



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Introduction

There is no legal definition of bullying. However, it is usually defined as behaviour that is:

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation

It takes many forms and can include:

- physical assault
- teasing
- making threats
- name calling
- cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (for example email, social networks and instant messenger)

The Outdoors Group Ltd (Including The Outdoors School) are committed to preventing all forms of bullying wherever it is possible to do so and to acting swiftly to deal with bullying when it does occur. We maintain a zero tolerance policy to bullying and actively promote a culture where bullying is not tolerated by staff or students within the company (or school).

Learners need to be aware that staff and other learners disapprove of bullying behaviour and will act if bullying is brought to their attention. An anti-bullying ethos is in place, reinforced by all adults. The majority of learners who are not involved are the most effective preventative and protective force in countering the problem. A clear understanding is therefore essential.

Our message is based on the following things;

Mutual respect for everyone in the school/setting is shown by everyone in the school/setting

- Explanation of sanctions to highlight the following things;
 - Accountability for your own actions
 - Responsibility for your behaviour
 - Understanding of the reasons behind sanctions and how these are linked to your actions
- A culture of celebrating and rewarding the following things;
 - Effort put in rather than achievement of task/s (growth mindset)
 - Kindness and fairness towards self and others
 - Acceptance of differences and inclusiveness
 - Helpfulness and empathy
- No-one but you is in control of your behaviour and reactions, and blame passed to others is not accepted
- That there is always a choice in our reactions and that choice means a fresh start every time a situation is resolved. Once a sanction has been imposed, it is an end to the matter and a fresh start is given.
- That it is **the behaviour** and not **the person** that is at the heart of disciplinary action.

Learners should be listened to carefully and opportunities be provided for them to express views and opinions whether it be in lessons/tutor time/sessions or informally. Use is made of learner surveys in The Outdoors School to find out the extent of any bullying problems, so we can work to reduce them.

Detecting Bullying Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a learner is being bullied include:

- Unwillingness to return to school/sessions.
- Displays of anxiety, becoming withdrawn or quiet
- Work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others
- Books, bags and other belongings suddenly go missing, or are damaged
- Change to established habits
- Diminished levels of self confidence
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class
- Choosing the company of adults
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact
- Difficulty in sleeping, experiences nightmares
- Talking of suicide or running away

Although there may be other causes for some of the above symptoms, a repetition of, or a combination of these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents and staff.

Racism

Examples of racism that we need to be alert to include:

- Verbal abuse by name-calling, racist jokes and offensive mimicry
- Physical threats or attacks
- Wearing of provocative badges or insignia
- Bringing racist leaflets, comics or magazines into school
- Inciting others to behave in a racist way
- Racist graffiti or other written insults, even against food, music, dress or customs
- Refusing to cooperate in work or in play

Sexual bullying

Sexual bullying can have the following characteristics:

- Sexual innuendoes and propositions
- Abusive name-calling
- Looks and comments about appearance, attractiveness (e.g. emerging puberty)
- Pornographic material, graffiti with sexual content
- In its most extreme form, sexual assault or rape

Homophobia

We should be alert to sexual bullying based around sexual orientation, whether or not the person being bullied is gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender. Generally

Homophobic bullying looks like other sorts of bullying, but in particular it can include:

- Verbal abuse - including spreading rumours that someone is gay, suggesting that something or someone is inferior and so they are 'gay', eg 'those trainers are so gay!'
- Physical abuse – including hitting, punching, kicking, sexual assault, and threatening behaviour.
- Cyberbullying – using on-line spaces to spread rumours about someone or exclude them. Can also include text messaging, including video and picture messaging.

Special educational needs and disability

We should be alert to the fact that learners with special educational needs or disabilities are often at greater risk of being bullied than other learners on the basis of their educational difficulties or disability.

Cyberbullying

With constantly advancing technology we must be alert to this unpleasant and particularly intrusive form of bullying. Cyberbullying can involve social networking sites, like Snapshot, Instagram, Facebook and Twitter, emails and mobile phones, used for SMS messages and as cameras.

Banter

It should be noted that abusive comments and interactions may not be passed off as mere 'banter'. Such comments referring to a person's race, religion, ethnicity, sexuality, culture, special educational needs or because a learner is a carer are not acceptable and will be treated as bullying matters.

Sharing Concerns

Learners should be encouraged to "tell" a member of staff or friend when bullying occurs. Friends of victims should be encouraged to do the telling, if necessary: this is difficult and learners often balk at it, but the more it occurs, the more acceptable it becomes. We should guarantee that whistle-blowers who act in good faith will not be penalised and will be supported.

Any staff or learners who witness any form of bullying, however minor or who are at all concerned about any behaviour should report it to tutors or other staff. These incidents may be part of a bigger picture of which the staff may be aware.

Members of the community (learners, staff and parents) need to be mindful that the school/setting expects any knowledge of bullying to be reported. A bystander who does not report bullying is complicit in the act.

Parents should be made aware on their learner's arrival in the school/setting of the importance of keeping lines of communication with the staff open so that any unhappiness of which they hear can be investigated and where necessary dealt with quickly.

Procedures for dealing with bullying

If an incident of bullying is reported, the following procedures are adopted:

- The member of staff to whom it was reported or who first discovers the situation, will control the situation, reassure and support the learners involved. They will inform the relevant member of staff as soon as possible.
- The victim will be interviewed on their own and asked (where able) to write an account of events, or this will be written for them if they prefer.
- The alleged bully, together with all others who were involved, will be interviewed individually and asked to write an immediate account of events.
- The incident should be recorded on the school system (SchoolPod) and the school behaviour policy procedures followed to the appropriate level (see behaviour policy).
- The parents/guardians of all parties should be informed and invited into school to discuss the matter. Their support should be sought.
- A way forward, including disciplinary sanctions and counselling, should be agreed.
- A meeting involving all the parties, with close staff supervision, could be helpful in developing a strategy for all concerned to close the episode.
- A monitoring and review strategy will be put in place.

In very serious cases, and only after the Principal/Service Manager has been involved, it may be necessary to make a report to the Police or to Social Services. In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019 a bullying incident should be addressed as a Safeguarding concern where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm.

All peer-on-peer abuse will also be treated as a Safeguarding matter.

Advice for learners

- All members of The Outdoors Group have the right to enjoy their lives free of bullying and harassment. Anyone who feels bullied or intimidated has the right to expect the school/setting to listen and to act promptly and sensitively to deal with the problem. The school/setting will investigate any incidents, including those which occur outside normal hours or off the premises.
- If you feel that you are being bullied, talk to someone: your Tutor or the Principal, Session Leader. It is also right for you to talk to your parents about it, and for them to discuss it with the school/setting.
- If you find it difficult to talk to anyone at school/setting or at home then you can phone the 24 hour Childline service on 0800 1111. All calls are free and confidential and trained counsellors will help any young person with a problem.
- You should treat others as you would hope to be treated yourself in an atmosphere of mutual respect. If an incident occurs you should do what you can to show your disapproval of bullying.

- Bullying will never stop if it is kept secret and no one faces up to it. If you think someone else is being bullied, talk to a member of staff about it. We guarantee that whistle-blowers who act in good faith will not be penalised and will be supported.
- It is important to recognise that there is culpability if you see or are aware of bullying but do nothing about it. Neglecting to act makes the bystander complicit in the bullying. If you are aware of bullying happening it should immediately be reported to a member of staff.

Date issued/reviewed/amended: 28th January 2020

Signature of Director or Company Secretary:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shevek Pring', written in a cursive style.

Name: Shevek Pring

Review date set: 1st January 2021

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