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# ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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<b>Approved by:</b>	Epsilon Star MAT Board of Trustees
<b>Date Approved:</b>	April 2026
<b>Next review due:</b>	April 2027

## **Values and Beliefs**

The school does not tolerate bullying of any kind. If we discover that an act of bullying or intimidation has taken place, we act immediately to stop any further occurrences of such behaviour. While it is very difficult to eradicate bullying, we do everything in our power to ensure that all children attend school free from fear. This school is committed to creating a safe environment where young people can learn and play, can talk about their worries, confident that an adult will listen and offer help.

We will make it clear to children, staff, parents, carers and trustees that when bullying happens we will work as a community in accordance with the policy set out in this document to help both people who are harmed and the perpetrators. We will ensure the safety of the targeted pupil and do our best to support improved behaviour from the perpetrator.

## **Aims of the Policy**

The Epsilon Star Trust is committed to creating an atmosphere within our schools that explicitly acknowledges that any bullying is unacceptable.

- All workers/staff/volunteers will be aware of our procedures to prevent and/or respond to observed or reported bullying.
- Where adult to child bullying is suspected, observed or reported it must be managed as a concern about an adult's behaviour within safeguarding procedures.
- All staff, volunteers, children and young people and parents/carers should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All children and young people and parents should know what the organisation policy is on bullying and what they should do if bullying arises
- As an organisation we take bullying seriously. Children and young people and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported, and that bullying will not be tolerated at Epsilon Star Trust.

This Policy statement has been agreed by the Board of Trustees of Epsilon Star Trust.

**This Policy operates in conjunction with:**

- Relationships and Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Child on Child Harmful sexual behavior policy
- Code of conduct
- Health and Safety Policy
- Home School Agreement
- Equal Opportunities
- E-safety Expectations
- PSHE including RSE Curriculum
- Cyber bullying, advice for Headteachers and school staff

**Definition of Bullying**

Bullying is defined as **deliberately** hurtful behaviour, which is **persistent** and **unprovoked**. It may take various forms, including physical, verbal and indirect.

Bullying is: 'To consistently intimidate, ill-treat or overawe'. It is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person and results in pain and distress to the victim. It can be emotional or physical.

**The Essex Definition:**

*'Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.'* Government advice on Behaviour, Discipline, Searching Pupils, Preventing Bullying & Use of Reasonable Force in Schools 2025.

**Bullying can be:**

- Emotional – being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g., taking another's belongings, threatening gestures, abusive notes or graffiti)
- Physical – pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist – racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact or sexually, abusive comments
- Homophobic – because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- Discriminatory – about disability, gender, age or other differences
- Verbal – name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumors, teasing
- Cyber – all areas of internet, such as email and internet chat room misuse
- Mobile - threats by text messaging and calls
- Misuse of associated technology i.e., camera and video facilities
- Bullying of pupils who have special educational needs or disabilities

**Bullying is therefore:**

- Different from random acts of aggression
- The harmed person suffers over a period of time
- Not just physical violence but includes many different sorts of behaviour including intimidation, teasing, name-calling and isolation

**It can take many forms but the main types are:**

- Physical – hitting, kicking, and taking another’s belongings
- Verbal - name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks
- Indirect – spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours

### **Responsibilities**

#### **Staff– the adult as a model**

Staff will not misuse a position of power to dominate the pupils in our school. We will avoid:

- Sarcastic comments
- Derogatory nicknames
- Dominating and humiliating behaviour

We will listen to pupils when they are willing to talk about bullying and we will be sensitive to a pupil’s needs for privacy and respect. Adhere to and promote this policy.

#### **Pupil -what we can expect of the pupils**

Pupils have the right to:

- Be physically safe
- Keep their own possessions and money
- Be free of insult, derogatory terms and teasing
- Be able to associate with other young people for companionship and friendship

**Pupils have responsibility for:**

- Physical safety of others;
- Security of everyone’s personal possessions and money
- Freedom from hurt by name calling, teasing
- Including all pupils in play and learning activities
- Reporting incidents of bullying

#### **Parents / Carers– what we expect of parents /carers**

- Support our anti-bullying policy and procedures
- Discuss with their child’s teacher any concerns that their child may be experiencing bullying or be involved in some other way
- Help to establish an anti-bullying culture inside and outside school

#### **Creating an anti-bullying climate in school**

The Epsilon Star Trust's Behaviour Policy explains how we promote positive behaviour in school to create an environment where pupils behave well, where pupils take responsibility for each other's emotional and social well-being and include and support each other.

