up. Relational conflict usually occurs between children of equal power and is often accidental, occasional or situational. With appropriate adult support, these conflicts can usually be resolved through discussion, restorative approaches and relationship-building.

Bullying differs from relational conflict because it involves repeated, intentional behaviour and an imbalance of power.

Staff will carefully assess each incident to ensure that the most appropriate support, intervention and safeguarding response is provided.

4.2 Forms of bullying

Bullying can take many forms and may occur face-to-face or online. These include, but are not limited to:

- **Physical bullying** – hitting, kicking, pushing, pinching, spitting, damaging property, inappropriate physical contact or intimidation.
- **Verbal bullying** – name-calling, insults, mocking, taunting, threats or offensive language.
- **Emotional or relational bullying** – deliberate exclusion, manipulation, humiliation, intimidation, coercion, spreading rumours, gaslighting or encouraging others to isolate someone.
- **Prejudice-based bullying** – bullying related to race, ethnicity, religion or belief, disability, SEND, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy or other protected characteristics.

- **Sexual bullying** – unwanted sexual comments, sexualised language, inappropriate touching, sexist behaviour, sexual harassment or sexual humiliation.
- **Online (cyber) bullying** – behaviour carried out through digital technology that causes fear, distress or humiliation.
- **Damage to property or theft** – deliberately damaging, hiding, stealing or extorting belongings.
- **Indirect bullying** – encouraging others to bully, social exclusion or coordinated attempts to isolate someone.

Bullying may involve one individual or a group and can occur within school, online or in the wider community.

4.3 Online (Cyber) Bullying

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using digital technologies, including mobile phones, email, messaging services, online gaming platforms and social media.

Online bullying can occur at any time and may continue beyond the school day, making it particularly distressing.

Examples include:

- sending abusive, threatening or intimidating messages
- posting or sharing embarrassing, offensive or harmful images or videos
- creating fake accounts or impersonating another person
- deliberately excluding someone from online groups or activities
- spreading rumours or false information online
- trolling or deliberately provoking emotional distress
- sharing private information without consent
- encouraging others to target an individual online
- making abusive comments relating to protected characteristics
- sharing or threatening to share intimate images without consent (which may constitute a criminal offence and safeguarding concern).

Where cyberbullying occurs, EMLM will respond in accordance with this policy and, where appropriate, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Behaviour Policy and Online Safety Policy.

4.4 Harassment

Harassment is unwanted behaviour that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It may occur as a one-off incident or as part of a pattern of behaviour and can take place face-to-face, in writing or through digital and online communication.

Harassment may relate to a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, including:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

Harassment may also occur because of a person's perceived protected characteristic or because of their association with someone who has a protected characteristic, such as a parent, sibling or other family member.

EMLM is committed to creating an inclusive environment where all members of the school community are treated with dignity and respect. Any form of harassment will be taken seriously, recorded, investigated and responded to appropriately. Where harassment also raises safeguarding concerns or may constitute child-on-child abuse, it will be managed in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

4.5 Banter

EMLM recognises that language described as "banter" can often normalise bullying, prejudice and harassment.

Behaviour will not be dismissed as banter where it causes harm, humiliation, fear or distress, regardless of whether harm was intended.

In line with Anti-Bullying Alliance guidance, it is **not** banter if:

- someone is hurt, upset or distressed
- it targets someone's identity, appearance or protected characteristic
- someone has asked for it to stop
- there is an imbalance of power
- the person targeted is not laughing or joining in
- it humiliates, intimidates or excludes another person.

Where there is uncertainty, staff will always prioritise the lived experience of the child who has experienced the behaviour and respond proportionately, using professional curiosity and safeguarding principles.

5. Responding to Bullying and Harassment

Bullying and harassment cause significant harm and can have a lasting impact on a child's emotional wellbeing, mental health, relationships, attendance and educational outcomes. Every learner has the right to feel safe, respected and included within the EMLM community.

Children who experience bullying or harassment will be listened to, believed and supported. Equally, children displaying bullying behaviour will be supported to

understand the impact of their actions, take responsibility for the harm caused and develop positive, respectful relationships. Where appropriate, restorative approaches, educational interventions and proportionate consequences will be used alongside pastoral support.

