



## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

In order to make it easier for all staff to keep themselves informed of Bowerbirdy's policies and any changes made to them, we will highlight any changes made from one update to the other.

New text will be highlighted as follows: **This is new text xxx xxx xxx.**

Any old text that has been deleted will be highlighted as follows: ~~This is old text that has been deleted yyy yy yyyyyy.~~

We hope this will help you to quickly be able to identify any changes made to our policies.

**Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Information and Records**

### ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

#### Statement of Intent

At Bowerbirdy we are committed to providing a warm, caring and safe environment during our open access activities for all our children and young people so that they can learn and play in a relaxed and secure environment. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in our activities. We take all incidents of bullying seriously. Bullying hurts. No-one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect and pupils who are bullying others need to learn different ways of behaving. At Bowerbirdy, we acknowledge that bullying does happen from time to time – indeed, it would be unrealistic to claim that it does not. When bullying does occur, everyone should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively in accordance with our anti-bullying policy. We are a TELLING company. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

#### Aims and Objectives of this Policy

The aim of this policy is to try and prevent and deal with any behaviour deemed as bullying. The implementation of this policy will create an ethos where bullying is regarded as unacceptable so that a safe and secure environment is created for everyone to learn and work in. All members of the company have a responsibility to recognise bullying when it occurs and take appropriate action in accordance with the company policy. This will happen in the following ways:

Bowerbirdy will meet the legal requirement for all children's activity clubs to have an anti-bullying policy in place. Bowerbirdy will work closely with other professional agencies to ensure that children stay safe as stated in The Children Act 1989, The SEN and Disability Act 2001, The Government Green Paper 'Every Child Matters' 2003 (outcome 2) and The Children Act 2004.

All Managers, Team members, coaches and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents/guardians will have an understanding of what bullying is.

All Team leaders, teaching and non-teaching staff will know what Bowerbirdy's policy is on bullying and will consistently and swiftly follow it when bullying is reported.

All pupils and parents/guardians will know what Bowerbirdy's policy is on bullying and what they can do if bullying occurs. Pupils and parents/guardians will be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

Whole company initiatives, staff training, and proactive teaching strategies will be used throughout the activities to reduce the opportunities for bullying to occur.

A positive, caring ethos will be created within our coaching environment where everyone can work, play and express themselves, free from the fear of being bullied.

#### What Is Bullying?

Bowerbirdy has adopted the following collaborative definition of bullying which is our shared understanding of what bullying is:

Bullying is any deliberate, hurtful, upsetting, frightening or threatening behaviour by an individual or a group towards other people. It is repeated over a period of time and it is very difficult for the victims to defend themselves (remember STOP – it happens Several Times on Purpose). Bullying is mean and results in worry, fear, pain and distress to the victim's.

#### **Bullying can be:**

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures), ridicule, humiliation
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, making rude remarks, making fun of someone
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, throwing stones, biting, spitting, punching or any other forms of violence, taking or hiding someone's things
- Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, making fun of culture and religion
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive or sexist comments
- Homophobic because of/ or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Online/cyber setting up 'hate websites', sending offensive text messages, emails and abusing the victims via their mobile phones
- Any unfavourable or negative comments, gestures or actions made to someone relating to their disability or special educational needs.

#### **Bullying is not:**

It is important to understand that bullying is not the odd occasion of falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional trick or joke is played on someone. It is bullying if it is done several times on purpose (STOP). Children sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise it is not classed as bullying. It is an important part of children's development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns, the odd name calling or childish prank. We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships.

#### **Where does bullying happen?**

It can happen anywhere – During the activity, in the toilets, in the dining hall, in the playground. Bullying may also happen on the way to and from the activity. In such cases, the Team Leader is empowered by law to deal with such incidents but must do so in accordance with Bowerbirdy's policy.

