

Sixth Form Anti-Bullying Policy

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1. Introduction

In this policy, the abbreviation of EDA will be used to cover all students enrolled on the Sixth Form course at Emil Dale Academy.

In this policy, the term “staff” covers all individuals undertaking work or services for the company regardless of their employment status.

2.0 Purpose

EDA must be a calm and focussed learning environment, in which all students feel safe and happy. Bullying, of any kind, will not be tolerated. All members of EDA have a responsibility to create a culture in which bullying is not allowed to happen. Victims of bullying and their advocates should have the confidence to alert EDA staff to instances of bullying. They must also have the confidence that these reports will be investigated, and appropriate action will be taken against bullies. This policy details our expectations of how this should be done.

3.0 Location of Policy

This policy is available to access on EDA's website.

4.0 To whom and where this policy applies

This policy applies to all staff, students and all others working with staff and/or students at or on behalf of EDA. For the purposes of this policy, this group are described as 'members of the EDA community'. This policy applies whenever students are on EDA's premises, when travelling to or from EDA, whenever students are in EDA uniform or identifiable as a member of the EDA community outside of training hours, and also to any other place where staff, students or others outlined above are present as a result of an EDA-organised event, trip or visit. Further, the policy applies in any interactions between members of the EDA community at any time.

5.0 What is Bullying?

5.1 Definition

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or a group that intentionally hurts another individual or group physically or emotionally. It is likely to be repeated over time and there may be an imbalance of power between the bully and the victim. Bullying may take place between students, between students and staff or between staff.

Bullying may be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences, such as, but not limited to, culture or class, appearance or health conditions, and home or personal situation. It may also be motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities.

Bullying is not a one-off comment said in anger, in which there is no evident power imbalance between the students involved. It is also not an argument or falling out between two or more students where both have displayed similarly unkind, offensive or threatening behaviour.

5.2 Forms of Bullying

Bullying can be either physical, verbal or psychological and takes many forms, including, but not limited to:

- a) Name-calling
- b) Taunting
- c) Mocking and/or laughing
- d) Making offensive comments or comments disguised as "banter" or "jokes"
- e) Offensive graffiti
- f) Excluding people from groups or social networking sites
- g) Gossiping and spreading rumours
- h) Headlocks, kicking, hitting and/or pushing
- i) Taking or damaging belongings
- j) Sending inappropriate, offensive or degrading text messages, emails or instant messages, including sexting
- k) Setting up websites designed to embarrass or upset individuals
- l) Filming individuals without consent
- m) Upskirting

- n) Child-on-child abuse

5.3 Identifying Potential Victims of Bullying

Bullying is a safeguarding issue and adults working with children and young people must follow EDA's safeguarding procedures if they are concerned about the welfare of a child or identify negative changes in a child's appearance or behaviour. Such changes may be due to bullying and it should be considered as a potential reason for change alongside other possibilities.

Examples of changes to look out for include, but are not limited to:

- a) Fear of walking to or from EDA
- b) Not wanting to go to EDA
- c) Asking to be driven to EDA where the individual had not previously been
- d) Changes being made to usual routines
- e) Refusal to attend EDA
- f) Truancy
- g) Becoming withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- h) Stammering
- i) Attempting or threatening self-harm and/or suicide
- j) Attempting or threatening to run away
- k) Crying when going to sleep or having nightmares
- l) Feeling unwell in mornings
- m) Deterioration in EDA training and skill development
- n) Damaged clothing, EDA equipment and uniform or belongings
- o) Missing possessions
- p) Asking for or stealing money
- q) Losing pre-packed food or other monies
- r) Unexplained cuts and/or bruises
- s) Hunger on arriving home from EDA
- t) Aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable behaviour
- u) Bullying or aggressive behaviour towards peers
- v) Reduced appetite or not eating
- w) Being frightened to say what is wrong
- x) Giving improbable excuses for any of the above

6.0 Preventing Bullying

We want EDA to be an environment in which bullying is not allowed to happen and all members of the EDA community should know that they have a responsibility to challenge and report bullying if they witness it.

6.1 Creating an Environment in which Bullying is not allowed to happen

Anyone who witnesses or suspects that bullying is happening should report it. We recognise that reporting bullying may not be easy, and members of the EDA community may fear negative repercussions. As far as possible, we will protect the anonymity of those who report bullying.

