



## Anti Bullying Policy

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| <b>Setting:</b>  | Amegreen Stable Futures     |                                 |                           |
| <b>Policy:</b>   | <b>Anti Bullying Policy</b> |                                 |                           |
| <p><i>This policy has been adapted/adopted from the West Berkshire model policy.</i></p> <p>This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis; however, should a need arise, it will be reviewed when required.</p> <p>This policy will be read, understood, and signed by all staff yearly and when changes have been made in line with government and DofE guidelines and changes.</p> <p><b>Document Control:</b></p> |                             |                                 |                           |
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## Change History

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## 1. Introduction

The Amegreen Education Group are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment. All members of the Stable Futures community have a right to learn, live and work in a safe, secure and positive environment. Bullying of any kind (including bullying of children by visitors) is wholly unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

We will take immediate action, where we believe an individual may be at risk, or it is alleged that an individual is suspected of being bullied or bullying others. Our primary concern, at all times, is the welfare and safety of all members of our community including children and young people, staff and visitors.

## 2. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Seek to create a culture in which bullying of any kind is not accepted by anyone.
- Enable all staff to understand what constitutes bullying.
- Make it clear to Individuals, staff and parents that bullying is completely unacceptable.
- Provide a clear framework for dealing with incidents of bullying, ensuring that bullies are dealt with swiftly and firmly.
- Develop a culture where individuals should be able to tell if they believe they are being bullied, and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.
- Enable all staff to be vigilant in recognising if bullying is taking place, and deal with it thoroughly and with sensitivity. Our aim is to promote positive relationships amongst all and to develop a culture in which individuals are listened to and their concerns were taken seriously.
- Create a proactive 'prevention culture' through the maintenance of conditions where bullying is less likely to flourish and is more easily detected.
- Promote an understanding of the impact of bullying within our community.

## 3. Legislation and statutory requirements

- This policy is based on the following advice/legislation:
- Education Act 2011.
- The Education (Independent Centre Standards) Regulations 2014
- The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015
- Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014, particularly Regulation 13: Safeguarding Service Users from Abuse and Improper Treatment.
- DfE guidance 'Preventing and tackling bullying' (July 2017).
- Children Act 1989,
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010.
- We also follow current DfE guidance 'Keeping children safe in education (2022)
- 'Working together to safeguard children (2018)



- HM Government advice 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (2015) and the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership's policies, procedures, guidance and protocols.

#### 4. Scope

The policy applies to all incidents of bullying between young people whether they occur within or outside the settings including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory.

If there are concerns about young people being bullied by visitors, carers or contractors, these will be addressed through the Whistle-blowing / Safeguarding Policies.

Bullying of employees is out of the scope of this policy and instead will be investigated thoroughly and addressed through the Code of Conduct.

#### 5. Roles and responsibilities

**All staff** have a duty to report bullying, to be vigilant to the signs of bullying and to play an active role in the site's efforts to prevent bullying. If staff are aware of bullying, they should reassure the children/young people involved and follow the local procedures as outlined in Appendix 2.

**Parents and carers** should look out for potential signs of bullying such as distress, lack of concentration, feigning illness or other unusual behaviour. Parents and carers should tell their children not to retaliate and support and encourage them to report the bullying. Parents and carers can report an incident of bullying to the site either in person or by phoning or emailing.

**Children and young people** should not take part in any kind of bullying and should watch out for potential signs of bullying among their peers. They should never be bystanders to incidents of bullying. If children/young people witness bullying they should support the victim, encourage them to report the bullying and, if possible, accompany them to tell a trusted adult

**The Centre Manager and Deputy on site and the Site Lead** have overall responsibility for ensuring that the anti-bullying policy is followed by all members of staff and that the site upholds its duty to promote the safety and well-being of all young people. They must ensure bullying is logged, incidents are reviewed and acted upon. Bullying trends should be analysed and be reported via governance.

#### 6. Definitions

The government defines bullying as: "Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally."

