



KISIMUL GROUP

Operational and Education Policy and Procedure

Anti-bullying

Reference Number	OPEd06
Version Number	16
Date of Issue	February 2019
Latest Revision	February 2020
Next review date	February 2021
Distribution	All Employees
Owner	COO/DoEd
Policy Lead (s)	Headteachers / Heads of Care
Department	Operations / Schools

Policy

Kisimul Group operates a whole school policy which has regard to the Department of Education 'Preventing and Tackling bullying: Advice for School Leaders and Governors', July 2017 and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) September 2019, and associated guidance for keeping children and YP safe from harm. The Group has formulated a set of strategies which enable staff to be aware of the possibility of bullying and how to act effectively to curtail any incidents of bullying. This policy sits alongside the behaviour policy and the safeguarding policy in referencing the following broad principles of rights for children and young adults placed within Kisimul schools.

Everyone has the right to be heard
Everyone has the right to feel safe
Everyone has the right to feel valued
Everyone has the right to feel understood.

'Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences'.

Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways,

it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online'

(Preventing and tackling bullying, advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies, DFE 2017)

. In our education and care provisions for young people with severe learning disabilities and autism spectrum disorder, it is imperative that staff are vigilant, as many of our children/young people cannot communicate effectively and are therefore potentially vulnerable to harm.. Good communication and effective record keeping and vigilance is essential in order to provide proactive oversight where the presentation of young people may be symptomatic of underlying anxieties caused by bullying behaviours.

Procedure

Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously our group's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and care staff have to make their own judgements about each specific case. In our context we must also be mindful that certain behaviour patterns exhibited by young people will cause distress and anxiety to other young people (such as loud vocalisations or frequent physical outbursts). While these may not be purposeful we should look to advocate for our young people and recognise potential symptoms within their presentation that suggest they are finding other young people challenging.

Bullying on the grounds of race, disability, age, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation also has regard to Equality Act 2010 and in particular the Equality Duty, which came into force in April 2011.

Kisimul Group has strict procedures when dealing with incidents of bullying. These procedures are to be followed by all staff both in the residential and the school setting.

It is the objective of Kisimul Group to ensure that all incidents of bullying are dealt with as quickly as possible and that the bully is made aware that this kind of behaviour will not be tolerated.

- All staff and children/young people are to be made aware that bullying is wrong and will not be tolerated. Positive and supportive relationships should be modelled and encouraged.
- Children/young people to be taught to say no and how to ask for help.
- Any victim of bullying should have the opportunity, and should be encouraged to seek out a member of staff for advice.
- With constant staff supervision children/young people should only have a very limited opportunity to initiate bullying.

- If staff become aware of bullying or have any indication that it is taking place they must intervene immediately.
- Compatibility of young people in respect of their sensory and communication profiles should be considered carefully. Many of our young people will find others behaviour intolerable and a source of anxiety, and we should look to be effective advocates for them where their presentation suggests discomfort or anxiety around other young people.

Cyber bullying

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click. (Preventing and tackling bullying, advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies, DFE 2017)

It is important that we educate and train our young people to use technology to support both their education, social and leisure activities and development. However, staff should be mindful of the potential for online abuse, and also ensure that our young people understand that posting harmful or abusive comments is unacceptable and constitutes bullying behaviour. No assumptions should be made that because of their learning disabilities that our young people do not have the capacity to access technology functionally, and therefore clear vigilance and oversight of what content and forums they are accessing should be in place, and concerns reported and shared promptly.

Intervention Procedures

Immediate steps to be taken by staff when dealing with a bullying incident:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached.
- Information about the incident is to be recorded within electronic handovers or with daily journals and must be discussed at handing over times and within team meetings. A incident record should be completed and notification given to the Head teacher or Head of care (or relevant senior person on shift). At WHS there is a bullying record sheet available for completion.
- A clear account of the incident will be recorded and given to the Head Teacher or the Head of Care, who will maintain a record of how the incident is dealt with and resolved.
- Relevant frontline staff will be kept informed and requested to continually observe interactions between the pupils. Risk assessments may need to be updated to reflect any patterns of behaviour that could cause anxiety to particular young people, whether this is purposeful or otherwise.

- Sanctions will be used as appropriate and in consultation with all parties concerned, but should only be used where this is an agreed part of a young person's behaviour management plan, outlining this is an effective response based on the cognitive awareness of the individual child/young person.

Children/young people who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Re-assuring the victim by offering help and support. Ensure that they realise that asking for help is the right thing to do.
- Assure the victim that prompt action will be taken to stop the bullying.
- The victim must be reassured that if any reoccurrence of bullying takes place they will be supported by staff.
- Kisimul has clear and visual anti-bullying displays within school and care that identify procedures for learners who feel anxious or worried about issues of bullying. These also reference pupil questionnaires with augmentative communication that can provide additional opportunities to relate concerns. In most instances it is the familiarity and vigilance of staff who are working with the young person who will notice differences in presentation and engagement which could be the symptoms of bullying or discomfort with the actions of other young people.

Children/young people who have bullied will be supported by:

- Explaining that he/she has been accused of bullying.
- Encourage the bully to understand the victim's point of view.
- Explain that this is unacceptable behaviour and makes other children/young people unhappy. The anti-bullying information provided for pupils will be used to reinforce this.
- Impose sanctions in accordance with the individual's behaviour strategy. Be aware that any aggressive actions give the message that it is all right to bully if you have the power.
- Explain that if bullying continues further sanctions will have to be imposed, and how, i.e. withdrawal of privileges.
- It may be necessary to separate or move young people and this should also be done supportively and with consideration to the impact this may have on a young person.

Other agencies which may need to be informed by staff team:

- Parents.
- Children/young peoples' social worker / placing authority.
- OFSTED under a notifiable incident if appropriate e.g. if it constitutes a serious incident.
- In case of a serious incident of bullying that is deemed to be a child protection issue the child protection and safeguarding policy will be implemented.

Prevention

In order to prevent bullying from taking place, staff are encouraged to:

- Involve child/young person, parents and child/young persons' representatives from LAs where necessary.
- Regularly evaluate and update the Group's approach to bullying.
- Openly discuss differences between people that can motivate bullying through the school curriculum, such as ethnicity, gender, disability, or sexuality.
- Use specific organisations or resources for help where appropriate, e.g. LCSP.
- Provide effective staff training and highlight the bullying policies and practices in staff inductions.
- Make it easy for children/young people to report bullying.
- Create an inclusive and open environment.
- Celebrate success and recognise achievement.

There will be reduced opportunities for bullying in school and care where there is a general encouragement of tolerance and consideration/respect for others (Croner 2000).

Cruckton Hall Ltd is a subsidiary of Kisimul School Holdings Ltd and as such will adopt relevant policies, where appropriate, from Kisimul Group.