Perpetrators of bullying rely on the silence of others to succeed. We will not tolerate students refusing to cooperate in an investigation into bullying and may treat such conduct as a behaviour incident in its own right.

The hustle and bustle of EDA can provide perpetrators of bullying with the opportunity to physically harm their victims. Unwelcome physical contact must not be dismissed as 'banter'. Accordingly, we will promote respect for the personal space of others and will have a robust approach to avoidable physical contact between students, which includes, but is not limited to, touching, stroking, pushing, arms around shoulders, patting on the head, pulling of hair, 'beats', headlocks, play fighting, tripping up and kicking.

Perpetrators of bullying rely on not being caught and exploit less structured and less closely supervised time-periods. All staff are expected to exercise relaxed vigilance both in and outside of the classroom, recognising the potential for concern at all times and being ready to intervene when appropriate.

6.2 An Anti-Bullying Curriculum

EDA explicitly teach our students about bullying and issues related to bullying as part of our Tutorial sessions.

Key areas addressed in Tutorial sessions include:

- a) What bullying looks like and what to do if you are a victim of or witness bullying, including cyberbullying and sexting.
- b) What prejudice and discrimination is, including discrimination against the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010, including LGBT+ bullying.
- c) How to use technology appropriately, including issues such as sexual consent and revenge pornography. The laws referring to Protected Characteristics, including the legal consequences of bullying in and out of the workplace. Negative language; including homophobic and racist language. Understanding and defining banter and bullying.
- d) What hate crime is and how to report it. Power imbalance, manipulation, coercion and domestic abuse. FGM and forced marriage.

Bullying may also be effectively addressed across the Acting, Dance and Singing curriculums in various projects and pieces that all students in any course study throughout their time training at EDA.

7.0 Tackling bullying

7.1 Reporting incidents

Perpetrators of bullying rely on the silence of others to succeed. We recognise that victims of and witnesses to bullying may be fearful of negative repercussions or reprisals if they report bullying. However, alerting staff to incidents means that strong, coordinated and efficient action can be taken. If staff are not informed, EDA will not be able to act.

Incidents of or concerns about bullying must be reported to a member of staff. For most students, the course leader is the most appropriate person to contact. However, students may speak to any member of staff that they trust. They may do this by:

- a) finding the member of staff before school, at break or lunchtime;
- b) asking the member of staff at the end of a lesson or at an equally appropriate moment when and where it would be possible to speak to them; or
- c) e-mailing the member of staff to ask when and where it would be possible to speak to them.

Students should specify that they wish to speak to the member of staff about bullying, so that the member of staff is clear that the meeting is urgent.

Physical evidence of bullying, such as photographs of bruising or other injuries, screenshots of text messages or Snapchats, information as to the location of graffiti, copies of unkind notes or items of damaged property, can prove incredibly helpful in investigating and resolving bullying. Students should provide the school with or alert the school to any physical evidence, which does or may exist, at the earliest opportunity when reporting bullying.

EDA staff reserve the right to record - voice or video - any conversations with students and parents/legal guardians for investigatory purposes.

7.2 Investigating incidents

When a report of bullying has been received, the report will be shared with the victim's course leader, who is likely to take responsibility for the investigation with the guidance of the Principal. Other members of the senior leadership or safeguarding team may also be involved in some circumstances.

If the investigating staff member is concerned that the law may have been broken, then the police may be involved and contacted.

The investigating staff member will speak to the victim as soon as possible. The investigating staff member will interview students and staff who they consider may have information to support the investigation. The investigating staff member will also review any physical evidence, if available.

The investigating staff member will speak to the alleged perpetrator, if identified, as soon as possible. The alleged perpetrator will be given a clear warning about their conduct while the investigation is ongoing, which will include an instruction not to contact the victim, either directly or indirectly, in or outside of EDA. There will be a consequence if this is not adhered to by the perpetrator. The investigating staff member may remove the alleged perpetrator from lessons and general circulation for the duration of the investigation to ensure its integrity.

The investigating staff member or the Principal will notify a parent/legal guardian of both the victim and the perpetrator following the conclusion of the investigation.

EDA staff reserve the right to record - voice or video - any conversations with students and parents/legal guardians for investigatory purposes.

