

HAPPY LITTLE PEOPLE

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person or causing pain and distress to the victim.

Forms of Bullying

- Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, ridicule, humiliation
- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, pinching, violence, threats
- Verbal: name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Racist: racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic: because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- Mobile/Internet: abusive emails, phone calls, text messages

Recognition of Bullying

The following list highlights some of the signs of bullying. It is important to note that although a child could be displaying some of these signs or behaviours; it does not necessarily mean that the child is being bullied. These signs could indicate that the child has other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility.

Indicators of Bullying

- Unwillingness to attend school and the club
- Withdrawn, isolated behaviour
- Complaining about missing possessions and lost money
- Refuses to talk about the problem
- Easily distressed
- Lacking confidence, low self-esteem, anxious
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive and unreasonable
- Begins to bully other children
- Changes in eating and sleeping patterns
- Starts stammering
- Has unexplained cuts and bruises

Dealing with Bullying Helping the child or young person

- Take bullying seriously. Ensure the child is safe.
- Encourage all children to speak and share their concerns.
- Reassure the victim that you can be trusted and will help, although you cannot promise to tell no one else.
- Keep records of what is said i.e. what happened, by whom and when.
- Report any concerns to the person in charge at the organisation where the bullying is occurring.

Action towards the bully

- Try to help the bully to understand the consequences of his / her behaviour and seek an apology from the bully.
- Inform the bully's parents/guardians and impose sanctions as necessary.
- Encourage and support the bully to change behaviour.

Happy little People aims to ensure that all children in our care have fun in a safe and caring environment. It is the responsibility of the OOSC Staff to do everything possible to protect the children from all forms of bullying. If bullying does occur all children should be able to tell any staff member and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

All members of staff, children and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.

All members of staff, children and parents should know what the club policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying occurs and is reported.

Bullying is taken seriously by the club and all children and parents will be fully supported if bullying is reported or observed.

All children and parents will be made aware of the club's behaviour policy which includes bullying and will be required to accept it.

Bullying will not be tolerated by the club. If the service receives a report of bullying:

- The staff member should listen to the child who is being bullied and reassure them that they are safe and have done the right thing by telling someone.
- If the bullying is not reported but a staff member observes that it is taking place, they should take the child aside and encourage them to open up about what's been happening to them.
- All reports of bullying should be treated seriously, the staff member should try to get as much detail as possible from the child about the other children who are suspected of bullying, when it occurs and how often it occurs.
- Even if bullying is not happening in the club, the staff member still has a responsibility to try and help the child.
- The staff member should explain to the child that in order to help them the Manager has to be informed.
- The manager should sit in with the staff member and the child and allow the child to recount the story freely. The staff should use open but not leading questions to try to get as much detail from the child as possible. The manager should keep a record of what the child has said.
- In circumstances where the manager is named as the bully then the staff carer should contact the owner immediately.
- In circumstances where another member of staff is named then the Lead Practitioner should be as discreet as possible and contact the owner
- If the bullying is occurring outwith the club, for instance in school, then the manager should inform the child's parents and suggest that they inform the relevant authorities.

Investigating reports of bullying in the club

- The manager should investigate all reports of bullying within the club. If the manager is the one being accused the owner should conduct the investigation.
- The manager should try to establish the facts surrounding the allegation. Both the victim and the child being accused should be treated equally and fairly and

dealt with separately.

- The manager should inform the child accused of bullying that a complaint has been made against them and give them the opportunity to respond.

Resolving the Bullying

- If the allegation is found to be true, then the Manager should try to establish why the child has been bullying and explain the hurt that it causes their victim.
- The Manager should remind the child of the club's behaviour policy and explain that bullying will not be tolerated. The consequences if their behaviour continues should also be explained, for example time out, exclusion etc.
- The manager should ask the child accused of bullying to make a genuine apology to their victim and if possible, the manager should try to reconcile both parties.
- When the parents of those involved come to collect the children the manager should ask to speak to them privately and explain what's been happening and what has been done to try and resolve the situation.
- The parents should be reminded of the club's behaviour policy and asked that they help the club to enforce this.
- The manager and other staff should monitor the situation to ensure that repeated bullying does not take place.
- In serious cases or when bullying persists, the manager should inform the owner who should try to resolve the situation.
- Excluding the bully from the club should only be used as a last resort.

To enable staff and children to have a happy club it is important to understand what 'acceptable behaviour' is and what 'unacceptable behaviour' is within the club. Clubs have a duty to promote positive behaviour and this should be used as the basis of your policy.