Anti-Bullying Procedures

These procedures implement the Safeguarding Policy providing important information about bullying and outlining processes in place at Young Epilepsy for managing bullying concerns.

BACKGROUND

These procedures reflect Young Epilepsy's belief that all the children and young people at Young Epilepsy have the right to feel safe and free from harm within their respective learning and living environments.

We would expect that the children and young people who attend Young Epilepsy should feel safe and that staff should support them to have an understanding of the issues relating to safety, such as bullying. Young Epilepsy would also want them to feel confident to seek support from staff should they feel unsafe.

We recognise that bullying exists in many forms, that it can happen in every age group, that victims and witnesses may stay silent, and that everyone needs to be alert to the manifestations of bullying and the personal harm it can cause.

Bullying may occur in any situation not just within the school or college or residential settings and that young people may require education in relation to personal safety and how to make a complaint about incidents which may occur in or outside of the organisation.

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'.

These procedures comply with the following legislation and guidance:

- Children Act 1989
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Education Act 1996 (Part IV)
- Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Section 89) School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (Section 61)
- DfES Guidance 'Bullying: don't suffer in silence' (DfES 0064/2000)
- DfES Guidance 'Safeguarding children in education' (DfES 0027/2004)
- DfE Guidance 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (DfE 00062-2011)
- Equality Act 2010 (Equality Duty)
- Cyber bullying: Supporting School Staff (DCSF April 2009)
- Guidance for Schools on Preventing and Responding to Sexist, Sexual and Transphobic

- Bullying (DCSF December 2010)
- National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools 2011
- National Minimum Standards for Children's Homes 2011

There are also four UK statute laws that are relevant to the use of IT in relation to bullying. These are:

- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994
- The Malicious Communications Act 1998
- The Communications Act 2003

When working with the children and young people at Young Epilepsy it is necessary to be particularly sensitive and aware of two specific areas:

Perceptions / Self Perception

Young people with atypical social communication (e.g. ASD) will often present in a manner that can be egocentric and demanding. This may be manifested in a way that other young people perceive as bullying, especially if they have similar needs themselves. Although such behaviour in itself may be inappropriate and require support it does not necessarily reflect intent to cause 'harm'. This is not to say that such actions are not possible. Staff need to be vigilant in their analysis of events and discuss any such incidents to identify the appropriate course of action.

Historical bullying

Some of the students who attend Young Epilepsy may come with a history of being bullied in their previous educational setting. It is important that staff are aware and sensitive to this need and the potential heightened anxiety of the student when they first attend. Some students are often very conscious of their own level of esteem and have expectations that they will become a victim again.

This policy should be read in conjunction with Young Epilepsy Safeguarding Policy and Procedure.

Definition of Bullying

'Behaviour by an individual or group usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally'.

Safe to Learn: embedding anti bullying work in schools (2007).

This can happen face to face or virtually through the internet and mobile devices.

How does bullying differ from teasing/falling out between friends or other types of aggressive behaviour?

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 and young people with disabilities are involved. If the victim might be in danger then intervention is urgently required.

What does bullying look like?

Bullying can be **direct** – usually face to face or via phone/mobile device with the victim or **indirectly** with the bully systematically undermining the victim's reputation by spreading rumours and malicious gossip with the intent of ruining the victim's social standing.

Bullying generally takes one of the following forms: (however this list is not exhaustive)

Emotional	being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding belongings, threatening gestures)
Physical	Hitting, kicking, pinching, spitting, tripping/pushing, punching, slapping
Racist	Bullying behaviour based on someone's colour, faith, culture or country of origin
Religious	Based on religious beliefs, disparaging and offensive actions and/or remarks
Sexual	Unwanted touch, sexual comments – derogatory terms
Verbal	Anything that is considered offensive or threatening to the bullied individual. This can be teasing or name-calling or spreading rumours or it can be something bigger like verbal threats

Homophobic	because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality/sexual orientation ie gay or lesbian
Cyber	All areas of internet misuse, such as nasty and/or threatening emails, misuse of blogs, gaming websites, internet chat rooms and instant messaging. Mobile threats by text messaging & calls. Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video facilities
Relational	Relational bullying entails intentionally damaging the social status of the victim.

