

Arcadea Anti-Bullying Policy



art, culture and disability equality

Contents:

Our Aims	Page 3
Our Objectives	Page 3
Definition	Page 4
Who Bullies?	Page 5
Who Is Bullied?	Page 5
Anti Bullying Strategies	Page 6
Preventive Measures	Page 6
Dealing with and Procedures	Page 7
Monitoring and Recording	Page 8
Adults and Bullying	Page 9
Signs Of Bullying	Page 9

1 Our Aims

At the Arcadea we aim to provide a safe and welcoming environment for all of the vulnerable adults, children, young people, staff and volunteers we work with.

Arcadea will not tolerate bullying. We will actively support all victims of bullying and take appropriate action with perpetrators as laid out in this policy and, if applicable in our grievance and disciplinary procedures.

Appropriate action may involve exclusion/dismissal relative to the seriousness of the behaviour.

All staff and volunteers are expected to challenge behaviour and attitudes that make any of our users, staff or volunteers, feel unsafe or unwelcome at Arcadea.

2 Our Objectives

- To promote a secure, safe, happy and friendly environment free from threat, harassment and any other type of bullying behaviour.
- To take positive action to prevent bullying occurring.
- To show commitment to anti-bullying behaviour.
- To inform children and parents of this policy and to develop positive partnership to help maintain a bully-free environment.
- To make staff aware of their role in fostering the knowledge and attitudes required in achieving the above objectives.

3 Definition

Bullying can be defined as deliberately harmful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for the victim to defend him/herself.

Bullying can take many forms:

Physical - hitting, kicking, spitting

Verbal - threats, name calling (e.g sectarian, racial, disabilist)

Indirect - spreading rumours or excluding someone from social groups or activities

Extortion - demanding money/personal property

Gesture - non-verbal threatening gestures which carry intimidating messages

No Verbal - Graffiti or defacement of personal property

Isolation – refusal to cooperate or be with someone.

Cyber - use of mobile phones or social networking sites

If unchecked it can be profoundly damaging to the victim's physical and emotional wellbeing in both the short and long term. At its worse it can result in significant harm.

Bullying can take the form of general abuse towards the victim or can target a particular trait. Examples include:

Sexual Preference,
Race
Religion
Gender
Class
Poverty

4 Who Bullies?

Anyone has the capacity to bully. However those who perceive themselves as low status within a community, institution or group may use bullying in an attempt to artificially boost their status. Self-esteem is therefore a key factor in whether someone bullies or not.

5 Who is bullied?

Anyone can be bullied – young person, parent/carer/guardian, staff member or volunteer. People who suffer bullying are often perceived by others to be different.

Sometimes the perceived difference is individual to that person – shyness, physical appearance, clothing and possessions, accent, perceived inappropriate behaviour.

Frequently the perceived difference comes from assigning an individual to a group. Such bullying would then be designated as classist, disabilist, homophobic, racist and religious, or sexist.

People can be assigned or be a member of more than one group.

NB

Whilst all the above constitute some manifestations of bullying, it should be remembered that an incident of bullying is anything that the victim or anyone else perceives to be such an incident.

6 Anti Bullying Strategies

Arcadea's policy is to 'condemn the behaviour, not the person'. We will aim to continue to provide services to children/young people who bully.

6.1 Preventive Measures

In order to prevent bullying, Arcadea has put in place the following measures:

- Appropriate staff ratio to numbers of young people
- Staff briefing on identifying bullying behaviour and how to respond appropriately
- A zero tolerance of bullying within the centre/project
- Staff supervision of all areas (floating) of the centre/project, especially hidden areas such as corridors and corners
- Staff to look out for possible signs or symptoms of bullying e.g. members who are anxious or nervous.
- Members are encouraged and supported to report possible bullying incidents to members of staff.
- Programmes will help young people improve their self-esteem and social skills and encourage them to have the self-confidence to reject bullying behaviour by others.
- If a member of the centre/project is unwilling to disclose information to a member of staff about a bullying incident then he/she will be able to access appropriate help/guidance by contacting help-lines, which are displayed on the centre's/project's noticeboards.
- All incidents of suspected bullying will be thoroughly investigated and if substantiated will be acted upon.

