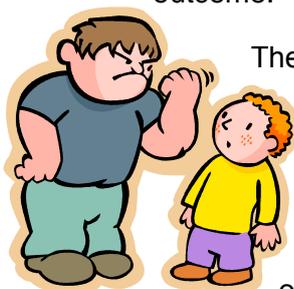


Children's Residential Anti- Bullying Guidance

To be read in conjunction with Walsall Council Countering Bullying Policy 3.4.3, located on Tri- X.

Introduction

The Residential Staff acknowledges the negative impact that bullying can have on a victim and within a group and actively discourage it through remaining vigilante at all times and taking immediate action if a situation arises within the home. Bullying behaviour is not tolerated within any of our children's homes within Walsall and in the event that a situation arises the staff will work positively with both the victim and the perpetrator towards a positive outcome.



The home's commitment to developing an anti bullying environment is reinforced by the staff team ensuring there are safe relationships, clear communication strategies, adherence to codes of conduct and clear professional boundaries between staff and children. All aspects of individual and group work are based on building and maintaining respect. The team also recognises that bullying takes place in a variety of settings i.e. school, clubs, and in the community and as such make it a priority to advocate on behalf of and support children who are or may become the victims of bullying. We acknowledge that the children for whom we care may be more vulnerable and may more easily become the victims of bullying behaviours and name calling due to their looked after status. In partnership with the children, parents and partner agencies the team endeavour to engage positively with the community and promote positive images for looked after children. Key workers also provide support for the young people by acting as an advocate and befriending and supporting.

What is Bullying?

Bullying means deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. The main types of bullying are:-

- Physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, spitting);
- Verbal (e.g. name calling, threatening, racist remarks);
- Indirect (e.g. spreading rumours, excluding someone from the group, stealing from someone).

The effect of bullying behaviour can also be made worse by the contribution of the bystander/collusive behaviour. This can manifest itself by:-

- A person choosing to ignore or deny that a bullying incident has occurred;
- A person who has witnessed an incident supporting the bully;

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- A person who has witnessed an incident refusing to report it;
- A person who has been informed that an incident has occurred not responding appropriately to the informant/information;
- A person failing to report that a colleague has committed or has been accused of, or implicated in a bullying incident.

Bystander/collusive behaviour is negative, disrespectful, unprofessional and acts to endorse the behaviour of the person who is bullying, and thus encourages further incidents.

More examples of bullying are:-

1. Being ignored or made to feel you are not good enough;
2. Teasing/ridicule - people laughing at your hair, clothes, or the way you look;
3. Use of physical size to intimidate;
4. Group pressure - crime, drugs, alcohol, smoking, shoplifting;
5. Discrimination - ethnicity, culture, gender, sexuality, disability;
6. Subtle bullying e.g. a look/expression;
7. Taking advantage - "My sweets for your watch", "Always making the same person cups of tea", "Always allowing the same person to choose the TV programme." Agreeing to do something because of fear of repercussions;
8. Using technology to bully e.g. text messages;

Why People Bully

People bully for lots of different reasons. Some of these may be:-

- They may be scared;
- There are family problems;
- They have seen others bully;
- They are being bullied themselves;
- They feel out of control;
- They are being abused;
- Bullying is seen as a way of surviving;
- They feel insecure and unimportant;
- To gain acceptance;

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- Issues related to prejudice/racism;
- Not liking yourself/wanting others to feel as bad as you do;
- To belong to a particular group or gang;
- They are taking their feelings out on others;
- They do not understand/appreciate the feelings of others;
- They have no friends and feel lonely;
- They always want their own way;
- A way of seeking attention/help;
- Not feeling respected or listened to.

Preventative Measures

This policy will be shared with the young people and the staff team, and reviewed at least once a year.

Bullying will be discussed with the young people as part of house meetings and key working sessions to encourage an open and honest culture at the home.

Bullying will be discussed in team meetings and supervisions with staff to ensure that information is shared and all of the team are aware of signs and indicators of bullying.

Any indicators that there are potential for bullying to take place at the home and between certain groups of individuals to be identified and acted upon as soon as possible.

Outside agencies will be invited to the home to talk about a variety of issues that may impact upon the group and lead to bullying situations as part of a strategy to share information with the young people.

Intervention

If it is identified that a young person is being bullied an individual risk assessment will be completed to highlight the risk and actions to be taken.

Incidents of bullying will be addressed as soon as they are identified.

If the bullying is taking place outside of the home, information is to be passed on to the relevant people i.e school staff for this to be addressed.

All incidents and responses are to be documented on a Detailed Case Record- Bullying and passed on to a member of the management team.

Stage 1

If staff feel that a young person is being bullied, they should talk to them about how they are feeling and what they can do to assist (e.g. do they want the staff to talk to

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the person bullying them and try and get them to stop), or what else the young person would like them to do to assist (e.g. to raise bullying in a residents' meeting).

Stage 2

If the situation has not improved, a formal meeting will be held with the young people concerned and any other person in the house that is involved; this will involve the young person's key worker and care manager/ registered manager. The aim of this meeting will be to bring the bullying to an end, and to offer appropriate support and advice to all those involved.

The situation will be monitored as in stage 1, and liaison with the relevant social worker will continue as agreed as part of the strategy. The stage 2 meeting will take place no longer than 3 weeks following the stage 1 meeting.

Stage 3

If the situation has not improved then a meeting will be held with the young person, the manager of the home and their social worker.

If the incident is of great concern or seriousness then a meeting will be held at Stage 3 without going through the first two stages.

The situation will be monitored as with Stage 1 and 2 and a review meeting will be held no later than 3 weeks following a Stage 3 meeting.

Supporting the person being bullied

Staff will offer their support to the young person and actively listen to their feelings about what is happening.

The young person can talk with someone from outside of the home such as their advocate.

Staff will make sure that the young person is made aware of what action is being taken and the timescales they can expect.

Support can also be given for the young person to explore the reasons that people display bullying behaviour, develop some self coping skills and helpful responses in bullying situations.

Work with the young people who bully

All bullying should be challenged immediately.

The young person should be encouraged to apologise for their behaviour and helped to think of ways to make the situation better.

Work with the person who is bullying to be carried out to explore the reasons why they bully others.

Additional information

1. Anti-Bullying – www.antibullyingalliance.org.uk
2. Child Exploitation and online protection centre- www.CEOP.gov.uk
3. Childline- www.childline.org.uk or tel: 0800 1111
4. Barnados- www.barnardos.org.uk
5. Kidscape- www.kidscape.org.uk
6. KOOTH.COM www.kooth.com