



Clovelly House

# Bullying Policy

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# Clovelly House School Policy

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# Clovelly House School Policy

## Anti-Bullying Policy

### 1. Statement of Intent

In accordance with the Children Act 1989 Clovelly House has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children it is looking after. They recognise that bullying behaviour can have a detrimental effect on the welfare of children. Children who come into our care may have already suffered abusive or disruptive life experiences. Many children may also present challenging behaviour and have difficulties with interacting with others in a positive way. It is vital these children are not exposed to further negative experiences by being bullied or by bullying others whilst in our home. Clovelly House School is thus committed to responding to the problem of bullying in a concerned, consistent and comprehensive manner. The Document, Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2022, recognises 'peer-on-peer abuse' as a serious concern for schools. Clovelly House School recognises its responsibilities and duty of care to the children in the school in connection with bullying.

### 2. Aim of the policy

- To provide a consistent and proactive approach to the management of bullying behaviour.
- To provide effective guidance for staff in caring for the victims of bullying and those exhibiting bullying behaviour.
- To ensure support and protection and to reduce incidents of fear and intimidation experienced by children and young people
- To prevent, wherever possible, the breakdown of placements
- To raise awareness and promote the involvement of all for developing strategies for countering bullying amongst looked after children.

The following information is taken from the document "Safe from Bullying in Children's Residential Provisions" produced for the department for children, schools and families (2009).

### 3. What is bullying?

One person or a group can bully others. Bullying is behaviour, usually repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual or group, physically or emotionally. The school recognizes that there are incidents when pupils may bully staff members. This will be dealt with by enabling the staff member to challenge bullying and by addressing pupils and those who perpetrate as well as those who witness the bullying and sending the message that this is unacceptable.

#### How does bullying differ from banter?

- There is a deliberate intention to hurt or humiliate.
- There is a power imbalance that makes it hard for the victim to defend themselves.
- It is usually persistent.

Occasionally an incident may be deemed to be bullying even if the behaviour has not been repeated or persistent – if it fulfils all 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. If the victim might be in danger then intervention is urgently required.

#### What forms does bullying take?

- name-calling
- taunting, mocking
- making offensive comments
- kicking, hitting, pushing
- taking belongings
- inappropriate touching
- producing offensive graffiti
- spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours



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- always leaving someone out of groups
- pressured to act against their will by others

### **Harassment**

Bullying can sometimes take the form of harassment. This is defined as unwanted conduct which violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading or humiliating environment.

### **Cyberbullying**

Increasingly, bullying is happening through new technology.

- inappropriate or hurtful text messages, emails or instant messages
- posting malicious material online (e.g. on social networking websites)
- sending or posting offensive or degrading images and videos

'Cyberbullying', as it is often called, might take the form of 'real world' bullying being played out online. Situations may be deliberately engineered in order to photograph someone in a humiliating way and circulate this online. It can be particularly insidious, because of the potential to follow children wherever they are, including in the Residential Provision.

### **Racist and religious bullying**

Racist bullying can be defined as 'A range of hurtful behaviour, both physical and psychological, that makes a person feel unwelcome, marginalised, excluded, powerless or worthless because of their colour, ethnicity, culture, faith community, national origin or national status'. Under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, all public bodies have a duty to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and promote good race relations. Tackling racist bullying is a key part of fulfilling this duty.

### **Sexual, sexist and transphobic bullying**

Sexual bullying includes any behaviour, whether physical or non-physical, where sexuality is used as a weapon by boys or by girls. It can be carried out to a person's face, behind their back or by use of technology. Sexist bullying refers to bullying simply because the victim is a girl or a boy, based on singling out something specifically gender linked. Transphobic bullying refers to bullying because someone is, or is thought to be, transgender. While young people may express an acceptance of sexual, sexist or transphobic insults because they are widely used, such insults are often used to bully someone. Inappropriate touching can also be a form of bullying and harassment and may escalate into abuse. Similarly, 'jokes' about sexual assault, or rape, if unchallenged, can create an atmosphere in which this behaviour is seen as more acceptable.