EMLM has a responsibility to respond promptly, consistently and effectively to all concerns relating to bullying or harassment. All reports will be taken seriously and considered within the wider safeguarding context. Where bullying raises safeguarding concerns or meets the threshold for child-on-child abuse, the matter will be managed in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

5.1 Online (Cyber) Bullying

The key difference between bullying and online (cyber) bullying is the way in which the behaviour takes place. Whilst the underlying behaviours may be similar, online bullying can occur at any time, reach a wide audience instantly and continue beyond the school day, making it particularly intrusive and harmful.

Online bullying may involve text messages, email, social media, online gaming, messaging platforms, websites or the sharing of digital images and videos.

EMLM promotes safe and responsible use of technology through its curriculum and Online Safety Policy. Learners are taught about respectful online behaviour, digital citizenship, privacy, consent, online relationships and how to report concerns.

Where online bullying is reported, the school will:

- investigate the concern promptly;
- take reasonable steps to preserve or secure evidence where appropriate;
- support learners and families in reporting harmful online content;
- work with online platforms, parents, carers and external agencies where necessary;
- consider whether the behaviour presents a safeguarding concern or constitutes child-on-child abuse.

5.2 Responding to Reports of Bullying and Harassment

All staff have a responsibility to respond to reports of bullying or harassment. The response will always be proportionate, child-centred and informed by safeguarding principles.

Initial Response

When bullying or harassment is reported or suspected, staff will:

- listen carefully to everyone involved without making assumptions;
- reassure the learner that they have done the right thing by speaking up;
- ensure the immediate safety and wellbeing of all children involved;
- record the concern in accordance with school procedures;

- report the concern to the appropriate senior leader and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL).

Investigation

An appropriate member of the leadership team will oversee the investigation, ensuring that:

- all parties have the opportunity to share their account;
- witnesses and available evidence are considered;
- the context, frequency, intent, power imbalance and impact of the behaviour are assessed;
- consideration is given to whether the behaviour constitutes bullying, relational conflict, harassment, discrimination or child-on-child abuse.

Safeguarding

The DSL or DDSL will review every reported bullying concern to determine whether:

- there are wider safeguarding concerns;
- the behaviour meets the threshold for child-on-child abuse;
- additional support or referral to external agencies is required;
- a risk assessment or safety plan is necessary.

Where appropriate, referrals may be made to Early Help, Children's Social Care, the Police or other partner agencies.

Recording and Monitoring

All reported incidents of bullying or harassment will be recorded on Bromcom in accordance with school procedures.

Records will include:

- the nature of the concern;
- actions taken;
- outcomes of the investigation;
- support provided;
- any sanctions or restorative interventions;
- follow-up arrangements.

Incident data will be monitored regularly to identify patterns, trends and emerging concerns, enabling the school to evaluate the effectiveness of its practice and take preventative action where necessary.

5.3 Responding to Bullying Outside School

Bullying that occurs outside school, during transport, educational visits or online may still have a significant impact on learners within school.

Where appropriate, EMLM will investigate concerns, work with families, liaise with other schools or agencies and implement appropriate support, safeguarding measures and behaviour interventions.

5.4 Working with Parents and Carers

Parents and carers will normally be informed of bullying concerns involving their child and will be involved, where appropriate, in agreeing supportive strategies and interventions. Information will be shared in accordance with safeguarding responsibilities, confidentiality and data protection requirements.

5.5 Supporting Learners

Support will always be individualised, proportionate and based upon the needs of the child.

Support for learners who have experienced bullying

Support may include:

- reassurance and emotional support;
- opportunities to speak with a trusted adult, tutor, pastoral lead or the DSL;
- regular wellbeing check-ins;
- restorative meetings where appropriate and agreed by all parties;
- strategies to rebuild confidence, resilience and positive relationships;
- individual safety planning where necessary;
- referrals to counselling, Early Help or other specialist services;
- ongoing communication with parents and carers.

Support for learners displaying bullying behaviour

Learners displaying bullying behaviour will be supported to understand the impact of their actions and make positive changes.

Support may include:

- restorative conversations and reflective work;
- behaviour support and targeted pastoral intervention;
- education relating to equality, diversity, respectful relationships and online safety;
- social, emotional or therapeutic interventions where appropriate;
- involvement of parents and carers;
- proportionate sanctions in line with the Behaviour Policy;
- multi-agency involvement where safeguarding concerns or additional needs are identified.

Follow-up

Following any bullying incident, staff will continue to monitor the wellbeing of all learners involved. Follow-up discussions will take place to ensure that the bullying has ceased, support remains effective and relationships are improving.

