

Children's Residential Service

Bullying Policy



Guidance for staff members, Young
People and their families

Anti Bullying Ethos

All of the staff will work together to create a welcoming and inclusive home for all young people, so that each young person feels that he/she can express his/her individuality safely and that they are respected for who they are, having equal rights and opportunities to reach their full potential.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is when an individual or a group bully others. Bullying is a behaviour usually repeated over time, which intentionally hurts another individual or a group, either physically or emotionally.

How does Bullying differ from banter?

- There is a deliberate intention to hurt or humiliate someone
- There is a power imbalance that makes it hard for the victims to defend themselves
- It happens all the time.

What type of Bullying is there?

Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding possessions, threatening gestures)

Physical - Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any other 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, etc.

Cyber Bullying - For example using mobile phone or social networking sites to intimidate or bully others

Why young people should feel safe?

Every young person should feel safe so that they are able to socialise with their peers and express their opinions, ideas and views openly without the fear of being victimised. When young people feel safe it provides them with an opportunity to develop their own sense of identity and self-image and as a result will develop their self-esteem, which is essential for all young people to feel happy.

What are unacceptable behaviours?

- Name calling, being sarcastic and spreading hurtful rumours
- Assault or physical violence
- Threats and intimidation
- Spitting
- Incitement of others to harass and intimidate
- Destruction of other people's property or taking their property without permission
- Extortion or undue pressure
- Emotional aggression like tormenting and excluding people
- Racial harassment, taunts, graffiti and gestures
- Sexual aggression or harassment, unwanted physical contact or comments
- Comments, threats or actions relating to people's disability
- Comments, threats or actions relating to people's sexual orientation

Preventing Bullying

The prevention of bullying is of paramount importance; we endeavour support our young people to be free of any type of bullying and we promote the prevention of it in the following ways:

- All staff are to be trained on countering bullies.
- Equal rights and respect to be given to all young people.
- Young people are to be involved in setting the rules and developing policies.
- Young people will have the right to complaint, and have access to the *Children's Right Worker*.
- Young people will have links to useful helplines.
- Damage to another young person's belongings will be paid for by the bully, there also may be a sanction.
- Young people who genuinely support others will be rewarded.
- Staff will listen to young people and support each person to deal with how being bullied makes them feel.
- Staff will support these young people who bully others seek support, as often those who bully have been bullied before or are sad for some reason.
- Bullying will be openly discussed and all young people as a group will support the development of how to live together free from bullying.
- Restorative meeting will be used to help bullies understand how they make those who they bully feel.
- Play fighting is not permitted at all, as this can be an excuse for someone to bully another person.
- All types of bullying will be taken seriously.
- It may result in the Police being contacted if the bullying leads to an assault, criminal offenses, harassment, misuse of mobile phone, hate crime offenses or sexual offenses.

What to do if you are being bullied?

If you feel that you are being bullied you must tell a member of staff because you have the right to feel safe and happy whilst living here. You can also make a formal complaint by filling a *Complaints Form* out with a staff member or the *Children's Rights Worker*. We will also do the following to make you feel safe,

We will – Listen patiently and ask some questions to ensure we have understood what the young person has said.

We will – Investigate the situation sensitively and patiently and take it seriously

We will – Acknowledge and allow the young people to express their feelings and agree an action plan with their consent to stop the bullying. The young person's safety will be considered at all times and we will not make you seem like a 'grass'.

We will – Help you to stand up to the bully and work with the bully to help him/her understand the impact he/she are having on others.

We will – Record all incidents of bullying and how we have supported the prevention of it. Doing this will tell us if the bully has also bullied others.

What to do if you see another young person being bullied?

If you witness another young person being bullied you need to tell the bully to **STOP** and that it is **NOT OK** to bully others, especially those who live in the same home. You must tell a staff member immediately if you feel unsafe to challenge the bully directly. The residents of the home and the staff members will work it out together how to make the home free from bullies!