6.2 Dealing with and Procedures for Bullying Behaviour

When dealing with bullying behaviour, staff will use a number of strategies:

1. Warning the child/young person. This should include a clear explanation as to why their behaviour is unacceptable, as well as the consequences of it continuing.
2. Time Out from an activity. Removing the child/young person from the room or activity shows them that their behaviour will not be tolerated, as well as protecting those who are being bullied.
3. Time Out from the Club. If the bullying behaviour persists, despite warnings and Time Outs, the child/young person may be told not to attend the club the following week or, in particularly severe cases, for a number of weeks.
4. Informing Parents/Carers. Parents/Carers of any child/young person under 16 will be informed if their child has been given Time Out from the club. With young children, it may be appropriate to involve parents at an earlier stage.
5. Return Meeting. After Time Out from the club, the child/young person, and (if under 16) their parent(s)/carer(s), will be invited to meet with project staff to discuss their return to the club.

Where appropriate, we may be able to offer individual or small group support, to help address their behaviour and any issues that contribute to it. Wherever possible, we will support their return to the open youth club, providing this is not detrimental to the safety and wellbeing of other club members.

6.2 Monitoring and Recording

- Monitor and record suspicious behaviour by members towards each other
- Monitor and record behavioural changes in individual young people
- Monitoring of attendance records to identify members who have stopped attending and exploring reasons for non-attendance

Risk assessment of incidents that occur between members.

Level 1 – Low risk (a one off incident or repeated name-calling)

Member spoken to by Youth Worker

Incident recorded.

Level 2 – Medium risk (persistent harassment of a member by an individual or group of young people)

Parents informed

An appropriate sanction is agreed.

Incident recorded.

Level 3 – High risk (where young person is at risk of injury or emotional distress from persistent bullying)

Parents informed,

Director informed,

Incident recorded.

Appropriate sanction agreed.

Victim offered all support necessary.

- Victims of bullying will be supported by the staff team and encouraged to continue to attend the centre/project.
- Parents will be informed of all incidents of Level 2 and Level 3 bullying at the Youth Centre and informed of what action the centre/project intends to take.
- All serious incidents of bullying should be reported to Arcadea's Director.

7 Adults and Bullying

At Arcadea we recognise that adults can also perpetrate bullying behaviour.

We expect relationships between the staff and children/young people to be based on mutual respect. We aim to promote a culture in which children and young people, as well as other members of staff, feel able to object if a member of staff is using their authority unfairly to target particular individuals or group.

8 Signs of Bullying

8.1 Signs a Child is Being Bullied

Look for changes in the child. However, be aware that not all children who are bullied exhibit warning signs.

Some signs that may point to a bullying problem are:

- Unexplainable injuries
- Lost or destroyed clothing, books, electronics, or jewelry
- Frequent headaches or stomach aches, feeling sick or faking illness
- Changes in eating habits, like suddenly skipping meals or binge eating..
- Difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares.
- Declining grades, loss of interest in schoolwork, or not wanting to go to school.
- Sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations
- Feelings of helplessness or decreased self esteem
- Self-destructive behaviors such as running away from home, harming themselves, or talking about suicide
- If you know someone in serious distress or danger, don't ignore the problem. Get help right away.

8.2 Signs a Child is Bullying Others

Kids may be bullying others if they:

- Get into physical or verbal fights
- Have friends who bully others
- Are increasingly aggressive
- Get sent to the principal's office or to detention frequently
- Have unexplained extra money or new belongings
- Blame others for their problems
- Don't accept responsibility for their actions
- Are competitive and worry about their reputation or popularity