Bullying Policy - Students

Orchard Education Ltd
1 Sargon Way
Great Grimsby Business Park
GRIMSBY
North East Lincolnshire
DN37 9PH

01472 898498

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1   <u>INTRODUCTION</u>

The Orchard is an independent school who work with pupils who can often present challenges in terms of managing behavior. The Orchard has a robust policy in terms of handling bullying and this policy is promoted throughout the staff team and learners who study at The Orchard

2   <u>WHAT IS BULLYING</u>?

2.1   BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

Most people use these terms interchangeably, and many definitions include bullying as a form of harassment. Harassment is generally a term that is used to describe unwanted behaviour designed to intimidate and create a hostile and offensive environment. The terms harassment and bullying are therefore interchangeable and for the purposes of this document are regarded as one and the same thing.

Bullying is variously defined. However, most definitions highlight that it is:

- deliberately hurtful behaviour causing either physical pain or emotional distress,
- repeated, and
- difficult for victims to defend themselves from.

It is particularly important to recognise that bullying is not restricted to overt physical aggression, and that indirect persecution can be just as hurtful. Bullying takes many forms but the three main types are:

- physical – touching, hitting, kicking, spitting and taking or hiding belongings
- verbal - name calling, invective, racist remarks, gender specific or sexualised comments, spreading gossip, or insulting someone by word
- psychological - spreading nasty stories/rumours about someone or their family, excluding someone from social groups, picking on them or setting them up to fail, exclusion or victimisation, standing inside personal and/or intimate space, the display of offensive materials, unfair treatment, ridiculing or demeaning someone.

Bullying does not necessarily occur face to face, and technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying that can occur anywhere. Therefore, it now may also occur in written communications, email and phone. The emergence of social networking sites provides another forum within which bullying may manifest itself.

Cyber-bullying is another form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and with greater access as people can distribute content with a click. This has implications for the Acceptable Use of Technology policy on and any subsequent monitoring procedures.

The wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 give teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices,

including mobile phones. Separate advice on teachers' powers to search (including statutory guidance on dealing with electronic devices)
For further information on how to respond to cyber-bullying and how young people can keep themselves safe, please refer to the Childnet International website.
(See below for further information)

2.2   RACIAL AND SEXUAL ABUSE AND BULLYING

It is important that we are clear in respect of where forms of racial and sexual attack lie with regard to bullying.

Insulting behaviour on the part of a person towards a member of a group on grounds of gender, sexuality, colour or ethnicity is indefensible. It differs from other forms of verbal abuse or bullying in that it is not merely a personal attack but is aimed indiscriminately at a whole ethnic group. It is not intolerance of another's action but of another's background, culture or sex.

Although not all racialist or sexual 'attacks' could be classified in solely bullying terms, some could comprise part of the ongoing bullying behaviour.

2.3   TEASING AND BULLYING

It is also important to have a framework to consider when teasing becomes a form of bullying.

This can be a difficult area and is very dependent upon the context and the relationship of those within the interaction. This will often determine whether it is shared fun or more seriously not perceived as playful. It is in the interpretation of the behaviour by both the victim and bully that the power lies.

"Such distinctions in the way in which activities are perceived should not be ignored, for the different circumstances in which people find themselves lead them to interpret their experience in a different way. The pain they feel is real" (Walford 1988)

Therefore, in matters of what appear to be 'minor' teasing, a friend who only intended to light-heartedly tease would recognise the pain inflicted and stop. A bully may well recognise the pain inflicted and continue.

2.4   BULLYING AND THE HOME/SCHOOL CONTEXT

There are significant differences between the bullying behaviour of boys and girls. Verbal bullying is a common practice of all bullies, but boys are much more likely also to use physical aggression. The most significant difference between boy and girl victims is the reluctance of boys to either own being victimised or seek help.

The stereotypical view of bullying is that it is a consequence of group living. Care staff are often portrayed as failing to protect victims or take the concerns of parents/carers seriously. There exists, however, a wealth of evidence to suggest that bullying has its origins not in residential care settings but within communities, and that it is imported into care settings. Aggressive parental models, combined with criticism and physical punishment are the means by which aggressive personalities are formed. Bullying is the inevitable consequence.