At Bowerbirdy, we are concerned with our children's conduct and during our activities and we will do what we can to address any bullying issues that occur during these activities. The following steps may be taken:

- Talk to the local Community Police Officer about problems on the streets
- Talk to the transport companies about bullying on local buses
- Discuss coping strategies with parents
- Talk to the children about how to handle or avoid bullying outside the activity
- Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate, by different signs or behaviour, that he or she is being bullied.

Adults should be aware of these possible signs and investigate further if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go to play
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine/route to school
- begins truanting
- becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to under perform in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions go "missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money/snack/sandwiches have been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- starts swearing or using aggressive language for no apparent reason
- is bullying other children or siblings



- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be taken seriously and investigated as soon as possible.

### What can you do if you are being bullied?

Wherever you are, you have the right to feel safe. Nobody has the right to make you feel unhappy. If someone is bullying you, it is important to remember that it is not your fault and there are people who can help you.

Children from a local school were all asked this question and we have included some of their strategies in the list below:

- Try not to let the bully know that he/she is making you feel upset.
- Try to ignore them.
- Be assertive – stand up to them, look at them directly in the eye, tell them to stop and mean it.
- Stay in a group, bullies usually pick on individuals.
- Get away as quickly as you can.
- Tell someone you can trust – it can be a team leader, a team member, a parent, a friend, a brother, a sister or a relative.
- If you are scared, ask a friend to go with you when you tell someone.
- When you tell an adult about the bullying give them as many facts as you can (What? Who? Where? When? Why? How?).
- Keep a diary of what's been happening and refer to it when you tell someone.
- Keep on speaking out until someone listens and helps you.
- Never be afraid to do something about it and quick.
- Don't suffer in silence.
- Don't blame yourself for what is happening.
- Call a helpline.
- What can you do if you see someone else being bullied? (The role of the bystander)

Ignoring bullying is cowardly and unfair to the victim. Staying silent means the bully has won and gives them more power. There are ways you can help without putting yourself in danger. The children have also discussed this question in class and some of the strategies they suggested are listed below:

- Don't smile or laugh at the situation.
- Don't rush over and take the bully on yourself.
- Don't be made to join in.
- If safe to do so, encourage the bully to stop bullying.
- If you can, let the bully know you do not like his or her behaviour.
- Shout for help.
- Let the victim(s) know that you are going to get help.
- Tell a member of staff as soon as you can.
- Try and befriend the person being bullied.
- Encourage the person to talk to someone and get help.
- Ask someone you trust about what to do.
- If you don't feel you can talk to someone about it, write it down and post it in the 'Worry' box.
- Call a helpline for some advice.
- Bullying of children with Special Educational Needs

Wat's On is a Free Activity provided by Watford Borough Council. We provide a secure, accepting, safe and stimulating environment where everyone is valued for who they are.

We may have some children who have learning disabilities and/or communication difficulties. Everyone involved in the group is very aware that these children can be especially vulnerable to bullying and we are therefore particularly vigilant at all times.

High attainers, gifted or talented children can also be affected by bullying. Staff will treat this type of bullying as seriously and in the same way as any other type of bullying.

### Procedures for reporting and responding to bullying incidents

All staff will respond calmly and consistently to all allegations and incidents of bullying at Bowerbirdy. They will be taken seriously by all staff and dealt with impartially and promptly. All those involved will have the opportunity to be heard. Staff will protect and support all children involved whilst allegations and incidents are investigated and resolved.

