



Anti-bullying Policy

The Pony Paddocks is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all participants, so they can participate in activities in a relaxed and secure atmosphere.

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in our organisation. If bullying does occur, participants should be able to tell someone and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a TELLING organisation; this means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell one of the staff or volunteers, and preferably the supervising member of staff.

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:

- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding personal belongings, threatening gestures)
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic - because of, or focusing on the issues of sexuality
- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber* - all areas of internet, such as email & internet misuse, mobile threats by text messaging and calls, misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and social media

*For more information on Cyber-bullying visit:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/advice/f0076899/preventing-and-tackling-bullying/what-is-bullying>

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. People who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving and may well have serious issues themselves, which affect their behaviour.

The Pony Paddocks has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying, in order to carry out their duty of care to safeguard all participants involved in The Pony Paddocks. Everyone has a right to protection, and the needs of disabled people and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account.

Policy aims

The aim of the Pony Paddocks Anti-bullying Policy is to promote good practice and that:

- All volunteers and paid staff, as well as participants should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All volunteers and paid staff, as well as participants should know what the Pony Paddocks policy is on bullying and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As an organization we take bullying seriously. All participants and their parents/carers should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

Some of the Signs and Symptoms of Being Bullied

A person may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied.

Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a participant:

- Is frightened of coming to the farm or participating in certain activities
- Does not want to go to the farm on their own
- Changes their usual routine
- Becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- Feels ill before coming to the farm
- Begins to behave negatively within the group
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- Has money that is continually 'lost'
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other participants
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what is 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.

Procedures if bullying is suspected

If bullying is suspected, the following procedures should be followed:

- Report bullying incidents to the Safeguarding Lead immediately
- In all cases of bullying, the incidents will be recorded by staff
- In serious cases parents/carers should be informed and will be asked to come into a meeting to discuss the problem
- If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted
- The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated, and the bullying stopped quickly
- Reassure the victim that you can be trusted and will help them, although you cannot promise to tell no-one else.
- Keep records of what is said (what happened, by whom, when).

An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour by:

- Talk with the bully(ies), explain the situation, and try to get the bully(ies) to understand the consequences of their behaviour. Seek an apology to the victim(s).
- Inform the bully(ies)'s parents/carers.
- Insist on the return of 'borrowed' items and that the bully(ies) compensate the victim.
- Impose sanctions as necessary.
- Encourage and support the bully(ies) to change behaviour.
- Hold meetings with the families to report on progress.
- Inform all organisation members of action taken.
- Keep a written record of action taken.
- Look at supporting the bully(ies) with any issues they may have, link in with existing support services in your area

Outcomes

- The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise and sometimes other consequences may take place
- In serious cases, exclusion from the organisation may be considered
- If possible, the participants 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

Prevention

We will use methods to help participants prevent bullying, as and when appropriate. These may include:

- Writing a set of The Pony Paddocks ground rules
- Signing a behaviour contract
- Using the creative arts such as: writing stories or poems, art, drama and music
- Reading stories about bullying
- Using role-play
- Having discussions about bullying and why it matters

Support to deal with the aftermath of bullying

Consideration should be given to the kind of support that participants, parents and members of staff or volunteers may need.

Consideration should also be given to what kind of support may be appropriate for the alleged bully (ies)

Use of helplines, support groups and open meetings will maintain an open culture and help the healing process. Some useful organisations are:

- o KIDSCAPE parents Helpline (Mon-Fri 10-4) 0845 1 205 204
- o Childline 0800 1111
- o Parentline Plus 0808 800 2222
- o Youth Access 020 8772 9900
- o Childline www.childline.org.uk
- o Bullying Online www.bullying.co.uk
- o Kidscape www.kidscape.org.uk