
Anti-Bullying Policy

Policy on Anti-Bullying

Please note: This Anti-bullying policy is in conjunction with KIDSCAPE and DfES circular 'Bullying don't suffer in silence'

Definition

Bullying is long-standing violence, physical or psychological, conducted by an individual or a group directed against an individual who is not able to defend themselves in the actual situation. (Roland 1989)

Statement of Intent

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils/students and young persons so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in **FreshSteps** workshops. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a **TELLING** unit. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

The aim of this policy

Is to help prevent bullying and/or deal with it immediately within **FreshSteps**. We hope to achieve these aims by ensuring:

All young people, staff, parents, carers and other visitors to **FreshSteps** are aware that bullying is viewed seriously and is not acceptable within **FreshSteps**.

That anti-bullying policy is reviewed regularly and takes account of other policy statements i.e. equal opportunities, behaviour management etc.

That all young people and staff are aware of the guidelines stated in the

- Minimising confrontation and encouraging mutual respect.
- Staff providing positive role models of how to handle conflict and difference.
- Consistent use of policy guidelines when dealing with bullying.

Positively, affirming young people whenever possible.

Objectives of this Policy

- All staff, pupils, parents and carers should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All staff should know what their work place policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils, parents and carers should know what the establishment policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a Provision **FreshSteps** takes bullying seriously. Young persons Carers and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated within **FreshSteps**

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, because of disability nationality or colour
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal name-calling which is the most common forms of **direct bullying**, and spreading rumours, nasty stories exclusion from social groups is a form of **Indirect bullying**.
- Cyber Bullying- this covers all areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room

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. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

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

Bullying can happen Anywhere, Anytime

FreshSteps takes a serious approach to bullying outside school premises. Steps will be taken to report to the police.

What are the signs of bullying?

Signs and Symptoms

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 school
- doesn't want to go on the school / public bus
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- 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 school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- 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 starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- 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

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

Young people may display some of the following warning signs:

Be frightened of staying in one place

Indicate they do not want to be in certain young person's company.

Be frightened of being in places without staff presence.

Be unwilling to participate in activities and leave the room.

Not want to socialise with certain young people.

Behaviour deteriorates.

Become disruptive.

Become verbally abusive.

Destroys books/objects in their room.

Become distressed.

Keep losing things.

Not want to eat meals/be hungry after meals.

What does it feel like to be bullied?

Victims of bullying may feel:

Ashamed that they have been singled out for the bully's attention and they have no control.

Guilty that they have done something that deserves being bullied.

That no one takes them seriously

Powerless

That no one cares.

There is nobody to turn to – if you tell, it will make matters worse

Isolated

It is important that young people being bullied feel that their situation is being taken seriously and they are not made to feel responsible. It is also important that they are given strategies to confront the bully themselves.

Reasons why young people may become bullies

Some young people become temporary bullies after a traumatic event, such as divorce, bereavement etc. Coming into care or moving home is a very traumatic experience and can trigger an episode of bullying. Bullying makes people feel in control and looked after young people often feel personally powerless.

Young people often become bullies because:

They have felt powerless and like the feeling of power.

Peer pressure.

It hides their insecurity.

They have been abused in some way.

They have experienced bullying in the past.

They feel different or left out.

They want to impress their peers.

Bullies are usually insecure people and it is vital that they are treated sensitively when confronted. We need to help the bully understand that this type of behaviour is not acceptable and offer other strategies to increase their self-esteem.

Guidelines for young people who are being bullied

If the bullying is to stop, it is essential that you tell somebody you feel you can trust in **FreshSteps**. When you do this, you can expect the following:

We will listen to you

We will keep a record of incidents of bullying.

We will try to find out the facts, stop the bully and make you feel safe within the unit at all times.

Possible strategies

It is recognised that punishing bullies does not always work, in fact it often makes things worse. However, there are a range of strategies that can be used.

Building self esteem of the young person being bullied

It is important that we increase the self esteem of the person being bullied. This can happen in a peer mentoring sessions. Their strength should be praised and highlighted. They should also be given some strategies to deal with bullies.

Peer mediation

Mediation is a process where by a third party guides two others in dispute through a set sequence of steps in order to help them find their own solution. This is a useful way of resolving minor problems.

This process can be taught to young people in a simplified version with excellent results and provides a reduction in minor squabbles that, if left unattended may result in bullying.

Staff mediation

Establish ground rules.

Help the young people talk through their differences.

Hold brief chats between each pupil in a designated room

Talk supportively with the bullied young person establish how bullying started

Keep a check on if bullying persists after 'chats'

Set targets for the bully or the bullied young person.

Seek training to learn preventive measures. Role play ideas

Procedures

Don't ignore complaints of bullying

1. Listen carefully to all accounts.
2. Take any statements from witnesses if possible and appropriate
3. Don't make assumptions
4. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents must be recorded by staff
5. In serious cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem
6. Make notes dates times of all reported incidents of bullying
7. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted
8. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
9. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour
10. Re-enforce **FreshSteps** anti-bullying policy at all times.

Outcomes

- The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place.
- Bullies involved in a 6wk Emotional intelligence programme
- Bully/bullied involved in peer mentoring sessions
- In serious cases, suspension from activities will be considered
- If possible, the pupils will be reconciled after the bully has been give a 'time-out' exclusion
- After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

Prevention

We will use **KIDSCAPE** methods for helping children to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

- writing a set of school rules
- signing a behaviour contract
- writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying
- reading stories about bullying or having them read to the group
- making up role-plays which deals with taunts and assertiveness
- having discussions about bullying and why it matters
- Ensure **FreshSteps** Environment is conducive to Anti-bullying Zero Tolerance.

Young persons:

If you are being bullied

- Try to stay clam
- Try not to respond
- Tell the bully/ies to stop
- Walk away.

Always tell:

- Family
- An adult
- Your teacher
- A friend
- Be clear about what has happened
- Who is bullying you
- Where it happened.

Parents:

- Talk to your child about bullying the causes and effects it has on the other child
- Always talk to your child about their school day asks questions about what they did.
- Give your child lots of praise
- Show your child how to interact with others
- Make an appointment to see your child's teacher/mentor if you suspect this is happening or have been told by the the unit to discuss ways in which we can all work together to help your child to stop bullying others.
- **FreshSteps** will give you the support and advice you and your child needs.
- Talk to your child about their behaviour try to find reasons behind this behaviour so it the issues can be dealt with.

HELP ORGANISATIONS:

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)	0808 800 5793
Children's Legal Centre	0845 345 4345
KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline (Mon-Fri, 10-4)	0845 1 205 204
Parentline Plus	0808 800 2222
Youth Access	020 8772 9900
Bullying Online	www.bullying.co.uk

Visit the **Kidscape** website www.kidscape.org.uk for further support, links and advice.

Anti-Bullying Campaign -185 Tower Bridge 0207 378 1446.

DfES website.
