

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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This policy was written for Greatwood by Laura Wickham and updated by Alex Shaw. It will be reviewed annually and updated in line with any new recommendations or legislation as it is made available.

Greatwood recognise that:

- bullying is “behaviour, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group, physically or emotionally” (Safe from bullying in youth activities , DCSF 2009)
- one person or a group can bully others;
- bullying can occur either face to face between individuals or groups or online, using information technology, such as computers or mobile phones;
- bullying can include:
 - verbal teasing or making fun of someone;
 - excluding children from games and conversations;
 - pressurising other children not to be friends with the person who is being bullied;
 - spreading hurtful rumours or passing round inappropriate photographs/images/drawings;
 - shouting at or verbally abusing someone;
 - stealing or damaging someone’s belongings;
 - making threats;
 - forcing someone to do something embarrassing, harmful or dangerous;
 - harassment on the basis of race, gender, sexuality or disability;
 - physical or sexual assault (although all sexual incidents and all but very minor physical incidents constitute abuse and must be dealt with in accordance with child protection procedures).
- bullying causes real distress. It can affect a person’s health and development and, at the extreme, can cause significant harm;
- people are often targeted by people who bully because they appear different from others;
- we all have a role to play in preventing bullying and putting a stop to bullying.

Anti-bullying Procedure

Purpose and aim of this procedure

This procedure is supported by the Greatwood anti-bullying policy. Its aim is to provide detailed guidance to staff and volunteers, as well as to children and young people who may experience bullying, so that they will know what to do if an incident of bullying occurs between children and young people. The procedure also refers to situations where a young person may be behaving in a bullying way towards an employee or a volunteer.

The procedure aims to ensure that Greatwood responds fairly and consistently to incidents of bullying, recognising that those who bully often have needs too.

This procedure applies to all children and young people who attend Greatwood who may be bullied behave in a bullying way towards others or observe someone being bullied. It also applies to all staff and volunteers who observe bullying perpetrated by children and young people within Greatwood, who may have incidents of bullying reported to them or who may be concerned that a child/young person or adult at Greatwood is showing signs of being bullied by another young person.

*If an adult is bullying a child/young person, this should be reported under the child protection procedures. If a child or young person is bullying another child to the extent that it may cause significant harm, then it will also need to be dealt with under child protection procedures.

*This procedure does not cover incidents of bullying among staff members and volunteers. The grievance procedure should be used for this purpose.

Below are some examples of bullying, but the list is not exhaustive. **Bullying can include:**

- verbal teasing or making fun of someone;
- excluding children from games and conversations;
- pressurising other children not to be friends with the person who is being bullied
- spreading hurtful rumours or passing around inappropriate photographs, images or drawings;
- cyberbullying (i.e. using computers or mobile phones to bully someone);
- shouting at or verbally abusing someone;
- stealing or damaging someone's possessions;
- making threats;
- forcing someone to do something embarrassing, harmful or dangerous;
- harassment on the basis of race, gender, sexuality or disability;
- physical or sexual assault (although all sexual incidents and all but very minor physical incidents constitute abuse and must be dealt with in accordance with child protection procedures).
- People are often bullied because they appear different from others.

The signs and symptoms of bullying

If someone is being bullied, they might not tell anyone directly. This could be because they have been threatened and are afraid to say anything or because they believe that nothing can be done about it and that telling someone will only make it worse. It could even be because they don't recognise that what is happening to them is bullying.

Signs that someone may be being bullied could include:

- being unhappy, withdrawn and unwilling to spend time in a group, especially during unstructured periods, e.g. break time;
- being without friends;
- missing meetings and activities at Greatwood and/or expressing a reluctance to attend;
- being clingy with adults;
- appearing to lose possessions or money (things that may have really been stolen by or given away to people who bully);
- unexplained injuries;
- uncharacteristic illness or aggression.

Some of these signs might also indicate abuse at the hands of adults or other negative experiences, so they should be treated with caution.

What to do if you are a child or young person being bullied

If you are being bullied you should never keep it to yourself. Tell someone you trust; this could be your key worker, teacher, another helper at Greatwood or someone else. It could also be your parent or carer. You may prefer to tell another child or young person first and ask that person to help you tell an adult. If the bullying is happening at Greatwood, we will sort it out here. If it's happening somewhere else (at school, for example, or near your home), we will get other people involved to stop it happening there.

What to do if you observe a child or young person being bullied or if someone tells you he/she is being bullied

If you are a child or young person and someone tells you that he or she is being bullied, don't try to deal with it yourself. Talk to the person about getting help from an adult. Try to persuade him or her to go with you to explain the situation to their key worker or the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Alex Shaw. If he/she won't do this, the best way to help is to explain that you will have to tell an adult yourself – and then go ahead and tell someone.

If you are an adult and a child tells you that he or she is being bullied, take the child seriously. Do not tell him/her to stop being silly or to keep out of the way of the people who bully. This will not help and will make the child feel let down and less inclined to tell anyone else. Listen to the child's full account of what is going on and complete the **bullying reporting form** with the child as soon as possible.

