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H. Dymally

Markfield

Anti-bullying Policy

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Anti-bullying Policy Statement

At Markfield we believe that everyone has the right to play, socialise and work in an environment where they feel safe and happy. Everyone has the right not to be bullied. We are committed to preventing bullying and to dealing with it. We want to empower our service users and help them to develop ways of preventing and stopping bullying.

If bullying does occur Markfield service users should be able to tell and know that bullying behaviour 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 the staff.

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years by the Play & Youth Services Manager, with the involvement of Executive Committee members, staff and service users.

What do we mean by 'bullying'?

The Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) website defines bullying as:

"The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power"

Bullying can happen either face to face or online/by phone. Cyberbullying is bullying via electronic means. This can happen through a range of online or mobile services such as text, email, social networking sites, video-hosting sites, messenger, photo sharing services, chat, webcams, visual learning environments, and online games.

It can occur in many different forms, for example: it can be verbal (using words), non-verbal (without words), physical (using actions), or emotional (playing on someone's emotions). It can be direct action (like physical violence) or indirect action (such as deliberately leaving someone out).

Some examples of bullying are:

- Hitting, kicking, punching, spitting
- Insulting someone's family (e.g. "Your mum ...")
- Racist bullying – insulting someone because of their skin colour, culture, religion, or where they or their family come from.
- Homophobic bullying – using words like "gay", "poof", "lesbian" as a term of abuse.
- Ignoring someone and deliberately leaving them out of groups.
- Making someone do something they don't want to do or stopping them from doing what they do want to do.
- Malicious text messages, sexting, posting personal information online without consent.
- Making fun of someone because they find certain things difficult.
- Making fun of someone because of how they look or behave.
- Generally making a person feel bad about themselves.

Not all disagreements or arguments between people are necessarily 'bullying'. It's OK to have a difference of opinion with someone and to tell them what your view is – this is not the same as

bullying them. When it does become bullying is if someone is deliberately trying to make another person feel bad.

Why do people bully?

To prevent or stop bullying it is important to understand why bullying happens. Some reasons why people bully are:

- They are being bullied or have been bullied themselves and want to take out their anger and frustration on someone else.
- The person they pick on annoys them or unsettles them in some way.
- They have seen people they respect use bullying behaviour as a way of getting what they want.
- They have never been told that this behaviour is wrong.
- They feel pressured into acting that way by other people.
- They have been labelled as “a bully” and feel that nobody expects any different from them.

Advice for service users and parents/carers:

What to do if you are bullied:

If you are being bullied by someone at Markfield, or if you see someone else being bullied:

- Tell the person doing the bullying to stop.
- If you don't feel able to do this, or you have tried but it hasn't worked, then tell a member of staff.
- *Or* you can tell another adult that you trust (e.g. parent, teacher) and ask them to tell us.
- Try not to let yourself be provoked into retaliating with physical or verbal violence – this will not help and will just make the situation more serious.

Advice for parents & carers:

If your child tells you that they are being bullied at Markfield **please let us know**. We will investigate what has happened and we will consult with you about what action we will take to deal with it. If you are not satisfied with the way we have dealt with it, you may take this up under our complaints policy.

If your child is involved in serious or persistent bullying at Markfield we will discuss this with you and we will consult you about what action we can take to help your child to stop the bullying.

Guidelines for staff and volunteers

Prevention of bullying:

We aim to create an environment at Markfield where bullying is prevented by doing the following:

- Making service users aware of the Code of Conduct they are expected to abide by.
- Staff and volunteers are always expected to model the kind of behaviour we want – being aware of and respecting other people's feelings.

- Staff will discuss the key points in this policy with service users to make them aware that bullying is not tolerated at Markfield.
- Children and young people are discouraged from using their phones on sessions at Markfield. If phones are used inappropriately at Markfield there will be further discussions with service users and parents/carers.

Dealing with bullying:

- Listen to service users when they tell you about bullying.
- Be alerted to observe if a situation may possibly develop into bullying.
- Where a situation is escalating and it is clear that service users cannot resolve things themselves, staff should intervene.
- Staff should speak to those involved to find out what has happened and why.
- Remember that the person who has been accused of bullying has the right to put their side of the story too.
- Staff should take care that not all the attention is focused on the person doing the bullying - it is very important for staff to clearly acknowledge the feelings of the person who has been hurt or upset and for staff to let them know that the bullying is not OK, and action will be taken to ensure that it doesn't happen again.
- Where a service user has lost their temper, they may need time out on their own to calm down. Do not insist that they speak to you about what has happened straight away, or that they are made to 'say sorry' before they are ready.
- Use 'restorative justice' where possible – this means the bully and the victim are brought together with the purpose of enabling the person doing the bullying to understand their behaviour and the hurt they have caused, and to stop. However, if the victim does not want to meet with the bully, then their wishes must be respected.
- Report what has happened – fill in an incident report to record any bullying.
- In some cases, the Service Manager or Session Leader will arrange to meet with the parents/carers of a service user who has been engaging in bullying, to discuss what has happened and how to prevent it from happening again and in some cases to draw up a behaviour contract with the service user.
- If a service user reports to a staff member that they or a friend is being cyberbullied, staff should listen to their concerns and help support the service user to take appropriate actions to resolve the situation. This could include informing their parent or carer, saving evidence, requesting for online content to be removed, or, in very severe cases contacting social services or police.

Allegations of bullying by staff:

If a service user accuses a staff member of bullying this must be reported to a manager and an incident form completed by the person to whom the allegation is reported. It will then be investigated and where necessary dealt with under the staff disciplinary procedures.

If a member of staff feels s/he is being bullied by a colleague or service user, s/he should report this to their line manager or to a more senior manager and keep a record of incidents. The matter should be investigated by their line manager, and every effort made to resolve the situation to the satisfaction of all parties. If the line manager is the alleged perpetrator, then another manager will carry out the investigation. Where the alleged bullying is by one staff member to another, this may be dealt with via the Grievance Procedure.

Recording and monitoring incidents of bullying:

All bullying incidents should be recorded by the staff member or volunteer who has witnessed the incident, using the normal incident form reporting procedure. All incident forms are reviewed and signed off by the relevant service manager and are logged onto the incident tracking system. Any follow-up action taken because of the incident (e.g. telephone calls to parents, meeting with service users involved) should be recorded by the manager on the incident form.

Reporting to the Executive Committee:

The Director will report to the Executive Committee meeting each quarter on the number of incidents, including the number of bullying incidents and the number of racist incidents, and what follow up action has been taken.