



Bullying Policy

Policy Reviewed: January 2020

Reviewed by: Admin Office

Review Date: January 2022

Contents

- 1 – Statement of Intent
- 2 – Proactive Strategies
- 3 – Policy Objective
- 4 – Procedures
- 5 – Outcomes
- 6 – Prevention
- 7 – Cyber Bullying
- Appendix – Definitions, Signs & Symptoms

1. STATEMENT OF INTENT

Safe Start is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all children, young people and students so they can learn and play in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable. If bullying does occur, all children/young people should be able to tell a member of staff and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

We are a *TELLING organisation*. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff. Our approach is one of robustly tackling all forms of bullying as far as reasonably practical.

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Children & young people who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

We have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

2. PROACTIVE STRATEGIES

Alternative school approaches included anti-bullying groups and zones; protective behaviours; golden rules; rules, policies and charters written by students; assemblies; anti-bullying awards; assertiveness behaviours; and whole-school campaigns (e.g. anti-homophobic campaign). Alternative peer support schemes included playleaders and cybermentors. Strategies targeted at individual students included assertiveness training; achievement training; nurture groups for targeted individuals; self-referral for counselling; individual plans; and individuals 'going on report'.

Reactive strategies can also be used proactively, including restorative approaches; no blame approach (now known as the support group method); conflict resolution; a solution-focused approach; assertive discipline and team teach. Proactive staff intervention was listed as a proactive strategy which included the involvement of nonteaching pastoral staff; counsellors; mediators; behaviour managers; clinical support; industrial 28 mentors and inclusion teaching assistants.

Additional curricular approaches included philosophy for children; emotional literacy training, SEAL and drama workshops, although listed under the main proactive strategies. Reporting systems included not only the more traditional paper-based reporting boxes

and questionnaires but also online and text-based reporting methods. Anti-bullying week or themed days were listed as well as a friendship week and a reward week. We will use lunchtime clubs; anti-bullying focus groups which involved students; staff and parents; outside agencies including local authority anti-bullying leads and recording systems which included a record to track bullied and bullying student

Proactive strategies rest on the development and maintenance of a positive, supportive and inclusive learning environment. Relationships among pupils and between pupils and teachers should be based on mutual respect. Such relationships can be encouraged through an emphasis on positive attitudes and personal skills. A whole-school approach to tackling and preventing bullying in schools involves the whole school community to provide a solid foundation from which to embed developments and improvement in a systematic way.

3. POLICY OBJECTIVE

- All staff, volunteers, members of the Board of Trustees, children/young people and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All staff, volunteers and members of the Board of Trustees are required to know the policy on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All children/young people and parents should be aware of the policy and what they should do if bullying arises.
- We take bullying seriously. Young people and their parents/carers should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.
- Bullying should be prevented.

4. PROCEDURES

Procedures

1. Children and young people should report ALL incidents of bullying to staff.
2. Depending upon the nature of the bullying, incidents of concern will be recorded and followed up by staff.
3. In serious cases parents/carers should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.
4. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.
5. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped immediately.
6. Staff will intervene to stop bullying and to change this behaviour.

5. OUTCOMES

Outcomes

1. The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place.
2. In serious cases, exclusion or withdrawal of placement will be considered.
3. If possible, the children/young people will be reconciled.

4. After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

6. PREVENTION

Prevention

We will use a variety of methods for helping children to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these will include:

- writing a set project on expectations / behaviour contract
- signing a behaviour contract
- writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying
- reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or group
- making up role-plays
- having discussions about bullying and why it matters
- setting up anti bullying focus groups

We also recognise the importance of staff awareness training in supporting the application of this policy. Guidance about what constitutes bullying and the signs to look out for is contained in the appendix.

7. CYBER - BULLYING

What is Cyberbullying?

Children, young people and many adults are keen adopters of new technologies, but sometimes their lack of awareness can leave them open to the threat of bullying via the technology.

Cyberbullying happens when a person or a group of people threaten, tease, embarrass or abuse someone else by using ICT, particularly mobile phones, the internet and related technologies such as social networks. The effects of Cyberbullying can leave the victim feeling upset and very vulnerable. It can be difficult to escape from the bullying as it can take place anytime of day or night and can lead to feelings of isolation and insecurity even in your own home. Cyberbullying is a **bullying and safeguarding** issue and should be treated as such.

Cyberbullying can take many different forms such as:

- Threats** - Text message being sent to your mobile.
- Public Posting** - Your personal information and/ or images shared publicly on a social network without your permission.

Exclusion - Exclusion from a discussion group or online gaming group.

Manipulation - Your personal information altered and displayed for others to see.

Hacking - Your password insecure enabling others to logon as you and delete, change or copy information.

Abuse and Name Calling - Hurtful voice and text messages sent to your phone.

Cyberbullying can affect all ages and staff, volunteers and children/young people can be the target of bullying.

**Here at Safe Start our aim is to:
Prevent cyberbullying**

By having a robust and effective policy which applies to the whole organisation.

By regularly reviewing this policy alongside any incidents and also following the introduction of any new technologies.

By raising awareness amongst children/young people in order to inform their decisions and encourage safe use of the internet and other technologies.

Respond to cyberbullying

Appropriately with support for any child/young person who has concerns around cyberbullying.

Give reassurance that the person has done the right thing by telling someone.

Advise on next steps:

Make sure the person knows not to retaliate or return the message.

Ask them to think about what information they may have in the public domain.

Help the person to keep relevant evidence for any investigation; such as retaining messages they have received, taking screen shots and noting web addresses etc.

Ensure the person understands simple methods to prevent recurrence eg; changing contact details, blocking contacts or leaving a chat room.

Take action to contain the incident when content has been circulated:

If you know who the person responsible is, ask them to remove the content;

- Contact the host (e.g. the social networking site) to make a report to get the content taken down.
- Consider confiscation of phones that are being used to cyberbully.
- Ask the individual to confirm who they have sent messages on to.
- In cases of illegal content, take advice from line manager who may need to contact the police, who can determine what needs to be kept for evidential purposes.

Investigating incidents

- All bullying incidents should be properly recorded and investigated.
- Cyberbullying can be a very serious matter and can constitute a criminal offence.
- In UK law, there are criminal laws that can apply in terms of harassment or threatening and menacing communications.
- Advise staff, volunteers and children/young people to keep a record of the bullying as evidence.
- Take steps to identify the bully if possible - the police will need to be involved to enable the service provider to look into the data of another user.

Appendix

What is Bullying?

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber All areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse
Mobile threats by text messaging & calls
Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities

What are the signs or symptoms of Bullying?

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from an educational placement
- doesn't want to go on the public bus
- begs to be driven to a project
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to the school/project/centre
- has poor attendance at school
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in their work
- has possessions which are damaged or " go missing"

- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home hungry (money / lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received
- becomes withdrawn

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated