Staff Protection Policy

Ellesmere College

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Scope of this policy

1.1 This policy outlines the College's approach to protecting its staff from all behaviour from any non-employee which causes distress. It is non regulatory.

1.2 This policy should be read alongside Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025, the Independent School Standards (ISSRs), and ISI safeguarding expectations.

2 Definition of behaviour which causes distress

2.1 Behaviour may take the form of:

2.1.1 verbal or physical abuse of an employee of Ellesmere College.

2.1.2 behaviour causing concern to an employee of Ellesmere College.

2.2 Abuse or behaviour causing concern may take place in various contexts:

2.2.1 In person (both one-to-one or in public)

2.2.2 On the telephone

2.2.3 In writing (including emails, texts and messaging)

2.2.4 Online (including posting malicious comments on websites and social media sites or messaging apps and other acts of "internet trolling".)

3 Rationale

Ellesmere College has a legal responsibility to take reasonable steps to protect its employees from all forms of abuse and behaviour causing concern whilst carrying out their day-to-day duties. The College is opposed to such abuse, and takes a stance against bullying in all its forms. It is the College's duty to also safeguard the wellbeing of staff, and provide support following incidents of abuse or distress.

4 Context

4.1 Regrettably, schools are experiencing a rise in verbal and written abuse of its employees in a range of contexts.

5 Aims of this policy

5.1 To improve understanding between parents, visitors and staff by providing parameters and guidelines for all.

5.2 To protect all employees of Ellesmere College from behaviour which causes distress.

5.3 To outline the procedures for how the College will handle examples of such behaviour.

6 General Principles on the Tone, Content and manner of Communication

6.1 All communications between parents and school (and vice versa) should be:

6.1.1 Polite and courteous (in tone and content)

6.1.2 Respectful of professional integrity

6.1.3 Illustrative of our common purpose

6.1.4 Mindful of the time pressures under which teachers and parents operate.

6.2 Electronic recordings of meetings or conversations are not normally permitted unless a parent's own disability or special needs require it. Prior knowledge and consent of all parties attending must be sought before meetings or conversations are recorded. Consent will be recorded in any minutes taken.

6.3 When parents are arranging meetings with staff, we will endeavour to meet as soon as is mutually practicable, subject to staff teaching and organisational commitments. All meetings should be arranged during normal working hours.

7 Procedure for Ellesmere College Employees dealing with behaviour by parents and/or visitors which causes distress

7.1 Introduction

We recognise that in our community (as in life) there will be times when frustration about what may have been said or done can occur. School staff understand the pressure that pupils and parents feel at times and are committed to helping resolve difficulties when they arise in a sensitive and helpful manner. Just as we demand the very highest standards of courtesy and professionalism from our staff, we also expect pupils, parents and visitors to follow the general principles listed above with regard to the tone and content of communications, be they in person, on the telephone, or in writing. A formal risk assessment will be conducted when behaviour is repeated, escalating, or poses a safeguarding concern.

7.2 Physical Abuse and Threatening Behaviour

7.2.1 All incidents of assault on staff must be reported in writing to the Head who will discuss the incident with the member of staff. The police will be contacted if it is deemed necessary.

7.2.2 Staff should be aware that no physical attack or injury needs to have occurred for a common assault to have taken place. It is sufficient for a person to have been threatened with immediate violence and put in fear of a physical attack for an offence to have been committed.

7.2.3 The Police expect to be involved where there is clear evidence of an injury (whether physical or emotional) and will take account of previous behaviour of the offender and the likelihood of a repetition if action is not taken.

7.2.4 The Head will write to the parent and will initiate the Senior Management procedure set out in paragraph 8 below. If the alleged offender is a visitor to the College, a member of staff should ask them to leave the premises immediately.

7.3 Verbal Abuse may be defined as "the repeated improper and excessive use of language or tone of voice to humiliate someone, or to undermine someone's dignity." Verbal abuse which is related to a protected characteristic, such as race, gender, sexual orientation, disability,

faith, or age, may constitute hate speech. The School will normally involve the Police where this is considered to have been the case.

7.3.1 Verbal Abuse in a one-to-one situation:

7.3.1.1 All incidents of alleged verbal abuse on staff must be reported in writing to the relevant member of the Senior Management Team at the earliest possible opportunity. The Senior Management procedure set out in paragraph 8 below will be implemented.

7.3.1.2 Staff should terminate the conversation if they deem it to have become abusive.

7.3.1.3 Staff should make a record in writing regarding the nature of the conversation and examples of the alleged abuse.

7.3.1.4 The relevant member of the Senior Management Team will reply to the parent and will initiate the Senior Management procedure set out in paragraph 8 below.

7.3.2 Verbal Abuse in a public situation:

7.3.2.1 All incidents of alleged verbal abuse against staff must be reported in writing to the relevant member of the Senior Management Team at the earliest possible opportunity. Include time and date and where possible the exact words or behaviour, presence of witnesses and action taken. The Senior Management procedure set out in paragraph 8 below will be implemented.