Our aim is to create a climate where bullying is not accepted by anyone within the school community. Bullying will not be tolerated and we make this clear in the information we give to pupils and parents/carers when they join our school.

### **Prevention**

The school will use various strategies to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

- Reward positive, non-aggressive behaviour
- Having Ready, Respectful and Safe rules that are woven into everything we do
- Anti-bullying Ambassadors
- Anti-bullying week
- Displays
- Assemblies
- Writing a set of class rules
- Including lessons about bullying in the PSHE curriculum
- Reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly
- Using role play situations.
- Having discussions about bullying and why it matters
- Make clear to parents that it is unacceptable to 'hit back'. This is not in line with the school policy
- In-service training for the staff
- Pastoral team – Time to Talk intervention
- Playleaders support pupils in social problem-solving activities
- Parent code of conduct
- Home-school agreements
- The involvement of outside specialists e.g. Behaviour Support

### **The Importance of Responding to Bullying**

All members of the school have a responsibility to recognise bullying and to take prompt action when they are aware of it happening. The child being bullied should always be assured that he/she has acted correctly in reporting the bullying.

Cyber bullying is dealt with in exactly the same way as other forms, whether on or off-line. Only the tools and technologies change, not the behaviour of children.

At the Epsilon Star Trust we have a fair and consistent approach to disciplinary measures, taking into account any special educational needs and disabilities.

Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

## Procedures

At the Epsilon Star Trust there are consistent disciplinary measures where intervention in bullying incidents is necessary. They are as follows:

1. Report bullying incidents to a member of staff. It may be appropriate for a pupil to report to the adult with a friend for support. The member of staff will listen and establish whether the incident reported constitutes bullying – any reported incident, whether it is established as bullying or not will be logged on our secure, online system.
2. If it is a bullying incident both the perpetrator/s and victim/s will be spoken to as part of the investigation. Children will be encouraged to see other points of view i.e. “How would you feel if..?”
3. The member of staff will emphasise that bullying of any kind is totally unacceptable.
4. If bullying has occurred, the incident will be updated as actions on the secure, online system.
5. The Support Group process may be instigated (see below).
6. Where perpetrators are clearly identified, they will receive consequences as deemed appropriate by the member of staff.
7. The victim will receive support and be given the opportunity to discuss strategies for dealing with the situation. A time for follow up will be arranged.
8. The perpetrator will be asked to make a genuine apology, either verbally or in writing, as appropriate.
9. If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.
10. In cases of serious or repeated bullying, the incidents will be recorded as usual and the Support Group approach implemented. This will be monitored by staff.
11. If necessary and appropriate the Police will be consulted.
12. As a final resort, temporary or permanent exclusion may take place.

***Parents/carers will be informed of any bullying incidents by a member of staff.***

## The Support Group Approach

We have staff members who are trained in using the support group. In this method, the victim, or target, of the bullying will speak to one of our trained members of staff and may be asked to draw a picture or describe the concerns that they have and to discuss the effect bullying has had. The adult will then hold a meeting with a group of students including the perpetrator, those who may have seen the incidents and others who are not directly involved. The adult explains to the group how the victim is feeling and the group then offers suggestions to find a solution.

Removing blame from the process allows the perpetrators to involve themselves in finding a solution without feeling threatened or defensive. Those who were bystanders are given a chance to see that by doing nothing, they were condoning the bullying.

The group is encouraged to come up with practical problem-solving solutions and the responsibility for carrying out these ideas rests with the group. Each pupil in the group then carries out their own solution, so that a child who has been excluded from activities with other children may now have someone to play with and another may accompany him on other occasions to make sure there is no bullying.

A week or so later the group reconvenes to discuss progress and what has been achieved. Records are kept of the way this method is carried out.

The adult will regularly check in with the victim to measure whether further support may be needed. The child also knows that they can go to the adult with any concerns that they may have.

We also use the Playleaders at lunchtime to support the victim and or perpetrator in supervised and organised play activities to minimise opportunities for further incidents to occur.

This has proven to be an effective method of support and usually enables difficult situations to be defectively resolved.