Following consultation with the student council; student's views regarding bullying have also been incorporated below:

Bullying can include:

- Name calling
- Saying or writing mean things
- Being mean and nasty
- Taunting
- Mocking
- Making offensive comments
- Physical assault
- Taking or damaging belongings
- Gossiping and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours
- Leaving people out of games
- People blocking your way
- Being disrespectful
- Using rude words that can make people sad
- Biting people
- Getting angry
- Threatening body language

Although bullying can occur between individuals it can often take place in the presence (virtually or physically) of others who can become 'bystanders' or 'accessories'.

Hate crimes are closely linked to bullying. This is when a crime is committed against you because of your age, colour, race, sex, religion, nationality, sexual identity or disability

There is no hierarchy of bullying – all forms should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately.

Bullying can take place between:

- young people

- young people and staff

- between staff

- individuals or groups

- Certain groups of pupils are known to be particularly vulnerable to bullying by others: these may include pupils with special educational needs such as learning or physical disabilities; young carers, Looked After children, those from ethnic and racial minority groups and those young people who may be perceived as lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender or questioning their gender role.

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<u>Signs which may raise concerns about the possible bullying of a student:</u>

A child or young person may indicate either by a direct disclosure or by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Staff should be concerned and monitor closely if a student:

- is frightened of walking to school/college and will not talk about it
- is unwilling to go to school/college (phobic)
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence; starts stammering; cries themselves to sleep at night and/or has nightmares
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- feels ill in the morning or has unexplained physical symptoms
- starts to deteriorate with their school or college work
- has possessions which are damaged or " go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully) or has other monies continually "lost"
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable unexpectedly
- is bullying other students
- develops an eating disorder or stops eating altogether

- is frightened to say what's wrong when approached
- 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; is anxious or disturbed after being online

It is clear that these signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying may be a possibility.

It is also recognised that some students' behaviour can be experienced as bullying by others but that they have not intended this given their level of functioning and awareness. There is still however a victim and in such cases, protective measures will be required for those affected by the behaviours.

Staff should be always vigilant in recognising that what students might perceive as bullying, they may not; it is how the student who is being bullied feels about it that counts.

Within the education settings the teacher or tutor will co-ordinate and use the curriculum to:

1. Increase children's and young people's awareness of different types of bullying

2. Help them to develop strategies to combat all types of bullying.

3. Ensure that all children and young people know how to report bullying; know how to get help and be confident that the response to bullying is effective.

4. Encourage them to develop positive values and attitudes such as tolerance, kindness and respect.

5. Use discussion and role play to explore issues related to bullying and to give individual children and young people confidence to deal with 'bullying'.

6. Use proactive systems and procedures which promote an inclusive, supportive ethos and positive relationships whereby differences are acknowledged and celebrated.

7. Use restorative justice practice to create a culture for all student based on social responsibility.

The above will be consolidated in residential student meetings and individual keyworker sessions.

Cyber bullying

This is when someone uses a mobile phone, email or the Internet to bully young people. Cyber bullying can be an extension of bullying happening face to face.

However a person can also be subject to cyber bullying by someone they do not know.

Cyber bullying can take the same form as bullying but virtually rather than face to face.

The main concerns about cyber bullying is that it is often face-less (people do not know the identity of those bullying them) and it is also something that can happen 24 hours a day as so many young people have access to mobile devices throughout the day and night. This can make cyber bullying extremely harmful to those experiencing it.

Here are ways to advise our students with regards to minimising or to avoid this:

- Be careful who you give your phone number and email address to

- Don't leave your mobile unattended;

- Never lend your mobile phone to anyone. If a friend or anyone else asks to borrow it then dial the number or text for them. If you don't do this they could use your phone to bully someone else and you could end up getting the blame

- Be careful about the personal details you put on social networking sites such as Facebook. Always use the privacy settings. Remember, you must be over thirteen to join sites such as Facebook

- Remember too that people are not always who they say they are on the Internet. The Internet allows all sorts of people to make themselves appear in a way that is attractive to you. Someone who says they are only 14 and would like to meet you may actually be over 50 and not a nice person to meet. You could put yourself in serious danger

- Never agree to meet anyone you have met on the Internet without informing your parents or an adult who can go with you. Keep yourself safe.