It is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on grounds of race, religion and belief, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disability (as defined in the Equality Act 2010), or because a child is adopted or is a carer. It may occur directly or through cyber-technology such as social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email. Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour. A feature of bullying in education and residential settings is that its existence is not always immediately known or suspected by those in authority. Bullying can quickly become a safeguarding matter and it may on occasion be necessary to record it as a safeguarding concern. Stable Futures recognises the seriousness of both physical and



emotional bullying in causing psychological damage and even suicide. Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal act in the UK, some types of harassing or threatening behaviour or communications could be a criminal offence; for example, under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003 and the Public Order Act 1986. If our staff consider that an offence may have been committed, we will seek assistance from the police.

For further information on the definition of bullying, forms of bullying, roles within bullying and signs and symptoms of bullying, see Appendix 1.

## **7. Responding to bullying**

### **7.1. Reporting bullying**

If a child/young person is being bullied they are encouraged to not retaliate but to tell someone they trust about it such as a friend, family member or trusted adult. They are also encouraged to report any bullying incidents to the Centre.

Parents and carers can report an incident of bullying to the site either in person or by phone or email.

To report bullying of children/young people staff should follow their local procedures as outlined in Appendix 2.

### **7.2. Responding to bullying**

When bullying has been reported, staff will:

- refer to local procedures as outlined in Appendix 2
- record the bullying on Management Information System (ClearCare)
- offer support to those who are the target of bullying
- pro-actively respond to the bully, who may require support
- assess whether parents and carers need to be involved
- assess whether any other authorities (such as police or the local authority) need to be involved, particularly where actions take place outside of the site

### **7.3. Derogatory language**

Derogatory or offensive language is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. This type of language can take any of the forms of bullying listed in our definition of bullying. It will be challenged by staff and monitored and follow-up actions and sanctions, if appropriate, will be taken for young people and staff found using any such language.

## **8. Training**

Staff can access online training through Educare and NSPCC. It is the site lead's responsibility to ensure that all staff receive regular training on all aspects of the anti-bullying policy.



## **9. Implementation**

The Centre Manager/Deputy and staff Team at each site has the responsibility for implementing this policy and the associated procedures.

## **10. Support, Advice and Communication**

Information and training on supporting young people who are being bullied can be obtained through the site's DSL. Further information and support can be provided by line managers. In cases where staff are being affected by bullying the line manager or HR business partner can support and advise.

## **11. Monitoring arrangements**

The policy will be reviewed by the Director and Education Lead every 12 months. Local procedures will be reviewed by the site in line with any updates.



## Appendix 1

### **Further information about bullying**

Definition of bullying, the government defines bullying as: “Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.” All episodes of bullying involve an imbalance in physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), intellectual and/or social power (having access to the support of a group or the capacity to socially isolate). The perpetrator(s) of which has (or at least appears to have) more power than the target of the bullying. Bullying, by its nature, is not a conflict between equals; but occurs when the perpetrator(s) of bullying has control over the relationship making it difficult for the person being bullied to defend themselves.

Fear of future victimisation is another important factor to be taken into consideration, when determining whether an interaction between individuals or groups meets the threshold necessary, to be considered bullying. Research also suggests that, in some cases, intent to harm may actually be secondary to achieving another goal, such as gaining social power or obtaining material goods.

Occasionally an incident may be deemed to be bullying even if the behaviour has not been repeated or persistent – if it fulfils all the other descriptions of bullying. This possibility should be considered particularly in cases of sexual, sexist, racist or homophobic bullying; and when children with disabilities are involved. Bullying can take place between children, between children and staff, or between staff; face-to-face, indirectly or using a range of cyber bullying methods.

### **Forms of bullying**

People are bullied for a variety of reasons – and no reason. Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on race, religion, gender (including transgender and gender reassignment), sexual orientation, or because a child is in residential care, ‘looked-after’, adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might also be associated with socio-economic background, academic performance, special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities, appearance or health conditions. It might be motivated by actual differences between individuals, or perceived differences.

People may experience different forms of bullying at different times and different forms of bullying at the same time. There is no “hierarchy” of bullying – all forms of bullying should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately.

Bullying can take many forms and may include name-calling; taunting; mocking; making offensive comments about individuals and/or their families; kicking; hitting; pushing; fighting; taking or deliberately destroying belongings or intimidation by looks or gestures (through threats of violence). It may involve inappropriate touching; producing offensive graffiti; invasion of privacy; gossiping; spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours; or always ignoring or leaving someone out of groups (either physically or online). It is also bullying when a child is pressured to do something (e.g. chores), lie for others or otherwise act against their will by others.





Cyberbullying may occur when an individual is tormented, threatened harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by another individual or group using the internet, interactive and digital technologies or mobile phones. It may occur via text messages, social media or gaming and can include the use of images and video. Cyberbullying 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 can forward content at the click of a button.

However, irrespective of the behaviour, it is important to appreciate that bullying depends on how it affects the person, not on what is being done. Different people are sensitive to different things. For example, teasing, arguing, play fighting and name-calling are not always bullying – but they can be if they affect somebody badly. **Bullying can be direct or indirect:**

**Direct** forms include physical violence or threats; verbal assaults and taunts; the destruction of property; extortion and unwanted sexual interest or contact.

**Indirect** forms of bullying include ignoring and withdrawing friendships; excluding and isolating young people; malicious gossip; offensive and threatening texting; spreading rumours and abusive or offensive graffiti. Bullying may also include being forced to become involved in criminal or anti-social behaviour.

**Emotional** (indirect bullying) includes isolation of others by a refusal to cooperate with them and exclusion - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures), deliberately excluded from social groups or activity by refusing to sit next to/ talk to/ work/ co-operate with others and refusal to follow staff instructions to do the above, or malicious rumours, e-mails or text messages, and also exclusion from play/discussions etc. with those whom they believe to be their friends.

**Physical harm** or its threat including the abuse of personal property – jostling, serious fighting, pushing, kicking, hitting, taking or hiding belongings, punching or any use of violence; deliberately destroying or damaging work or possessions or removing personal property, use of weapons/threatening use of a weapon (or any object which could be used as a weapon), intimidation through physical gestures and actions.

**Cyber** – not occurring face to face but rather through electronic means including, but not limited to, social networking sites, internet and intranet sites, email, instant messaging, by mobile phone including through text messages and phone calls, photographs both real and manipulated and so on. . It can be particularly insidious because of the potential to follow individuals wherever they are.

Bullying can be based on any of the following things:

- Race - Bullying directed at individuals of a certain race, culture, ethnicity, language, faith, community, national origin or national status. The distinctive feature of racist bullying is that the victim is attacked not as an individual but as the representative of a family, community or group.
- Culture or class – focusing on and/or playing off perceived cultural differences or similarities.
- Gender - sexist behaviour from name calling to physical sexual assault. It is the use of sexual language or negative stereotyping because of gender.
- Gender identity - transphobic behaviours related to an individual's gender identity
- Sexual orientation- Homophobic/biphobic - This is bullying which is directed towards people who are openly gay, bisexual, are perceived as gay, or show characteristics. Heterosexual young people subject to homophobic bullying are less reluctant to report it as this may enforce



the stereotypical way that they are already viewed by others so sensitivity and positive support are required for victims.

- Religion or belief – Attacking faith, belief, religious practice or custom.
- Special Educational Needs and Disability – remarking upon, drawing attention to, or discriminating against persons with physical disabilities or learning difficulties or other identified special educational needs such as Specific Learning Difficulties (SLD)
- Related to another vulnerability – such as young carers or looked after children

### **Roles within bullying**

Bullying is a complex behaviour - situations often involve a tangled web of misunderstandings, anxieties, insecurities and needs. However, different roles have been identified:

- The ringleader, the person who through their (social) power can direct bullying activity.
- Assistants/associates, who actively join in the bullying (sometimes because they are afraid of the ringleader).
- Reinforcers, who give positive feedback to the bully, perhaps by smiling or laughing.
- Outsiders/bystanders who stay back or stay silent and thereby appear to condone or collude with the bullying behaviour.
- Defenders, who try to intervene to stop the bullying or comfort children who experience bullying.
- It should be noted that the same individual can adopt different roles at different times, or indeed at the same time (a bullied child might be bullying another child at the same time, or a seeming 'reinforcer' might become a 'defender' when the ringleader is not around).

