



FREE2B ANTI BULLYING POLICY EASY READ VERSION

Free2B is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of its members so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere in line with the Equalities Act 2010.

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Free2B and will not be tolerated. If bullying does occur, all young people/children and parent/carers should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

Young people and parent/carers should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

Please speak to a member of the Free2B staff team to report any concerns

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 focused around issues, such as:

Racism	racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
Sexual	unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
Homophobia/Biphobia	taunting because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
Transphobia	taunting because of, or focussing on the issue of gender identity
Body	insulting a person physically

Bullying can be acted out in a variety of ways, such as:

Verbal	name-calling, sarcasm, threatening, teasing, sexual comments
Social	spreading rumours, leaving people out, embarrassing people
Physical	pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
Cyber (online)	all areas of the internet such as email, social media, online meeting platforms & internet chat room abuse
Mobile	threats by text messaging & calls and misuse of associated technology such as camera & video facilities

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.
- Young people who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

Free2B has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Signs and Symptoms

- A young person may indicate by signs or behaviour that they are being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:
 - is frightened of walking to or from the centre
 - doesn't want to go by public transport
 - begs to be driven to the provision
 - changes their usual routine
 - is unwilling to go to the provision
 - becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
 - starts stammering
 - attempts self-harm, or threatens suicide or runs away
 - cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
 - feels ill in the morning
 - begins to do poorly in school work
 - comes home with clothes torn
 - has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
 - asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
 - has monies continually "lost"
 - has unexplained cuts or bruises
 - becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
 - is bullying other young people or siblings
 - stops eating
 - is frightened to say what's wrong
 - gives improbable excuses for any of the above
 - is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
 - is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

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

Help young people understand bullying – Free2B has a responsibility to educate all young people about what bullying is so that they can better identify it.

Keep the lines of communication open – ensure that young people feel safe to talk to staff and volunteers about what is happening for them, both in and out of Free2B.

FREE2B STAFF GUIDELINES/PROCEDURES

Stop bullying on the spot

- The bullying behaviour must be stopped quickly
- Model respectful behaviour – intervene, separate people and make sure everyone is safe

Find out what happened

- If you are not sure of, or need to clarify, the situation, get the facts – keep all young people involved separate and get the stories from several sources both adults and young people. Listen without blaming or labelling bullying until you are sure.
- Determine if it's bullying – what is the history/is there a power imbalance/ has it happened before, or are you worried it will happen again?

Support young people who are bullied

- Listen and focus on the young person, show you want to help and that it is not their fault. They may find it difficult to talk about, and may need extra support eg. counselling
- Give advice about what to do – think through what to do if it happens again, other sources of advice or support – assertiveness skills/building confidence and self esteem
- AVOID: telling young person to ignore it, say they provoked it, advise physical fighting back or suggesting to parents that they should contact the other parents – provisions should mediate.
- Follow up – ensure consistent support

Support young people who bully and address bullying behaviour

- Make sure the young person knows what the problem behaviour is – young people who bully must learn their behaviour is wrong
- Show young people that bullying is taken seriously – model respectful behaviour when addressing the problem
- Work with the young person to understand some of the reasons they bullied – to fit in/issues at home/stress/they have been bullied
- Use consequences to teach – consequences that build or involve learning empathy
- Involve young people who bullied in making amends or repairing the situation – write a letter to apologise, clear up, do a good deed.
- AVOID strategies that don't work or have negative consequences – eg 3 strikes and you are out, peer mediation/conflict resolution (bullying is about an imbalance of power), group treatment tends to lead to reinforcing behaviour in each other.
- Follow up: continue to work with the young person to help them understand how their actions affect other people.
- Support bystanders who witness bullying
- Even if young people are not bullied or bullying others, they can be affected by bullying. Many times, when they see bullying, they may not know what to do to stop it. They may not feel safe stepping in, but there are many other steps they can take.

Report bullying incidents on relevant paperwork

- Staff to fill in details on Free2B Incident form
- Discuss during debriefs with full team
- If necessary, report to your line manager or safeguarding lead
- If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted

Outcomes

- The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place.
- In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered
- If possible, the young people will be reconciled
- After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.
- Young people may be referred to external agencies for further support.
- Encourage young people to do what they love
- Help young people take part in activities they like, they can build their confidence and friendships that help protect young people from bullying

HELP ORGANISATIONS:

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)	020 7354 8321
Children's Legal Centre	0845 345 4345
KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline (Mon-Fri, 10-4)	0845 1 205 204
Parentline Plus	0800 800 2222
Youth Access	020 8772 9900
Bullying Online	www.bullying.co.uk

This is an easy read version of our members anti-bullying policy

If you would like to see the full policy document, please request a copy from: Lucie Brooke

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