Where bullying persists or escalates, further safeguarding action and additional interventions will be implemented.

6. Prevention Through Inclusion and Awareness

At Education My Life Matters (EMLM), preventing bullying is everyone's responsibility. We believe the most effective way to prevent bullying and harassment is by creating a positive, inclusive and respectful culture where healthy relationships are modelled, diversity is celebrated and all members of the school community feel safe, valued and listened to.

Our preventative approach is underpinned by safeguarding, equality, restorative practice and trauma-informed principles. We recognise that preventing bullying requires proactive education, strong relationships, vigilant staff and effective partnership working.

To achieve this, EMLM will:

Promote an inclusive school culture

- Foster an environment where kindness, respect, empathy and inclusion are expected and modelled by all members of the school community.
- Promote equality, celebrate diversity and challenge prejudice, discrimination and stereotypes.
- Ensure learners understand that bullying, harassment, discrimination and prejudice-based language are unacceptable in any form.
- Uphold the school's values consistently through daily practice, assemblies, the curriculum and wider school life.

Teach positive relationships and respectful behaviour

- Deliver an age-appropriate curriculum through RSHE, PSHE, online safety and other learning opportunities that develops learners' understanding of:
 - healthy relationships;
 - respectful communication;
 - diversity and protected characteristics;
 - digital citizenship and responsible online behaviour;
 - bystander responsibilities and how to seek help safely.
- Provide opportunities for discussion through assemblies, themed events, awareness campaigns, Circle Time and restorative practice.
- Teach learners practical strategies for recognising, responding to and reporting bullying.

Build trusted relationships

- Ensure every learner has access to trusted adults who will listen to concerns and take appropriate action.

- Encourage learners to report worries about themselves or others without fear of judgement or retaliation.
- Promote pupil voice through regular opportunities for learners to share their experiences and contribute to school improvement.

Identify and support vulnerability

- Recognise that bullying can affect any learner but that some children may be at greater risk because of their individual circumstances, needs or protected characteristics.
- Identify learners who may require additional support and implement appropriate pastoral, safeguarding or wellbeing interventions.
- Provide additional support during periods of transition, including when learners join the school or experience significant changes in their lives.

Maintain a vigilant safeguarding culture

All staff are expected to remain professionally curious and alert to signs that may indicate bullying, harassment or wider safeguarding concerns. Staff will:

- know their learners well and recognise changes in presentation, behaviour or relationships;
- monitor patterns in attendance, punctuality, engagement and wellbeing;
- identify changes in friendship groups or social interactions;
- challenge low-level behaviours, inappropriate language and discriminatory attitudes before they escalate;
- supervise identified locations and times where bullying is more likely to occur;
- record and report concerns promptly in accordance with safeguarding procedures.
- seek advice and support from external agencies where appropriate, including Early Help, Children's Social Care, health services, the Police and voluntary organisations;
- engage specialist organisations to provide education and support on issues such as equality, online safety and protected characteristics where appropriate.

Work in partnership

EMLM recognises that preventing bullying requires effective partnership working. We will:

- work collaboratively with parents and carers to promote positive behaviour and wellbeing;
- seek advice and support from external agencies where appropriate, including Early Help, Children's Social Care, health services, the Police and voluntary organisations;
- engage specialist organisations to provide education and support on issues such as equality, online safety and protected characteristics where appropriate.

Monitor and Review

The school will regularly monitor bullying incidents, pupil voice, safeguarding information and behaviour data to identify trends, evaluate the effectiveness of preventative strategies and inform future practice. This enables EMLM to continually strengthen its inclusive culture and respond proactively to emerging risks.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

Creating a safe, respectful and inclusive environment is the responsibility of the whole school community.

The Head of School will:

- promote a culture where bullying, harassment and discrimination are not tolerated;
- ensure this policy is implemented consistently across the school;
- ensure appropriate systems are in place for reporting, recording and responding to concerns;
- monitor the effectiveness of the school's preventative strategies;
- ensure appropriate training and resources are available for staff;
- report bullying trends, themes and actions to the Board Members.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs) will:

- provide advice and guidance on safeguarding aspects of bullying;
- review all bullying concerns to determine whether they meet the threshold for child-on-child abuse or other safeguarding concerns;
- coordinate safeguarding responses where required;
- make referrals to external agencies where appropriate;
- monitor patterns of bullying alongside wider safeguarding information.