### **Signs and symptoms of bullying**

A victim may indicate verbally, by signs or behaviour that they are being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and they should investigate if a child or young person:

- becomes frightened of walking or moving from one place to another
- does not want to use usual transport/ public bus or another mode of transport
- asks to be driven separately/ with certain adults
- changes their usual routines without obvious reason
- is unwilling to go to Centre, college or home
- begins to hide, truant or avoid Centre/ going home
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering or struggles to communicate in usual ways
- attempts or threatens self-harm, suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or have nightmares
- feels ill in the morning without specific symptoms
- begins to perform poorly in Centre or usual tasks
- comes home with clothes torn or property damaged
- has money or possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the bully)
- has unexplained marks, cuts or bruises
- frequently hungry at home or Centre (unable to eat due to anxiety)
- becomes unusually aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say or communicate what is wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone (possibly cyberbullying)
- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber-message is received (possible cyberbullying)



Whilst some of our more vulnerable children and young people exhibit some of these signs when they come to us for support, we should be vigilant about new signs/ behaviours developing, which could indicate bullying. These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

## Appendix 2: Local Procedures: Stable Futures

### 1) How to report bullying - children and young people

You can report to any staff member and they will ensure action is taken.

Every student will be assigned a Teacher. You will have regular scheduled 1:1 check-ins with your Teacher, this is a good opportunity to report bullying confidentially.

You will also likely have 1:1 therapy sessions, these are also appropriate forums to confidentially raise or report bullying.

If you are not happy to say it face-to-face then you can email a staff member via the Centre's email system [Emily.Clayton@Amergreencs.co.uk](mailto:Emily.Clayton@Amergreencs.co.uk), or you can text the DSL – Emily Clayton 07795 342004

You can report it to a family member, such as a parent, and ask them to contact the Centre on your behalf.

It is always best to tell someone at the Centre so we can do something about it. However, we understand if you do not feel comfortable talking to someone at the Centre. If so, you can:

- Call ChildLine to speak with someone in confidence on 0800 1111
- Contact 'Off the Record' [Homepage - OTR South \(otr-south.org.uk\)](http://otr-south.org.uk)
- Free, safe and anonymous support online via Kooth App [www.kooth.com/](http://www.kooth.com/)

### 2) How staff report suspected bullying

Any bullying incidents or potential bullying incidents should be logged as a behaviour incident on ClearCare

However, before logging anything you suspect is a bullying incident, please speak to centre manager or Deputy first. This is because bullying is closely monitored and it is important that we moderate centrally what is/is not deemed bully or a less severe incident.

There are specific boxes for bullying on the incident slip that needs to be ticked so that senior leaders can filter these cases

You need to add the perpetrator(s) as the main students and then there is a victim drop-down menu for the victim(s).

Where this raises a safeguarding concern this should also be logged on Clearcare



### **3) Prejudice-based incidents**

A prejudice-based incident is an incident of unkind or hurtful behaviour that is motivated by prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views towards a protected characteristic or minority group. It can be targeted towards an individual or group of people and have a significant impact on those targeted. All prejudice-based incidents are taken seriously and recorded and monitored.

These should be recorded as you would a behavioural incident on ClearCare. You will see there is a relevant tick box to register a prejudice-based incident. In line with the Centre incident level matrix, these should be evaluated at a high-risk level and the child risk assessment will need to be reviewed.

### **4. Site initiatives to prevent and tackle bullying**

We use a range of measures to prevent and tackle bullying including:

- A child-friendly anti-bullying poster is clearly placed in every student space, it ensures all students understand what bullying is and knows how to report it when they see it.
- The Personal Development and PSHE programme of learning includes opportunities for young people to understand different types of bullying and what they can do to respond to and prevent bullying.
- Tutorial time provides regular opportunities to discuss issues that may arise in class and for form tutors to target specific interventions
- Individual and group sessions help raise students' awareness of bullying and derogatory language
- Difference and diversity are celebrated across the site through diverse displays, books and images. The whole site participates in events including Anti-bullying week, Black History Month and LGBT History Month
- The site values of equality and respect are embedded across the curriculum to ensure that it is as inclusive as possible.
- Stereotypes are challenged by staff and students across the site.
- Our restorative approach to behaviour management provides support to targets of bullying and helps those who show bullying behaviour to understand the consequences of their actions.
- Students are continually involved in developing Centre-wide anti-bullying initiatives in the student forum.
- Working with parents and carers, and in partnership with community organisations, to tackle bullying where appropriate.
- There is an open door policy and the Centre and staff team is always available to support where they can.