

The Learning Club Anti-Bullying Policy

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Introduction

This document sets out the ACE Cardiff Anti Bullying Policy and it should be read by volunteers who work in The Learning Club and by all staff.

Policy Statement

ACE is committed to providing a caring, friendly, and safe environment for all our pupils so that children and young people can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

Objectives of This Policy

- To give all volunteers and staff of ACE an understanding of what bullying is.
- That all the staff and volunteers of ACE should be aware of ACE's policy on bullying and be able to follow its guidelines when bullying is reported.
- To assure pupils (and their parents) that they will be supported if they are bullied.
- To make all volunteers and staff of ACE Cardiff aware that bullying will not be tolerated

Background Information on Bullying

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 focussing on the issue of homosexuality
- Verbal - Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing

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

What is ACE Cardiff's view on bullying?

- Everybody has the responsibility to work together to stop bullying - the child, the parent or guardian, staff, volunteers, committee members, teachers, education workers, social workers, friends, fellow pupils/beneficiaries and members of the local community.
- Children and young people will be encouraged and supported in implementing anti-bullying procedures at ACE Cardiff and within their community
- The policy and its practice will be reviewed regularly in the light of changing needs and changes adopted by other agencies.

Support to the Child

ACE Cardiff strongly believes that:

- Children and young people should feel confident that our staff, volunteers, and committee members will listen to and support them.
- Any advice and assistance given will be by an appropriately trained and experienced staff member or volunteer.
- Children should have access to helpline numbers
- Children should be told what is being recorded, in what context and why.

- Services are available for children to have access to a staff member or volunteer to talk about bullying or any other issue that affects them, in confidence. These staff members and volunteers will be trained in communication skills, and mentoring. They will also be aware of the limits of their confidentiality and understand the nature of consent.
- Anyone who reports an incident of bullying will be listened to carefully and supported, whether it is the child being bullied or the child who is bullying.
- Any reported incident or bullying will be investigated objectively, having listened carefully to all those involved.
- Children being bullied will be supported and assistance given to uphold their right to learn, develop and play in a safe environment which allows them to reach their potential.
- Those who bully will be supported and encouraged to stop bullying. It should be recognised that the bully may well be a victim as well as the bullied.
- Punishments involving long periods of isolation, or which diminish and make individuals look or feel foolish in front of others, will be avoided.

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by symptoms or changes in behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Although many of these will not be witnessed directly by a volunteer or member of staff (but may be mentioned in conversation by a child, sibling or parent), staff and volunteers should be aware of these possible signs, and investigate, if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- does not 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 truanting
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or running away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- school work starts to decline
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which go 'missing'
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)

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- continually loses dinner or other monies
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (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

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

Online Bullying

Bullying can also take place using online platforms and technologies. The list below outlines some of the forms of online bullying to be aware of.

- excluding a child from online games, activities or friendship groups
- sending threatening, upsetting or abusive messages
- creating and sharing embarrassing or malicious images or videos
- 'trolling' - sending menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games
- voting for or against someone in an abusive poll
- setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child
- creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name.

Procedures

If any incident is reported to you (a disclosure) or you see an incident or you see the signs of an incident, you must record the details on an ACE Cardiff Incident Report Form and inform either the Session Supervisor or the Safeguarding lead.

In serious cases, parents will be informed and asked to come in to discuss the problem

If necessary and appropriate, the police will be consulted.

The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated, and the bullying stopped quickly.

An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour.

Prevention

ACE uses various methods to help the children to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

- Writing a set of rules for ACE activities
- Writing stories or poems, or drawing pictures about bullying
- Reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or group of students
- Making up role-plays about bullying
- Having discussions about bullying and why it matters

Confidentiality

Every effort must be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all children. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need-to-know basis only.

Further Reading

ACE Cardiff has several other documents which define how the Child Protection Policy is carried out. Volunteers who work in The Learning Club and all staff must at least know how to get a copy of these documents and are encouraged to read them.

- EM002 Child Safeguarding Policy
- PR001 Child Protection Guidelines & Procedures
- EM006 Equal Opportunities Policy
- RES013 Staff Handbook