That is not to say, however, that schools do not have a dynamic role in protecting young people from bullying and preventing incidences of bullying occurring. The culture and ethos of any home is a crucial factor in determining levels of bullying. Research clearly indicates that where staff openly express their disapproval of bullying and act promptly to deal with it less bullying occurs.

The maintenance of the schools culture in which care, commitment, and respect for the individual is promoted is vital. Within such a culture intimidation and violence are reduced to a minimum, but all adults need to be vigilant in respect of identifying bullying occurrences, and all adults have a role in its prevention and protecting young people who may be at risk.

Bullying may occur in any situation not just within the home and young people will need to be educated in relation to personal safety and making a complaint about incidents which occur in areas outside of the home. Likewise, young people may on occasions feel that they are being bullied by adults at the home, and all adults have a duty to support and if necessary represent the views of the young people in our care. If issues cannot be resolved informally then adults should remind young people of their right to pursue the matter through The Orchard's Complaints Policy. Additionally, any young person may choose to address the matter via their placing authority's complaints procedure.

3   MEASURES TO PREVENT BULLYING

The most effective preventative measure that can be employed is for all adults to establish clearly that bullying in the school, during transport, or on excursions will not be tolerated, and indeed will be dealt with firmly.

This will also require adults to plan opportunities for talking to young people about issues of difference, perhaps in lessons or tutorials, through dedicated events or projects, or in formal meetings. Staff themselves will be able to determine what will work best for young people depending on the particular issues they need to address.

However, there are a number of features of adult behaviour which if adopted are likely to significantly reduce incidents of bullying.

Adults should:

- ensure punctuality;
- play an active role in the supervision of young people;
- check potentially high-risk areas on regular basis;
- use the established systems of communication to detail incidents of bullying;
- consider seating arrangements during transport to decrease the likelihood of incidents of bullying occurring;
- use review sessions etc. to discuss bullying;
- intervene before low-key verbal abuse of physical intimidation escalates;
- confront bullies or suspected bullies in a manner that allows them not to regard it as a negative experience, but one where they clearly understand why they are being spoken to and what aspects of their behaviour needs to improve;
- confront victims to examine why the incident occurred, confirm the appropriateness of informing adults, and establish ways to avoid a repetition.

Any young person can be at risk from bullies. Adults have an important role in warning them and advising them how to cope. Young people vulnerable to being bullied should be advised to:

- always tell an adult about alleged bullying, including cyberbullying and incidents occurring outside of the establishment
- be aware of not putting yourself into vulnerable or isolated situations;
- be aware of where you could get immediate help
- try not to show any temper reaction that may entertain;
- do not brag about possessions or money;
- give a clear reason not to lend someone an expensive item;
- consider whether their behaviour provokes.

Some children, both bullies and victims may require more intense and regular session working proactively to develop appropriate strategies to minimise the bullying. This may form part of an intensive therapeutic intervention programme.

Adults need to examine carefully their own responses to bullying incidents or the suspicion of such. The lack of support to victims is often considered as permission for further attacks. If young people are to be protected from bullying adults need to ensure that they:

- respond quickly and unambiguously to it;
- are continually and persistently observant;
- do not subconsciously transfer feeling of irritation to groups;
- actually seek to bring bullying into the open with knowledge that it thrives on secrecy and often fades when discovered and discussed;
- make use of Key Worker Sessions and other appropriate times to discuss personal relationship problems;
- make use of appropriate training opportunities, resource material etc. to improve their knowledge and skills in respect of helping both the bullied and the bully; and
- refer serious incidents to centre management.

4   <u>RECORDING, MONITORING AND RESPONDING</u>

4.1   RECORDING

There are a number of areas within the existing structures where bullying and responses to bullying may be recorded. They are:

- Cause for concerns
- Incident Forms
- Action Plan Targets & Reviews

4.2   RESPONDING

As well as creating a record of acts of behaviour that may be deemed bullying, all of the above form a facility to record and outline actions and responses to a greater or lesser degree.

In practice situations, unkind acts need a clear and effective response and adults will need to take a strong lead. Research has shown that restorative approaches that concentrate on victim empathy and relationship building are likely to be most effective. Restorative approaches, appropriate to the Young Person's ability, rather than automatic sanctions, continue to be the preferred approach as part of everyday practice. It is essential that young people feel safe because adults listen, are not afraid to act and are in control.

