EmpowerEd Anti-bullying Policy

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EmpowerEd Anti-Bullying Policy

1. Aims and Objectives

At EmpowerEd, we understand that bullying is unacceptable and can severely damage children's individual well-being and educational progress. Therefore, we strive to prevent bullying by fostering an ethos in which it is not tolerated under any circumstances (refer to the behaviour policy). This policy aims to establish a consistent company response to any incidents of bullying that may occur. We seek to raise awareness among all stakeholders regarding our commitment to eradicating bullying and clearly define everyone's responsibilities in this matter.

2. Our Company Commitment

At EmpowerEd, we:

- Regularly discuss, monitor, and review our Anti-Bullying Policy to ensure its effectiveness.
- Support staff in promoting positive relationships and identifying and addressing bullying appropriately.
- Ensure that students are aware that all bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively, enabling them to feel safe and learn in an inclusive environment.
- Communicate promptly with parents/carers regarding their concerns about bullying and work collaboratively to uphold the anti-bullying policy.
- Learn from best practices and seek support from the Local Authority and other relevant organisations when appropriate.

3. Definition of Bullying

Bullying is a subjective experience that can take many forms. Various national and international definitions of bullying exist, but most share three common elements:

- **Deliberate Hurtful Behaviour**: Bullying is intentional and aimed at causing distress.
- **Repeated Behaviour**: It typically occurs over time rather than as a one-off incident.
- **Imbalance of Power**: The victim often finds it difficult to defend themselves due to a perceived or real imbalance of power.

3.1 Forms of Bullying

Bullying can manifest in several ways, including:

- **Physical Bullying**: Punching, pushing, damaging property, or forcing someone to do something against their will.
- **Verbal Bullying**: Name-calling, teasing, or insulting someone based on their identity

(e.g., race, religion, sexual orientation).
- **Indirect Bullying**: Spreading rumours, social exclusion, or ostracism.
- **Cyberbullying**: Using electronic means (text messages, social media, emails, etc.) to harass or intimidate others.

3.2 Specific Types of Bullying

We acknowledge that while any child can be bullied, some may be more vulnerable due to certain characteristics, including:

- Race, religion, or culture
- Special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities
- High ability
- Appearance or health conditions
- Sexual orientation
- Family circumstances, including being a young carer or looked-after child
- Sexist, sexual, or transphobic bullying
- Use of derogatory language relating to any of the above categories

3.3 Roles in Bullying Situations

We recognize that bullying involves different roles, including:

- **Ringleader**: The individual who initiates and directs the bullying.
- **Associates**: Those who actively participate in bullying due to peer pressure.
- **Reinforcers**: Bystanders who encourage bullying behaviour through laughter or support.
- **Outsiders**: Those who witness bullying but do not intervene.
- **Defenders**: Individuals who attempt to stop the bullying or support the victim.

We encourage all students to take responsibility for their actions and to stand against bullying, as peer intervention can significantly reduce the prevalence of bullying.

4. Preventing, Identifying, and Responding to Bullying

To combat bullying effectively, we will:

- Collaborate with staff and external agencies to identify and address all forms of bullying, particularly prejudice-driven incidents.
- Provide systematic opportunities for students to develop social and emotional skills, including resilience.
- Integrate discussions of bullying into the curriculum, alongside initiatives such as Circle Time and peer support programs.
- Train all staff to recognize bullying and adhere to company policies and procedures.
- Leverage the work of Learning Mentors to support vulnerable children.
- Create "safe spaces" for students who may be at risk of bullying.

5. Involvement of Students

We commit to:

- Regularly gather students' views on the prevalence and nature of bullying.
- Ensure students know how to express concerns about bullying.
- Inform students about the potential consequences of engaging in bullying.
- Involve students in anti-bullying initiatives and activities.
- Provide support to those who have been bullied and facilitate interventions for those who bully.

6. Liaison with Parents and Carers

We will:

- Ensure that parents/carers know whom to contact if they have concerns about bullying.
- Inform parents/carers about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively.

7. Responsibilities

This policy's success hinges on the entire EmpowerEd community understanding that bullying is intolerable and knowing the steps to prevent and address it.

7.1 Responsibilities of Company Directors

- Oversee the monitoring and reviewing of this policy.

7.2 Responsibilities of Staff

- All staff members must be familiar with and implement this policy.

7.3 Responsibilities of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

- Implement the anti-bullying strategy and ensure all staff are equipped to handle bullying incidents.
- Ensure children understand the definition of bullying and its unacceptability.
- Provide adequate training for all staff on addressing bullying.
- Foster a climate of support and recognition to minimise the likelihood of bullying.
- Collaborate with team members to ensure the policy is enforced consistently.

7.4 Responsibilities of Tutors

- Take all bullying incidents seriously, intervening to prevent them and keeping written records of incidents.

- Support victims and involve parents if bullying persists.
- Maintain a record of bullying incidents occurring outside of classroom time.
- Address bullying situations promptly and provide support to all involved.
- Participate in ongoing training to effectively manage bullying incidents.
- Establish a trusting and respectful classroom environment, promoting positive interactions among all students.

