



Westgate Youth Project

Anti Bullying Policy

April 2022

Anti-Bullying Policy

A Framework for Westgate Youth Project

RATIONALE

Westgate Youth Project is completely opposed to bullying and will not tolerate it. It is entirely contrary to the values and principles we work and live by. All members of the Westgate Youth Project community have a right to work in a secure and caring environment. They also have a responsibility to contribute, in whatever way they can, to the protection and maintenance of such an environment.

MISSION STATEMENT

Westgate Youth Project is about supporting and encouraging all young people to...

- ...meet together in a secure environment
- ...have fun and learn
- ...form friendships
- ...take part in a wide range of activities and events
- ...have opportunities that aid personal development

Young people will be provided with the opportunity to gain the confidence and ability to face challenges in life, be involved in their community and help work towards a society that is caring and free.

PRINCIPLES

Westgate Youth Project actively promotes positive interpersonal relations between all members of Westgate Youth Project and the wider community.

- Young people have a right to learn free from intimidation and fear
- The needs of the victim are paramount
- Westgate Youth Project will not tolerate bullying behaviour
- Bullied young people will be listened to
- Reported incidents will be taken seriously and thoroughly investigated

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying is an act of aggression, causing embarrassment, pain or discomfort to someone. It can take a number of forms; physical, verbal, making gestures, extortion and exclusion. It is an abuse of power. It can be planned and organised, or it may be unintentional. It may be perpetrated by individuals or by groups of young people. Bullying can target an individual or a wider community group.

Definition of Cyber Bullying

Cyber bullying is used as an umbrella term to describe many different kinds of online abuse including but not limited to harassment, doxing, reputation attacks and revenge porn.

To constitute cyber bullying – the perpetrator uses technology such as computers, consoles, cell phones and/or any other device with access to the internet or social media to harass, stalk or abuse another person by instigating or participating in online hate campaigns. Although most media coverage indicates that cyber bullying is a problem exclusive to social media – it is also very problematic within the online gaming community.

FORMS OF BULLYING

Examples include:

- Physical violence such as hitting, pushing or spitting at another young person
- Interfering with another young person's property, by stealing, hiding or damaging it
- Using offensive names when addressing another young person
- Teasing or spreading rumours about another young person or his/her family
- Belittling another young person's abilities and achievements
- Writing offensive notes or graffiti about another young person
- Excluding another young person from a group activity
- Ridiculing another young person's appearance, way of speaking or personal mannerisms
- Misusing technology (internet or mobiles) to hurt or humiliate another person

Behaviour that is NOT bullying

Examples include:

- Accidentally bumping into someone
- A single act of telling a joke about someone
- Choosing different people or groups to play with from time to time
- An argument or a heated disagreement between two or more people (the pattern of which is not repeated to gain power)

Reasons why someone may be bullied:

There are a number of reasons why someone may be bullied. They include everything from personality differences to being in the wrong place at the wrong time. What's more, anyone can be a target of bullying.

Bullying is about a wrong choice the bully makes, not a perceived defect in the target. The responsibility for bullying always falls on the bully's shoulders, not the victim's.

Effects of bullying:

Bullying can affect everyone, those who are bullied, those who bully, and those who witness bullying. Bullying is linked to many negative outcomes including impacts on mental health, substance use, and suicide.

LINKS WITH OTHER WESTGATE YOUTH PROJECT POLICIES

Respect Contract; Equality and Diversity; Online Safety; Safeguarding

These documents can be found in the Westgate Youth Project policy & procedure folder at Westgate Community Centre, Lymington Road, Westgate on Sea, CT8 8ES.

They are also available to access via the WYP website:
www.westgateyouthproject.co.uk

RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL STAKEHOLDERS

The Responsibilities of Trustees

The management committee will:

- Support the staff team in all attempts to eliminate bullying within Westgate Youth Project
- Review the effectiveness of this policy on an annual basis
- A parent/carer who is dissatisfied with the way WYP has dealt with a bullying incident can ask the chair of trustees to look into the matter. The management committee responds within ten days to any request from a parent/carer to investigate incidents of bullying. In all cases, the governing body notifies the Youth Work Manager and asks her to conduct an investigation into the case, and to report back to a representative of the governing body.

The Responsibilities of Staff

Our staff will:

- Foster in our young people's self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others
- Demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our young people
- Discuss bullying with all, so that every young person learns about the damage it causes to both the young person who is bullied and to the bully, and the importance of telling an adult about bullying when it happens.
- Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying
- Listen to young people, who have been bullied, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them.
- Report suspected cases of bullying to the Youth Work Manager/Leader in Charge
- Follow up any complaint by a parent about bullying, and report back promptly and fully on the action which has been taken.
- Deal with observed instances of bullying promptly and effectively, in accordance with agreed procedures.

The Responsibilities of Young people

We expect our young people to:

- Refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity
- Intervene to protect the young person who is being bullied, unless it is unsafe to do so
- Report to a member of staff any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying, to dispel any climate of secrecy and help to prevent further instances

Anyone who becomes the target of bullies should:

- Not suffer in silence, but have the courage to speak out, to put an end to their own suffering and that of other potential targets

The Responsibilities of Parents and Carers

We ask our parents and carers to support their child/ward and Westgate Youth Project by:

- Watching for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their child/ward, which might be evidence of bullying
- Advising their child/ward to report any bullying to a member of the team. To explain the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for both themselves and for other young people.
- Advising their child/ward not to retaliate violently to any forms of bullying.
- Being sympathetic and supportive towards their child/ward, and reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken;
- Keep a written record of any reported instances of bullying
- Informing Westgate Youth Project of any suspected bullying, even if their child/ward is not involved;
- Co-operating with Westgate Youth Project, if their child/ward is accused of bullying, try to ascertain the truth. Point out the implications of bullying, both for the young person who is bullied and for the bullies themselves.

The Responsibilities of All

Everyone should:

- Work together to combat and, hopefully in time, eradicate bullying.

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

Within Westgate Youth Project:

- We follow a Respect Contract, detailing clear consequences for bullying behaviour, all young people agree to follow it alongside delivery of positive engagement programmes.
- We have procedures in place for managing poor behaviour, including clear boundaries, warnings, behaviour contracts and parental/carer involvement.
- Clear guidelines for recording and monitoring through safeguarding policy & procedures.

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH INCIDENTS OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

Steps taken to support and respond to the needs of both bullied and bullying young people:

- Records kept
- Action which may be taken
- Contacting parents/carers of all young people concerned in the bullying incident.
- Investigation.
- Feedback to those concerned.
- Sanctions such as behaviour contract

MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy is monitored and reviewed annually as part of the Westgate Youth Project safeguarding audit.

Signature of Chair of Committee:.....

Date:.....

Date of next review: