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**BULLYING (INCLUDING CYBERBULLYING) POLICY**

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## **Bullying definition**

Bullying is defined as deliberate hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves.

It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power over one or more persons. Bullying can happen in person or online, and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert).

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.

### **Physical bullying**

Physical bullying includes hitting, kicking, tripping, pinching and pushing or damaging property. Physical bullying causes both short term and long-term damage.

### **Verbal bullying**

Verbal bullying includes name calling, insults, teasing, intimidation, sexual or racist remarks, or verbal abuse. Verbal bullying can escalate to levels which start affecting the individual target.

### **Social bullying**

Social bullying, sometimes referred to as covert bullying, is often harder to recognise and can be carried out behind the bullied person's back. It is designed to harm someone's social reputation and/or cause humiliation. Social bullying includes:

- lying and spreading rumours
- negative facial or physical gestures, menacing or contemptuous looks
- playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate
- mimicking unkindly
- encouraging others to socially exclude someone
- damaging someone's social reputation or social acceptance.

Role of EACS in e-policy: As EACS are acting in loco parentis, it is our duty to be aware and involved in all matters relating to a student's online-safety.

For full details of our Online (E-Safety) policy go to: <http://www.eliteacs.com/policies>

## **Cyber bullying**

Cyber bullying can be overt or covert bullying behaviours using digital technologies, including hardware such as computers and smartphones, and software such as social media, instant messaging, texts, websites and other online platforms.

Cyber bullying can happen at any time. It can be in public or in private and sometimes only known to the target and the person bullying. Cyber bullying can include:

- Abusive or hurtful texts emails or posts, images or videos
- Deliberately excluding others online
- Nasty gossip or rumours
- Imitating others online or using their log-in

<https://www.ncab.org.au/bullying-advice/bullying-for-schools/>

Cyberbullying is a form of bullying, that is on the increase with young people in this country.

Childnet's 2016 Cyberbullying Guidance, funded by the Government Equalities Office and European Union, shows schools how to embed cyberbullying in anti-bullying work.

If a student approaches an EACS member of staff or we are notified by parents/agents that a student is a victim of cyberbullying. EACS will handle the concern sensitively and speak to the individual through the DSL or the Deputy DSL. The school will also be involved and if necessary, the Police and Social Service if a student is under 16 years old.

## **Sexting**

EACS strongly advises that students take caution when taking photos and posting them online. Once posted, you lose control over how they are shared.

EACS endorses and advises all staff to read The UK Council for Child Internet Safety publication on Sexting in schools and colleges: Responding to incidents and safeguarding young people.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/60987/4/6\\_2939\\_SP\\_NCA\\_Sexting\\_In\\_Schools\\_FINAL\\_Update\\_Jan17.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/60987/4/6_2939_SP_NCA_Sexting_In_Schools_FINAL_Update_Jan17.pdf)

Remember, it is illegal to take or share photos of anyone under the age of 18 that is deemed to be explicit.

## Elite procedures for dealing with reports of bullying and cyber bullying

If an EACS staff member, including host family and drivers are approached by a student or parent/agent of a student and informed that the student is a victim of bullying/cyber bullying they will approach the concern with sensitivity and professionalism.

The decision to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care would be made in cases when the DSL is confident that they have enough information to assess the risks to pupils involved, and the risks can be managed within Elite's support framework and network for the child. In such circumstances the procedures continue.

Elite will take direction and support from the parents/agent and schools where appropriate in terms of supporting the student who is a victim of bullying or cyber bullying. The best course of action will be determined in accordance with suggested guidance as detailed in Resources and Support.

Staff, host families, & drivers should follow the usual reporting procedures as for any other safeguarding concern as laid out in Elite's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy. Copies of the reporting forms are available on the Elite website In addition, copies may be requested from the office by emailing [info@eliteacs.com](mailto:info@eliteacs.com)

Concerns and child protection issues are recorded in their Safeguarding files, which remain secure and confidential. An additional student folder will be created to manage all correspondence and recorded actions. Dates and notes pertaining to a student are entered onto a monitoring spreadsheet which again remains secure and confidential. Safeguarding and child protection information is stored securely and can only be accessed by the DSL and Deputy DSL.

## **Resources & Support**

EACS will support staff with the provision of information and guidance and signposting to training resources, as they become available, which will assist staff in preventing and responding to bullying and cyberbullying.

### **Cyberbullying.**

**Childnet 2016 Cyber bullying guidance** provides useful support and resource reference for Elite. The guidance comprises of four main sections and whilst this was originally commissioned for schools, it is very relevant to Elite in supporting students who may be suffering from cyber bullying.

The sections and resources available are highlighted as follows:

#### **Understanding Cyberbullying**

<http://www.childnet.com/ufiles/1-understanding-cyberbullying1.pdf>

#### **Preventing Cyberbullying**

<http://www.childnet.com/ufiles/2-preventing-cyberbullying1.pdf>

#### **Responding to Cyberbullying**

<http://www.childnet.com/ufiles/3-responding-to-cyberbullying1.pdf>

#### **Supporting Staff**

<http://www.childnet.com/ufiles/4-cyberbullying-supporting-school-staff.pdf>

#### **Bullying**

**Bullying UK** if you think you are being bullied call 0808 800 2222 or visit their website at –

<http://www.bullying.co.uk>

#### **Kidscape**

There to provide children, families, carers and professionals with advice, training and practical tools to prevent bullying and protect young lives.

<http://www.kidscape.org.uk>