8. Monitoring and Review

8.1 Day-to-Day Monitoring

The SLT will monitor the implementation of this policy on a day-to-day basis and review it regularly to ensure its effectiveness.

8.2 Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if necessary, taking into account feedback from staff, students, parents, and external stakeholders.

APPENDIX A: Types of Bullying

1. Bullying Related to Race, Religion, or Culture

Definition: Racist or faith-based bullying targets individuals based on their background, colour, religion, or heritage. Surveys and focus groups indicate that a significant proportion of bullied students have experienced this type of bullying, with recent political and social issues contributing to its rise. Research shows that Black and minority ethnic (BME) children often experience more severe bullying. These incidents can be both direct and indirect, reflecting broader societal attitudes toward race and faith.

Impact:

- The characteristics targeted in racist or faith-based bullying not only affect the individual child but also impact their family and community, leading to a compounded sense of identity-related distress.
- Racial and cultural elements in bullying can negatively affect a child's sense of identity, self-worth, and self-esteem.

Reporting:

- Companies are advised to log all incidents of racist or faith-based bullying and report them termly to the local authority. This data collection allows for the identification of trends and the provision of necessary training and support.
- All incidents suspected to be racist must be recorded, reported, and investigated thoroughly.

Key Reference: The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report (1999) defines racism as "conduct or words which advantage or disadvantage people because of their colour, culture, or ethnic origin."

2. Bullying Related to Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Disabilities

Definition: Children and young people with SEN and disabilities are statistically more vulnerable to bullying. Public bodies must promote equality of opportunity and eliminate disability-related harassment.

Vulnerability:

- Children with SEN and disabilities often struggle with social confidence and friendship formation, which can protect against bullying.
- When children with SEN or disabilities engage in bullying, the same standards of behaviour apply as for all students, with reasonable adjustments made as necessary.

3. Bullying Related to Gifted and Talented Children

Definition: Gifted and talented children can be targets of bullying due to their advanced abilities, interests, or achievements.

Vulnerability:

- Their unique talents may lead to feelings of isolation and resentment among peers, making them targets for bullying behaviour.

4. Bullying Related to Appearance or Health Conditions

Definition: Children with visible health issues or conditions such as eczema, or those perceived to have physical limitations, are often more vulnerable to bullying.

Factors:

- Body image issues, perceived affluence or lack thereof, and general societal standards of appearance can exacerbate the risk of being bullied.

5. Bullying Related to Sexual Orientation

Definition: Homophobic bullying targets individuals based on their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

Prevalence:

- Research shows that LGBTQ+ youth (gay, lesbian, bisexual, or perceived as such) face a higher risk of victimisation.
- This type of bullying is often underreported due to the fear of "coming out" prematurely to peers or adults.

Forms of Homophobic Bullying:

- **Verbal Abuse**: Use of derogatory terms, spreading rumours that undermine an individual's sexual orientation.
- **Physical Abuse**: Acts of violence, including hitting, punching, or threatening behaviour.
- **Cyberbullying**: Online harassment, including rumours spread through social media or texting.

6. Bullying of Young Carers or Looked-After

Children

Definition: Children who care for family members with disabilities, illness, or substance misuse issues may be more vulnerable to bullying due to their unique responsibilities.

Vulnerability:

- Young carers often face stress and health risks from their responsibilities, which can lead to feelings of isolation.
- Looked-after children may also experience bullying due to their circumstances and potential academic struggles.
- Traumatic backgrounds, such as domestic violence or bereavement, may contribute to vulnerability.

7. Sexist, Sexual, and Transphobic Bullying

Definition: This type of bullying affects all genders and is characterised by attitudes and actions that demean or intimidate based on gender.

Forms of Bullying:

- **Sexist Bullying**: Involves attitudes and comments that demean individuals based on their gender.
- **Sexual Bullying**: Includes name-calling, unwanted physical contact, and inappropriate comments.
- **Transphobic Bullying**: Targets individuals who are transgender or questioning their gender identity, often resulting in significant emotional distress.

Impact:

- All children, regardless of gender, may experience bullying, and both boys and girls can be victims or perpetrators. Addressing these behaviours requires a nuanced understanding of gender dynamics and individual experiences.

8. Reporting and Intervention

Reporting:

- All incidents of bullying should be reported promptly to ensure effective intervention and support.
- Create a safe and confidential reporting system that encourages students to come forward without fear of retaliation.

Intervention Strategies:

- Empower bystanders to intervene safely and report incidents.
- Provide training for staff on recognizing and addressing all forms of bullying, including those related to race, religion, disability, and gender identity.
- Establish support systems for victims, including counselling and peer support groups.

9. Conclusion

EmpowerEd is committed to addressing all forms of bullying and creating a safe and inclusive environment for all students. By understanding the various types of bullying and their impacts, we can work together to create an atmosphere where every student feels valued and respected.