4.3   MONITORING

Often individual acts of unkindness or cruelty are described as bullying. Indeed, many people's most hurtful memories will have been related to a one-off, particularly unpleasant or humiliating act, which clearly felt like bullying.

However, one aspect of the definition of bullying is that it is repeated. Therefore, part of The Orchard's policy for preventing bullying is:

- A positive and proactive approach.
- A clear and positive response to disrespectful and/or unkind acts that emphasises restorative approaches and relationship building as the primary approach.
- A systematic monitoring structure that operates as an early warning system for identifying patterns or trends of behaviour.
- Clearly defined personalised procedures for all young people in relation to the use of technology, supported through regular monitoring checks by an appropriate adult.

Teachers and Learner coaches should be looking for key trends in data and information that they analyse as part of their role. Below is a sample list of sources of data that might provide such information:

- incident forms (raw data, plus sample monitoring/reading)
- Sanctions and restorative approaches data
- Retrospective sample monitoring/reading of reviews/tutorials
- A regular time to talk directly with the young person.

These activities are an important component in ensuring that if bullying is happening it doesn't remain hidden. If no monitoring is happening, then there is a danger that a series of unkind acts may be dealt with at the time but the pattern and trend over time remains unnoticed or hidden. It also provides critical data as to whether responses are effective.

Although key workers have a responsibility to systematically monitor, all adults should have an overview and be alert to trends. Signs of possible bullying can sometimes be more easily spotted by somebody 'further removed'. For example, an adult returning from holiday, or a relative that hasn't seen the young person for a while, might notice a change in a child's demeanour or well being, whilst for those working closely with the child day by day, changes may be small and imperceptible. It is therefore important that there is a way of recording concerns that trigger procedures that thoroughly examine such a concern.

4.3.1   Cause For Concern

To ensure that there is an audit trail to track issues any adult can raise a **Cause for Concern via the secure CPOMS portal**. However the raising of a **Cause for Concern** does not mean that a judgement has been made that there is serious ongoing bullying taking place. This will alert the relevant members of staff that an issue has been raised and it will be investigated. Records will be kept on the CPOMS portal.

It becomes the duty of the management team to assess the validity and volume of evidence in respect of bullying and if necessary ensure the implementation of an effective response. The cause for concern allows for describing such response and evaluating the outcomes.

(Bullying of staff by staff is addressed via the Complaints and Representation Policy)

5   STAFF TRAINING

All adults will be involved in discussion and support as part of their induction and then subsequently on an ongoing basis exploring a range of issues including what constitutes bullying, how to respond to bullying, identification of high risk areas and how to support both those who bully and those who are the victims of bulling.

6   FURTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION

6.1   DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION RESOURCES

- [Behaviour and Discipline in Schools: A guide for Headteachers and School Staff](.). (Feb 2014, updated Jan 2016))

DfE Set of Documents

- [Preventing and tackling bullying](.): Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies (Oct 2014 updated July 2017)

- [Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff](.) (Nov 2014 updated July 2017)
- [Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying](.) (Nov 2014)

6.2   SPECIALIST ORGANISATIONS

- [The Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA):](.) Founded in 2002 by NSPCC and National Children's Bureau, the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) brings together over 100 organisations into one network to develop and share good practice across the whole range of bullying issues.

- [BullyingUK](.): part of "Family Lives" a charity set up to help families with a range of issues including bullying and cyber bullying

- [Anti Bullying Network](#): an independent operation to support anti-bullying work in schools

- [Kidscape:](#) Charity established to prevent bullying and promote child protection providing advice for young people, professionals and parents about different types of bullying and how to tackle it. They also offer specialist training and support for school staff, and assertiveness training for young people.

- [Restorative Justice Council:](#) promotes quality restorative practice

6.3 CYBER-BULLYING

[ChildNet International](#): Specialist resources for young people to raise awareness of online safety and how to protect themselves.

[Thinkuknow:](#) Website with extensive materials on e-safety, with specific support for cyber-bullying.

7 **REVIEW**

This document will be evaluated and reviewed within one year of its current date.

This policy will be reviewed annually by a Director.

	Initial	Review 1	Review 2	Review 3
Signed		D. Melia	D. Melia	
Position		Director	Director	
Date		04/08/2017	30/08/2018	