

Anti-Bullying Strategy

Organisation:	Elevated Minds CIC
School:	Elevated Futures
Approved by:	Doreen Sinclair-McCollin, CEO
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1. Statement of Intent

Elevated Minds CIC, operating as Elevated Futures Educational Provision, is committed to providing a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment for all pupils. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Our anti-bullying strategy reflects our commitment to fostering respectful relationships and ensuring that all pupils feel valued and protected.

This policy is underpinned by the strengths-based principles of the Dynamic Development Plan (DDP), which emphasises understanding behaviour as communication and proactively fostering the positive relationships, skills, and environment necessary for all pupils to thrive.

2. Legal Framework and Compliance

This policy is written in accordance with, and gives due regard to, key legislation and guidance, including:

- **Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (Paragraph 10):** Which states the proprietor must ensure bullying is prevented *in so far as reasonably practicable*.
- **The Equality Act 2010:** Which places a duty on schools to eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation based on protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation).
- **The Children Act 1989 & 2004**
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (Statutory Guidance)**
- **Education Act 2002** (Section 175)

3. Aims and Principles

The primary aim of this policy is to **prevent** and **respond** to bullying effectively, guided by the following DDP-aligned principles:

- **Prevent:** To proactively prevent bullying in all forms (including verbal, physical, emotional, cyber, and prejudice-based) by fostering a whole-school culture of respect, inclusion, and empathy.
- **Promote:** To promote positive behaviour, emotional literacy, and social problem-solving skills, equipping pupils with the tools to build and maintain healthy relationships.
- **Support:** To provide robust, DDP-informed support for any individual affected by bullying behaviour, ensuring they feel safe, heard, and valued.
- **Understand:** To recognise that bullying behaviour is often a sign of undeveloped skills or unmet needs. We apply restorative, educational interventions rather than purely punitive ones.
- **Empower:** To provide clear, accessible guidance for all pupils, staff, and parents on how to identify, report, and respond to bullying, encouraging reporting without fear of retaliation.

4. Definition of Bullying

Bullying is defined as behaviour by an individual or group, **repeated over time**, that **intentionally** hurts another individual or group, either physically or emotionally.

However, our policy recognises that behaviour can be perceived as bullying regardless of the perpetrator's original intent. The **impact** of the behaviour on the individual is our primary concern.

Bullying can be distinguished from isolated conflicts or disagreements between peers. It is characterised by a deliberate use of power (perceived or actual) in an unequal relationship.

5. Types of Bullying

We recognise all forms of bullying, including:

- **Physical:** Hitting, kicking, pushing, taking or damaging belongings.
- **Verbal:** Name-calling, insults, threats, racist, sexist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, or disablest remarks.
- **Emotional / Relational:** Spreading rumours, deliberate exclusion or isolation, "dirty looks," coercive control, or manipulation.
- **Cyber:** Using technology to bully (e.g., abusive texts, social media posts, emails, sharing humiliating images/videos). This bullying is invasive and can occur 24/7.
- **Prejudice-Based:** Bullying based on perceived or actual differences, targeting protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

A whole-school commitment is required to implement this policy effectively.

- **The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Governors:** Are responsible for approving this policy, ensuring it is embedded in school culture, and monitoring its effectiveness.
- **The Headteacher/Principal:** Has overall responsibility for the policy's implementation and for ensuring all staff (including TAs/HLTAs) and pupils are aware of it.
- **The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Pastoral Team:** Will lead on investigations, coordinate support, and maintain detailed records of all bullying incidents.

- **The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) / Inclusion Manager:** Will work closely with the pastoral team to ensure the DDP framework is applied, particularly for pupils with SEND (both as targets and those displaying bullying behaviour), linking behaviour to unmet needs or communication difficulties.
- **All Staff (including Teachers, TAs, HLTA, and Support Staff):** Are responsible for modelling positive relationships, implementing the preventative curriculum (PSHE), identifying potential bullying, and responding consistently to all incidents as per this policy.
- **Therapeutic Professionals (e.g., EPs, SaLTs, OTs):** Will be consulted to inform DDPs for pupils involved, aligning therapeutic goals with educational outcomes and addressing underlying skill deficits (e.g., social communication, emotional regulation).
- **Pupils:** Are encouraged to be active bystanders, report all incidents of bullying (to themselves or others), and uphold the school's values of respect and kindness.
- **Parents/Carers:** Are encouraged to work in partnership with the school, to report concerns immediately, and to support the school's restorative and strengths-based interventions.