### **Homophobic bullying**

Homophobic bullying targets someone because of their sexual orientation, (or perceived sexual orientation). It can be particularly difficult for a young person to report and is often directed at them at a very sensitive phase of their lives when identity is being developed. What might be called banter can be deemed harassment if it is at the expense of someone's dignity and meant offensively. The term 'gay' as an insult is unacceptable and should always be challenged, as such use can create an atmosphere in which a young person feels denigrated and even hounded. The term 'gay' is sometimes used as a proxy for racist or disablist bullying because young people may believe they can get away with using these words in an abusive way, whereas racist insults would be challenged by staff.

Regulations made under the Equality Act 2006 outlaw discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation in the provision of 'goods and services', including those provided by public bodies. The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 also place a duty on employers to protect all staff against discrimination or harassment on the grounds of their sexual orientation.

### **Disablist bullying**

Bullying involving children and young people with disabilities employs many of the same forms as other types of bullying, with name calling and pushing and shoving being common. Additional forms include:



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- Manipulative bullying, where the perpetrator tries to get the victim to act in a certain way –do something they should not do – steal from a newsagent for example, when they may not be able to recognise that they should not do this.
- Bullying that exploits a particular aspect of a condition such as sensitivity to sensory stimuli, lights or sounds.
- Conditional friendship where the victim is 'allowed' to be in the friendship group only on certain conditions.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 makes it unlawful to discriminate against disabled persons in the provision of facilities and services. Under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, all public bodies have a duty to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and harassment on grounds of disability and promote positive attitudes towards disabled people. Tackling disablist bullying is a key part of fulfilling this duty.

### 4. Preventing bullying

Clovelly House School aims to prevent incidents of bullying using the following:

#### Leadership

- Maintain Policies, including an anti-bullying policy and safeguarding children and young people policy
- Appoint and 'Anti-bullying' officer to support the school to tackle bullying
- Offer training to staff to enable them to deal effectively with bullying issues
- The ethos of the school reflects that the Clovelly House School is a safe and inclusive environment where bullying will not be tolerated
- Risk assessments, placement and action plans reflect bullying issues
- Ensure that records are kept and relevant people informed (e.g. social workers)
- Link with local authorities and other agencies

#### Staff members

- Be aware of the anti-bullying policy and their role in implementing it
- Report any concerns of bullying to the leadership team
- Review and monitor risk assessments and action plans with regards to bullying
- Identify vulnerable young people and "high-risk" times and places
- Take any allegations of bullying seriously
- Record any allegations of bullying appropriately
- Share any concerns with line management as per safeguarding and whistle blowing policies
- Ensure that bullying is discussed at young person's meetings, care team meetings, LAC Reviews etc.
- Link with other agencies involved in care of young person (e.g. school, clubs)
- Act as positive role models for young people
- Complete direct work that aims to explore bullying issues, develop resilience and implement strategies for managing bullying behaviour

#### Young people

- Be aware of the anti-bullying policy through Young Person's Guides
- Consult about bullying issues through LAC Reviews, School Meetings, Care Team Meetings, Young Person's meetings and direct work
- Engage in opportunities to discuss bullying in a safe and private manner
- Access to information about bullying including external support



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### 5. Dealing with incidents of bullying

All staff must refer to the safeguarding children and young people policy and ensure that the immediate safety of a young person is paramount in any incident of bullying.

#### Support the child who is bullied

The starting point for any intervention should be to talk to the person who has been bullied, establish what has happened and agree a way forward:

- Make time to listen to the victim calmly, using effective listening techniques.
- Take bullying seriously and avoid telling young people to 'just ignore it'.
- Agree an action plan with his or her consent.
- Avoid humiliating the victim by taking actions which make them seem weaker, powerless or a 'grass'.
- Help the victim become more resilient, for example by building up their self-confidence, emphasising their strengths and helping them to develop protective friendships.
- Cyberbullying can be traced and tracked to find proof of the bullying, so it becomes less of a question about one person's word over another.