7.3.2.2 If a teacher is subject to verbal abuse by parents or visitors when refereeing or coaching a sports fixture, the teacher should:

7.3.2.2.1 Pause the game

7.3.2.2.2 Warn the parent/visitor

7.3.2.2.3 Where possible send for another colleague to observe the rest of the match.

7.3.2.3 Staff should record (and pass to a member of SMT) the nature of the incident and examples of the alleged abuse.

7.3.2.4 The relevant member of the Senior Management Team will initiate the Senior Management procedure set out in paragraph 8 below.

7.3.2.5 In the case of visitors from other schools, the Head will write to the Headteacher of the visiting school to inform them of the incident and any action that the College is taking (see paragraph 9 below).

7.4 Correspondence

7.4.1 All correspondence that is unacceptable in tone or content must be passed immediately to the relevant member of the Senior Management Team at the earliest possible opportunity without reply to the parent, beyond a formal acknowledge of receipt.

7.4.2 The relevant member of the Senior Management Team will reply to the parent and will initiate the Senior Management procedure set out in paragraph 8 below.

7.5 Vexatious, malicious or defamatory behaviour

7.5.1 The school takes very seriously any action (by a parent and/or visitor) which, after full and fair consideration, is deemed vexatious, malicious, defamatory, or which sets out to undermine the reputation of the individual and/or of the College or which, on the balance of probability, may be found to have been intended to cause upset or distress to a member of staff.

7.5.2 All behaviour deemed vexatious, malicious or defamatory must be reported immediately to the relevant member of the Senior Management Team at the earliest possible opportunity without discussion with the parent or visitor.

7.5.3 The employee or teacher concerned should provide the relevant member of the Senior Management Team with the evidence (e.g. screenshots from social media sites, notes from the relevant conversation or the email concerned etc.)

7.5.4 The relevant member of the Senior Management Team will reply to the parent and will initiate the Senior Management procedure set out in paragraph 8 below.

8 Senior Management Procedure

The Senior Management **Four Step Procedure** for following up on alleged abusive behaviour towards staff is as follows:

8.1 Step One - Communication with/from a senior member of staff (as determined by HM) followed by a formal letter if deemed appropriate. If there is a repeat then: Step Two.

8.2 Step Two - Communication with or from the Head, followed by a formal letter.

8.3 Step Three - Meeting with an appropriate member of Governing body , followed by a formal letter

8.4 Step Four - Required Removal of pupil (under the terms of our Expulsion and Required Removal Policy Check).

8.5 Serious abusive behaviour (such as Physical Abuse, career-threatening malicious and defamatory comments about teachers, or egregious cases of verbal abuse) will be dealt with at Stage Two, Three or Four of the procedure, without going through the prior stages.

If the abuse is directed at a senior member of staff, the process may start at Step Two; if it is directed at the Head, it will start at Step Three.

9 Sanctions

The following sanctions may be applied to parents and visitors.

9.1 Warning letters to parents or visitors.

9.2 Permission to attend College functions may be withdrawn, including (but not limited to):

9.2.1 Sports matches.

9.2.2 Cultural activities.

9.2.3 Permission to attend parent-teacher meetings.

9.3 Restrict all communication with the College through a member of the SMT.

9.4 Permission to be on College premises, or to access online presentations or events, may be withdrawn.

9.5 Required removal of the pupil from the College.

9.5.1 The Parents may be required to remove the Pupil permanently from the College or from boarding if, after consultation with the Parents and if appropriate the Pupil, the Head is of the opinion that:

- one or both of the Parents have treated the College or members of its staff or any member of the College community unreasonably; then in these circumstances, and at the sole discretion of the Head, Withdrawal of the Pupil by the Parents may be permitted as an alternative to Removal being required. The Head shall act with procedural fairness in all such cases, and shall have regard to the interests of the Pupil and the Parents as well as those of the College. The Head's decision to require the Removal of the Pupil shall be subject to a Governors' Review if requested by the Parents. The Parents will be given a copy of the Review procedure current at the time. The Pupil shall be suspended from the College pending the outcome of the Review.

- Where a parent has made a deliberately invented or malicious allegation the Head will consider whether to require that parent to withdraw their child or children from the College on the basis that they have treated the College or a member of staff unreasonably.

  Whether or not the person making the allegation is a parent (or other member of the public), the College reserves the right to contact the police to determine whether any action might be appropriate.

10. Monitoring and Review

10.1 The Governing Body will review incidents annually and ensure proportionality and compliance with statutory expectations.

10.2 This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or following the issue of any new guidance from the Department of Education or ISI.

10.3 The review will be carried out by the Deputy Head Pastoral and recommendation sent to the Head for authorisation.

Authorised by	The Head JMSL
Date	February 2026

Reviewed by	DHP RChatterjee
Date	February 2026