7.3 Resolution of incidents

If the report is upheld, the investigating staff member will present their conclusions to the Principal, with whom they will agree a consequence. The consequence will depend upon mitigating and aggravating factors.

Any fixed term external exclusions or permanent exclusions will only be issued by the Principal or their nominated deputy in situations of absence. The victim will be informed of the consequence.

Following the consequence, if appropriate the victim's Year Leader, Deputy Principal or the Principal will facilitate a mediation meeting between the victim and the perpetrator. This meeting will allow the victim to explain to the perpetrator how they had made them feel and will allow the perpetrator to apologise to the victim. If the victim does not wish to participate in this meeting, it is their right not to do so.

If the consequence is a fixed term external exclusion, the perpetrator will return to school following a reintegration meeting in which they acknowledge the actions that they have taken and demonstrated understanding and remorse. A parent/legal guardian must attend the reintegration.

The investigating staff member will notify appropriate staff, following the conclusion of the investigation. In some circumstances, some staff members may need to be made away throughout the investigation process for monitoring purposes. This will be determined on a need-to-know basis. This communication will include a request to raise their level of vigilance around the student(s) affected, any special arrangements that should be put in place to support the student and a reminder to report concerns they may have via their line manager.

The investigating staff member, course leader or Principal may:

- a) praise the student for speaking out and encourage them to do the same in the future if necessary;
- b) inform the student of the actions the school has taken;
- c) give advice on how to avoid contact with the perpetrator;
- d) assess whether the student may require support during breaks and lunchtimes;
- e) offer mentoring by either the welfare manager, course leader, or another appropriate guest staff members;
- f) check in with the victim on a periodic basis to assess the success of the resolution; or
- g) make recommendations to a parent/carer about accessing external support, such as counselling.

Perpetrators of bullying may also require support and guidance to prevent a repeat of their actions. This will be offered following the conclusion of any consequence and mediation and may include:

- h) offer mentoring by either the welfare manager, course leader, or another appropriate guest staff member(s).

Following the resolution of an incident, perpetrators of bullying will continue to be treated fairly by all members of EDA staff.

It is crucial that any reprisals following the resolution of a bullying incident are reported immediately and directly to the victim's course leader, deputy principal or principal. This report may be made by the victim or another member of staff, that the student has spoken to. If this report is upheld, a more severe consequence will be issued.

Perpetrators of bullying do not always act alone and may rely on or be encouraged by other students. We will treat students as joint perpetrators of bullying if they are found to have:

- i) made comments, either in person or online, that support the perpetrator's actions;
- j) made comments, either in person or online, that describe what has happened to the victim in a mocking or humiliating way;
- k) made inflammatory remarks to either the victim or the perpetrator that are intended to prolong the issues between them or make them worse;
- l) shared material (e.g. messages, video footage, sound clips etc.) that describe or celebrate what has happened to the victim;
- m) supported the organisation of occasions when the victim can be targeted further; or
- n) withheld information or evidence, given limited cooperation with or hindered an investigation.

Students found to have acted in this way may also be issued with a consequence.

8.0 Recording and evaluation of incidents

Accurate recording of data regarding bullying incidents is essential in enabling the school to identify patterns in behaviour and 'hotspots'.

Incidents of bullying will be recorded on Microsoft Teams throughout the investigation. The incident will be recorded against the perpetrator and will include the following information:

- a) the nature of bullying;
- b) the discriminatory nature of bullying e.g. racist/homophobic/protected characteristics, if appropriate;
- c) the location of the incident;
- d) the timing of the incident;
- e) a description of the incident, including the name of the victim; and, once the investigation has concluded
- f) the consequence issued.

8.1 External agency involvement

In some circumstances, we may utilise external agencies in the investigation of bullying or in supporting the victims or perpetrators of bullying.

Where we consider that the law may have been broken, we will recommend to the student and, where applicable, parents/legal guardians to report incidents to the police directly. We will cooperate with any resulting police investigation but may not proceed with any investigation or action within EDA without police advice, so as not to prejudice the outcome of their investigation or action.

Version Number	Date of Issue	Review Date	Author	Changes Made/ detail
01	21 st July 2023	July 2024	Eden Tinsey	First issue
02	25 th July 2024	July 2025	Eden Tinsey	Policy has become solely applicable to BTEC/Sixth Form students

				Reformat of policy, including new logo implementation
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