#### Work with the bullying child

Work with the bully to help them understand their behaviour and its effects on others. The overall goal is to ensure the bullying stops and the bully's behaviour changes:

- Make it clear that it is the behaviour that is 'bad', not the child.
- How does bullying make them feel? Why do they need to do this?
- Help children to find other ways than bullying to feel recognized and ways to manage their emotions.
- Help a child to learn to recognize their emotions, perhaps marking on a chart how he or she feels today.
- Anger management and conflict resolution skills can be taught.
- Use a restorative approach.
- Give the child tasks to do that earn them praise or rewards for pro-social actions
- When a good relationship is established, try to elicit some understanding of the feelings of the victim, and challenge prejudice such as racism.
- How can this person make amends or compensate the victim?
- Be aware that many people who bully others have been victims at some point themselves and may still be one.

#### Monitor and Record

Bullies will often appear to comply – but may bully someone else, or bully more secretly so that they do not get caught. They can appear to comply because of strong controls strictly enforced, but it is unclear whether or not their behaviour and prejudices have really changed. So consider whether your intervention has secured lasting change and check from time to time. Encourage and praise any positive behaviour by the bullying child.

- Monitor the situation.
- Record any bullying incidents and action taken.
- Report back to the victim.
- Follow up, discreetly, with the victim to make certain the bullying has actually stopped and that they feel safe.
- Do nothing to perpetuate the image of a child as a permanently weak victim, but try to put across a positive strong image of them instead.
- Help the victim to come to believe in themselves starting with small steps.



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- Use an incident as a learning opportunity for everyone.
- Ensure that all incidents are recorded accurately and appropriately and the information is shared with the relevant people

### 6. Bullying as a Child Protection Issue

Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child – 'is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. As such, it will sometimes be appropriate to report bullying incidents to child protection officers. In making this decision, staff should follow the safeguarding and child protection policy.

### 7. Dealing with serious or persistent bullying

As outlined in the document "Safe from Bullying in Children's Residential Provisions" (2009) the following may help to deal with persistent bullying issues. Where possible all other strategies should be exhausted and all relevant people consulted appropriately.

- Working with partners (strategy meetings, inter-agency meetings etc)
- Involving the police (in extreme cases after appropriate consultation)
- Removing a child from the home/school (after appropriate consultation)

### 8. Further Information – advice and support

Action for Children:

[www.actionforchildren.org.uk](http://www.actionforchildren.org.uk)

Anti-Bullying Alliance:

[www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)

CEOP (The Child Exploitation Online Protection Centre): Hosts the Young people's online charter and is responsible for safety on the internet. There is advice for parents and carers and for young people

<http://www.ceop.gov.uk>

Childnet/Becta: For information and materials on a range of online safety aspects such as social networking, being a good digital citizen and cyberbullying. [www.becta.org.uk/safeguarding.php](http://www.becta.org.uk/safeguarding.php)

Childnet also offers activities, posters and materials on: <http://www.kidsmart.org.uk>

EACH (Educational Action Challenging Homophobia): Provides training for local authorities to challenge homophobic bullying: [www.eachaction.org.uk](http://www.eachaction.org.uk)

Mencap: The Don't Stick it, Stop It! Campaign contains stickers and useful materials, such as line animations and video clips, which can be used for training/awareness purposes

[www.mencap.org.uk/dontstickit](http://www.mencap.org.uk/dontstickit)

NSPCC: Offers a wide range of advice and support in this area, including what to do when a child may disclose a further problem such as domestic violence or neglect.

Visit [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

Stonewall: Information on tackling homophobic bullying

[www.stonewall.org.uk](http://www.stonewall.org.uk)



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Transforming Conflict: For information on restorative practices and training  
<http://www.transformingconflict.org>.

### 9. References

Department for Children, Schools and Families (2009). Safe from Bullying in Children's Residential Provisions. DCSF-00447-2009.

Keeping Children Safe is everybody's business – How you can help if you think a child is being harmed'. Local Safeguarding Children Board (Leicestershire & Rutland)

Leicestershire Safeguarding Board Policies and Procedures

'The Children's Homes Regulations' (2015)

'Working Together to Safeguard Children', (HM Government, July 2018)

'Keeping Children Safe in Education', (DfE September 2023)

**See also:** Clovelly House 'Positive Behaviour Management Policy'  
Clovelly House Policy on 'Equality and Diversity'  
Clovelly House 'Child Protection Policy'