7. Proactive and Preventative Strategies (The DDP Framework)

We believe prevention is the most effective strategy. Our approach is built on the DDP framework:

1. **A Strengths-Based Culture:** Fostering a school environment where every pupil's strengths are recognised (as outlined in *The Dynamic Development Plan* framework). We celebrate diversity and actively teach respect for all.
2. **Explicit Curriculum Input:** Using PSHE, RSE, Computing (for online safety), and assemblies to explicitly teach:
 - The definition and impact of bullying.
 - Empathy, emotional literacy, and self-regulation.
 - Social problem-solving and conflict resolution skills.
 - How to be a positive and safe online citizen.
 - Assertiveness skills and how to report concerns.
3. **Targeted Staff Training:** All stakeholders (including Leaders, Teachers, TAs, and SENCos) will receive regular training on identifying, preventing, and responding to bullying through a DDP and trauma-informed lens.

4. **Safe and Monitored Environment:** Ensuring appropriate supervision in "hotspot" areas (e.g., corridors, changing rooms, playgrounds) and robust filtering/monitoring of the school's IT systems.
5. **Pupil Voice and Empowerment:** Utilising peer-mentoring systems, a school council, and pupil surveys to actively listen to and act upon pupil concerns.

8. Responding to Bullying Incidents: A DDP-Led Approach

When bullying is reported, the school will follow a clear, consistent, and DDP-led process.

Stage 1: Reporting

- Pupils, staff, and parents can report concerns through multiple channels (e.g., to any staff member, via an online reporting tool, or to a trusted peer mentor).
- All reports, even if they appear minor, will be taken seriously and recorded.

Stage 2: Investigation (DDP-Lens)

- The designated staff member (e.g., Head of Year, Pastoral Lead) will investigate immediately.
- The investigation will move beyond "who did what" to understand the **function** of the behaviour.
- We ask: "Why is this happening?" "What unmet need is this behaviour communicating?" "What skills are lacking?"
- The SENCo/Inclusion Manager will be consulted if the behaviour involves or is directed at a pupil with SEND.

Stage 3: Intervention (Restorative & Strengths-Based) This is a multi-faceted approach, not a single sanction.

Support for the Target:

- Immediate safety planning to stop the bullying.
- Access to pastoral support (e.g., school counsellor) to process the experience.
- Creation of a simple DDP focused on rebuilding confidence, resilience, and assertiveness skills.
- **Intervention for the Pupil(s) Displaying Bullying Behaviour:**
 - The focus is on **education and rehabilitation**, not just punishment.

- **Consequences** will be applied. These will be logical, proportionate, and educational (e.g., loss of privileges, restorative tasks) rather than purely punitive (e.g., isolation without reflection).
- A **DDP** will be initiated by the SENCo/Pastoral team, identifying the pupil's skill gaps (e.g., empathy, social awareness, impulse control) and providing targeted support to develop them. This aligns therapeutic input with behavioural change.
- **Restorative Justice:**
 - Where appropriate and safe for all parties, a facilitated restorative meeting will be held. This aims to repair the harm done and allow the pupil(s) displaying the behaviour to understand its impact.

Stage 4: Parental/Carer Involvement

- Parents/carers of all pupils involved will be informed and invited to partner with the school.
- The focus will be on a shared, non-blaming approach to support the pupils and resolve the issue.

9. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Review

- The DSL and SLT will maintain a central, confidential log of all reported bullying incidents.
- This log will be analysed termly to identify patterns, trends, "hotspots," or groups at particular risk (e.g., pupils with SEND, pupils from protected characteristic groups).
- The analysis will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of this policy and the associated DDP interventions.
- This policy will be reviewed annually by the SLT and Governors, or sooner in response to significant incidents or legislative changes.

Approval Sign-Off

Name	Position	Signature	Date
D. Sinclair-McCollin	Head Teacher Director		28 July 2025