If you observe the bullying directly, act assertively to put a stop to it. Explain to all concerned that the incident will have to be reported properly to stop it happening again. Report the incident to the child's school or key worker. Unless the incident is minor and can be dealt with informally, the child's school should be notified within one working day.

If the bullying is taking place within Greatwood, the parent, child and school should be reassured that it will be dealt with as a priority and should be asked for their views on what would be helpful to deal with the situation.

Having spoken to the child who has been bullied and the school, Greatwood should also speak to the people who bully and obtain their account of what has happened or is happening. This should be noted in writing and the school of the people who bully should be informed. The person who bully and his or her parents/carers should be asked for their views on what should be done to put a stop to any further bullying and to repair the damage that has been done.

Apart from very minor incidents that have been directly observed by a staff member and dealt with at the time, all bullying that takes place Greatwood should be discussed within the staff group within five working days.

At the meeting, the bullying incident should be discussed and the details of a draft plan drawn up to address the situation, taking into account any suggestions made by the children involved and their school, parents/carers.

The following areas should be covered:

- details of any apology that has been or should be offered by the people who bully;
- details of any support for the person who has been bullied, e.g. use of buddy scheme, extra input from the key worker or referral to another service;
- details of any consequences for the people who bully, in addition to making an apology, with reference to the behaviour code;
- details of any support for the people who bully, with reference to the behaviour code;
- details of any further discussions or work to be done with others in the group, including children who may have observed or encouraged the bullying;
- details of any changes in how the staff group may handle issues of bullying in future.

The plan should be shared with the children concerned, the school and their parents, and should be reviewed regularly.

Keeping a record of the bullying

Use the bullying reporting form and take clear notes of any discussions or meetings that take place following the bullying incident. The plan for dealing with the aftermath of the incident should be copied to the child who has been bullied, his/her parent/carer and to the people who bully and their parents/carers and the school. It should also be placed on the file of all the children directly involved.

Bullying online (cyberbullying)

What to do if you find out that a young person is being cyberbullied

If you find out that a young person or child is being cyberbullied using technology that they possess or technology that is provided through the group or organisation you work for, it is just as important to take action as it is with other forms of bullying. In terms of taking things forward, there are several additional things that the staff, in consultation with Alex Shaw, needs to do to take action:

1. Give reassurance to the young person that they have done the right thing by coming forward;
2. Help the child or young person to keep the evidence and offer support – emails, text messages, screen shots and noting web addresses or other relevant information;
3. Support the young person in ensuring they know how to block people, change details or leave certain services where appropriate;
4. Support the child or young person in containing the material – if they or you know the person, ask them to remove the content;
5. Contact the relevant service provider, e.g. mobile phone provider or social networking provider to get the content taken down. Go through the appropriate reporting channels, and follow up with the service provider as necessary;
6. Use existing behaviour codes and e-safety policies and practices to confiscate equipment where appropriate or limit access;
7. If the content is illegal or you have suspicions that it may be, contact the relevant authorities;
8. Keep an evidence trail in the same way that you do with offline bullying to ensure there is a clear record.
9. Follow up the incident in the same way as you would for any other type of bullying, using the guidance above.

Mobile phones

All UK mobile phone providers have call centres and/or procedures in place to deal with issues around bullying. You will be able to find the number with information about the child's or your own provider. You can advise that it may be possible to get the child's number changed if they are being bullied. If a certain type of handset is being used, it may be possible to set the phone so that it does not receive phone calls or texts from a particular number.

Social networking sites

Social networking sites like Facebook have become an integral part of how young people network and communicate with each other. Facebook itself stipulates that users should be at least 13 years old, but many young people have found ways round this rule, which makes it all the more helpful that Facebook and other similar sites have reporting procedures and a safety centre that contains advice for children, young people, parents and professionals. These sites will remove content that breaches their terms and conditions. Facebook also operates something called "social reporting"; this encourages people to work with others in their community to report offensive content as well as reporting it "officially" through Facebook.

Video and picture hosting sites

If there are moving images or static pictures posted that are of a bullying nature, they should be reported in the same way as social networking sites. It may sometimes be necessary to create an account before the images can be reported. When making the report, remember to flag things that are deemed inappropriate in the website's own policy.

IM (instant messaging)

It's important that, if bullying has occurred in this context, all messages are recorded and archived. This means that if a report needs to be made or evidence needs to be saved, then there is a clear record. As with other online services, reports should refer to breaches in the provider's terms of service.

Support services

Beat bullying's Cyber mentors service provides support for young people aged between 11 and 16. Young people are able to log onto the site and talk to other fully trained peer mentors, an adult or a trained counsellor. See "<http://www.cybermentors.org>"

Child Line is a service for children and young people to talk to on 0800 1111 or you can access help via the website "<http://www.childline.org.uk>"