The following step-by-step procedure will be used for reporting and responding to bullying allegations or incidents:



- Report all bullying allegations and incidents to staff.
- Staff will make sure the victim(s) is and feels safe.
- Appropriate advice will be given to help the victim(s).
- Staff will listen and speak to all children involved about the incident separately.
- The problem will be identified and possible solutions suggested.
- Staff will attempt to adopt a problem solving approach which will move children on from them having to justify their behaviour.
- Appropriate action will be taken quickly to end the bullying behaviour or threats of bullying.
- Staff will reinforce to the bully that their behaviour is unacceptable.
- The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place and appropriate sanctions applied (see next section).
- If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.
- An attempt will be made, and support given, to help the bully (bullies) understand and change his/her/their behaviour.
- In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by staff on the standard Incident Report Sheet. All reports will be kept in a file in the office.
- In serious cases parents will be informed and will be invited for a meeting to discuss the problem.
- After the incident has been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.
- Bullying incidents will be discussed regularly at team meetings.
- The anti-bullying Team Leader will present termly reports on serious bullying incidents to the Area Manager.
- If necessary and appropriate, the Child Protection Officer, Social Services or police will be consulted.

Whole Company initiatives and proactive teaching strategies will be used throughout Bowerbirdy to develop a positive learning environment with the aim of reducing the opportunities for bullying to occur.

#### These can include:

- Involving the whole school community in writing and reviewing the policy
- Undertaking regular questionnaires and surveys to monitor the extent of bullying in the school and the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy
- Producing a 'child speak' version of the policy for the children
- Each class agreeing on their own set of class rules
- Circle time on bullying issues
- Setting up of a circle of friends support network where a small group of children volunteer to help and support an individual experiencing difficulty
- Children being read stories about bullying
- Using drama activities and role-plays to help children be more assertive and teach them strategies to help them deal with bullying situations
- Introducing playground improvements and initiatives
- Training all children and young people to be Wat's On Pals
- Implementation of the Positive Play Programme
- Using praise and rewards to reinforce good behaviour
- Encouraging the whole activity lessons to model appropriate behaviour towards one another
- Organising regular anti-bullying training for all staff
- Monitoring and evaluation of the policy To ensure this policy is effective, it will be regularly monitored and evaluated.

Sources of further information, support and help There is a vast amount of information and guidance available about bullying that can provide a wide range of support and help. The following list is just a small selection of the support available that teachers, parents and children have found useful.

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Name of organisation	Telephone number	Website
Act Against Bullying	0845 230 2560	<a href="http://www.actagainstbullying.com">www.actagainstbullying.com</a>
Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)	0207 704 3370	<a href="http://www.ace-ed.org.uk">www.ace-ed.org.uk</a>
Anti-bully	not available	<a href="http://www.antibully.org.uk">www.antibully.org.uk</a>
Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA)	0207 843 1901	<a href="http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk">www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk</a>
Anti-bullying Network	0131 651 6103	<a href="http://www.antibullying.net">www.antibullying.net</a>
Beatbullying	0845 338 5060	<a href="http://www.beatbullying.org.uk">www.beatbullying.org.uk</a>
Bully Free Zone	01204 454 958	<a href="http://www.bullyfreezone.co.uk">www.bullyfreezone.co.uk</a>
Bullying Online	020 7378 1446	<a href="http://www.bullying.co.uk">www.bullying.co.uk</a>
Childline	0800 1111	<a href="http://www.childline.org.uk">www.childline.org.uk</a>
Kidscape	020 7730 3300 (general enquiry number) 08451 205 204 (adults only)	<a href="http://www.kidscape.org.uk">www.kidscape.org.uk</a> <a href="http://www.beyondbullying.com">www.beyondbullying.com</a>



NSPCC	0207 825 2500	<a href="http://www.nspcc.org.uk">www.nspcc.org.uk</a>
Parentline Plus	0808 800 2222	<a href="http://www.parentlineplus.org.uk">www.parentlineplus.org.uk</a>
The Children's Legal Centre	0800 783 2187	<a href="http://www.childrenslegalcentre.com">www.childrenslegalcentre.com</a>
The Office of the Children's Comm	0844 800 9113	<a href="http://www.childrenscommissioner.org.uk">www.childrenscommissioner.org.uk</a>
UK Government Website	not available	<a href="http://www.direct.gov.uk">www.direct.gov.uk</a>

NOTE: This Policy was approved by the following officer on 01/01/2026 and is due for review every 1 year:  
John-Paul White