Board Members will:

- ensure the school fulfils its statutory duties relating to safeguarding, behaviour and equality;
- monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this policy;
- receive regular reports on bullying trends, outcomes and preventative work;
- hold leaders to account for maintaining a safe and inclusive school culture.

All staff will:

- promote positive relationships and model respectful behaviour;
- remain vigilant for signs of bullying, harassment or discrimination;
- challenge inappropriate language and behaviour;
- respond promptly to concerns;
- record and report incidents in accordance with school procedures;

- contribute to restorative and supportive interventions;
- maintain appropriate professional curiosity where safeguarding concerns may exist.

Parents and carers will:

- support the school's expectations regarding behaviour and respectful relationships;
- encourage their child to report concerns;
- work in partnership with the school to resolve concerns positively;
- inform the school of bullying concerns affecting their child.

Learners will:

- treat others with kindness, dignity and respect;
- report bullying or harassment involving themselves or others;
- support peers by acting responsibly and seeking help from trusted adults;
- contribute to maintaining a safe and inclusive school environment.

8. Training, Education and Awareness

EMLM is committed to ensuring that all members of the school community have the knowledge, skills and confidence to prevent, identify and respond to bullying effectively.

The school will:

- provide regular safeguarding and anti-bullying training for all staff, including recognising bullying, online bullying, prejudice-related incidents, child-on-child abuse and appropriate recording procedures;
- ensure staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities, including when concerns require referral to the DSL;
- provide regular updates in response to changes in legislation, statutory guidance and emerging safeguarding risks;
- deliver an age-appropriate curriculum through RSHE, PSHE, online safety and other curriculum areas that promotes respectful relationships, equality, diversity, inclusion and digital citizenship;
- promote awareness through assemblies, Anti-Bullying Week, awareness campaigns and learner-led initiatives;
- provide opportunities for learners to develop emotional literacy, resilience, empathy, conflict resolution and bystander skills;
- work collaboratively with families and external agencies to strengthen preventative practice and provide additional support where appropriate.

9. Recording, Monitoring and Review

Accurate recording is essential to safeguarding, identifying patterns of behaviour and evaluating the effectiveness of the school's anti-bullying strategy.

All concerns relating to bullying or harassment will be recorded on CPOMS by the member of staff receiving or responding to the concern. Following investigation, the Head of School (or delegated senior leader) will determine whether the allegation is substantiated and record the outcome. The school's Bullying Incident Recording and Investigation Overview (Appendix 1) will be completed to ensure a consistent record of investigations, outcomes, support provided and follow-up actions.

Records will include:

- the nature of the concern;
- those involved;
- actions taken;
- safeguarding decisions;
- support and interventions provided;
- outcomes;
- follow-up and review arrangements.

The Head of School and Designated Safeguarding Lead will regularly review incident data to:

- identify trends, themes or patterns;
- identify any groups or individuals who may be disproportionately affected;
- evaluate the effectiveness of interventions;
- inform staff training and curriculum development;
- contribute to safeguarding, behaviour and school improvement planning.

The Head of School will provide regular reports to the Board Members on bullying trends, outcomes and the effectiveness of preventative strategies while maintaining appropriate confidentiality.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if required, following significant incidents, changes in legislation, statutory guidance or local safeguarding arrangements. The review will consider the views of learners, staff, parents and carers, alongside incident data and emerging national guidance to ensure the policy remains effective and reflects current best practice.

Appendix 1 – Bullying Allegation Investigation Record

Education My Life Matters (EMLM)

This form should be completed following every reported allegation of bullying or harassment. It should be uploaded to CPOMS and retained in accordance with the school's record retention procedures.

1. Incident Details

CPOMS Reference Number: _____

Date concern reported: _____

Date(s) of alleged incident(s): _____

Reported by:

☐ Learner

☐ Parent/Carer

☐ Staff Member

☐ External Agency

☐ Anonymous

☐ Other: _____

Investigating Officer: _____

Date investigation commenced: _____

Date investigation completed: _____

2. Learners Involved

Learner(s) who experienced the alleged bullying

Name(s):

Learner(s) alleged to have displayed bullying behaviour

Name(s):

Witnesses

3. Nature of the Allegation

Tick all that apply.