- If you do experience this type of bullying, don't reply to abusive emails or texts but do keep them, as they can be used in evidence against the bully.

- Check your personal details on Internet sites and remove any that could give away too much information

- Remove or block anyone you suspect of bullying from your friend lists

- Never agree to providing photos or videos, especially those of an intimate nature to other people

This policy affects all staff, students and volunteers at Young Epilepsy. It is essential that all staff act in accordance with this policy and that any concerns, issues or challenges are reported and dealt with as a matter of priority.

PROCEDURES

Procedures for Managing Bullying Concerns

Summary

Any incidence of bullying may represent a safeguarding issue and must be treated as a concern. When an incident is reported, or staff witness an episode of bullying behaviour, that member of staff must firstly ensure that the student who has been targeted is safe and supported, then advise, if appropriate, the bullying student of the inappropriateness of their behaviour, and ask them to apologise. Work may be needed with the bullying student to reinforce this. The incident should be referred to the line manager who will arrange for the actions below to be taken, and ensure that the head of the relevant department is informed. You may need to ensure that any evidence is gathered and protected.

The Safeguarding Team must be made aware of any alleged bullying incidents. An Incident Report will then need to be completed.

Checklist of actions to be taken

Immediately ensure the safety of and offer support and reassurance to the targeted student- this is essential. This could be by:

- providing more supervision from staff

- separating the students involved to prevent recurrence

- making an alternative arrangement for either student's management in the short or long term

Staff should, where appropriate, agree with the bullied student the next steps and actions that need to be taken. The student's views should be recorded on the incident report where possible.

The bullying student, where appropriate (e.g. where the student has some capacity to understand their actions and the consequences of these), should be asked to apologise to their target and reconciliation attempted between the students, if the targeted student is agreeable and supported appropriately. If the bully will not apologise it is important that they are made aware nevertheless of the negative impact of their actions and that this is not appropriate behaviour.

Using a restorative justice approach can be useful with individuals but also with groups of students, to explore the impact of actions, recognising students' social responsibilities and learning to make amends to those who have been affected. This approach can be useful to help students develop empathy and a shared group concern about the welfare of others within the group.

Staff should address the reasons for the bully's actions and either make a referral to an appropriate specialist or engage that student in a supporting/guiding dialogue. This would depend upon the extent or level of concern. In severe and/or persistent cases the option of suspension or exclusion of the bullying student should not be ruled out.

All incidents of bullying must be reported immediately and recorded by completing an Incident Report. Bullying behaviour is monitored in this way, bringing persistent or difficult cases to the attention of the relevant manager who has a monitoring role to undertake.

The Safeguarding Officer on call must be contacted with details in order for the Safeguarding Team to review incidents of bullying or harassment involving students. The member(s) of staff who witnessed the incident should make the call, and be ready to refer to the Incident Report that has been filed –with the correlating number. An action plan should have been agreed which should be shared with the Safeguarding Officer on call. Information should be shared by the reporting staff, where appropriate, with parents and social workers/care managers following discussion with the Safeguarding Officer on call.

There will need to be consideration given to Young Epilepsy contacting external agencies (Social Services and/or the Police). Some forms of bullying are illegal and should be reported to the police. These include:

- violence or assault
- theft
- repeated harassment or intimidation, eg name calling, threats and abusive phone calls, emails or text messages
- hate crimes

In any unresolved cases Young Epilepsy accepts that parents or students might wish to use the complaints procedure and, if still dissatisfied, they may choose to involve external agencies.

This procedure is agreed by Director of Operations and will be implemented by all departments.

Signed: ....

Director of Integrated Care

Date: ....

Date of next review: 1 November 2016