- ☐ Physical
- ☐ Verbal
- ☐ Emotional/Relational
- ☐ Online/Cyber
- ☐ Sexual
- ☐ Prejudice-related
- ☐ Damage to Property
- ☐ Theft/Extortion
- ☐ Other

If prejudice-related, indicate:

- ☐ Race
- ☐ Disability
- ☐ Religion or Belief
- ☐ Sex
- ☐ Sexual Orientation
- ☐ Gender Reassignment
- ☐ Pregnancy/Maternity
- ☐ Other

4. Initial Safeguarding Assessment

Was the learner safe at the time of reporting?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Immediate action taken:

DSL/DDSL informed?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Date:

Safeguarding concerns identified?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, details:

Risk Assessment completed?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Referral made?

☐ Early Help

☐ Children's Social Care

☐ Police

☐ Other

Details:

5. Investigation

Evidence considered:

☐ Learner statements

☐ Staff statements

☐ Witness statements

☐ Parent information

☐ Screenshots

☐ CCTV

☐ CPOMS chronology

☐ Previous incidents

☐ Other

Summary of investigation:

6. Head of School Decision

Following investigation, this allegation has been determined to be:

- ☐ Bullying (Substantiated)
- ☐ Harassment
- ☐ Prejudice-related Incident
- ☐ Child-on-Child Abuse
- ☐ Relational Conflict
- ☐ Unsubstantiated
- ☐ False Allegation
- ☐ Malicious Allegation

7. Reason for decision: Professional Analysis and Decision-Making

Following completion of the investigation, the investigating officer should use professional judgement to determine the most appropriate classification of the incident. This analysis should take account of the information gathered, the views of those involved, safeguarding considerations and the school's definitions contained within this policy.

Professional Analysis:

In your professional judgement, this incident is best described as:

- ☐ Relational conflict
- ☐ Bullying
- ☐ Harassment
- ☐ Prejudice-related incident
- ☐ Child-on-child abuse
- ☐ Behaviour linked to an identified safeguarding concern
- ☐ Unable to determine based on available evidence

Please explain your rationale for this decision, making reference where appropriate to:

- ☐ intent;
- ☐ repetition;

- ☐ imbalance of power;
- ☐ impact on the learner(s);
- ☐ safeguarding concerns;
- ☐ Equality Act protected characteristics;
- ☐ online or contextual factors;
- ☐ previous incidents or patterns of behaviour.

Professional rationale:

Threshold Considerations

Has the behaviour involved:

Consideration	Yes	No
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Repeated behaviour ☐ ☐

Intentional behaviour ☐ ☐

Imbalance of power ☐ ☐

Significant emotional or physical harm ☐ ☐

Prejudice or discrimination ☐ ☐

Online or cyber elements ☐ ☐

Sexualised behaviour ☐ ☐

Wider safeguarding concerns ☐ ☐

Risk of ongoing harm ☐ ☐

Does the incident require referral to, or discussion with, the Designated Safeguarding Lead?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, record outcome:

8. Actions Taken

Support for learner experiencing bullying

☐ Pastoral support

☐ Learning Mentor

☐ Safety Plan

☐ Wellbeing support

☐ Restorative meeting (where appropriate)

☐ Parent meeting

☐ Early Help

☐ External agency referral

☐ Other

Details:

Support and intervention for learner displaying bullying behaviour

☐ Restorative intervention

☐ Behaviour support

☐ Reflection work

☐ Targeted pastoral support

☐ Behaviour sanctions (see Behaviour Policy)

☐ Parent meeting

☐ Education regarding respectful relationships/equality

☐ External agency involvement

☐ Other

Details:

9.Communication

Parents/Carers informed?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Date:

Other professionals informed?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Details:

10. Follow-up Review

Review Date 1:

Outcome:

Review Date 2:

Outcome:

Has the behaviour ceased?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Further intervention required?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Details:

11. Monitoring Information

Tick where applicable.

- ☐ Repeat incident
- ☐ Repeat learner experiencing bullying
- ☐ Repeat learner displaying bullying behaviour
- ☐ Online bullying
- ☐ Prejudice-related
- ☐ Child-on-child abuse
- ☐ Required safeguarding referral
- ☐ Required external agency involvement

12. Authorisation

Investigating Officer

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Head of School

Outcome confirmed:

Signature:

Date:

DSL/DDSL (where safeguarding involvement required)

Signature:

Date:

For help and advice on bullying and harassment:

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.bully.co.uk

www.bullying.co.uk/cyberbullying

www.connectsafely.org

www.stonewall.org.uk

ChildNet International

Digizen

Internet Matters

Think U Know

UK council for Child Internet Safety