

## Anti Bullying Policy

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### 1. Introduction

Step into Learning (SIL) takes all incidents of bullying and harassment seriously and will always act to ensure that any bullying is dealt with promptly and effectively as possible. SIL is committed to keeping all students and Staff safe by providing an environment where that is a zero-tolerance culture to bullying behaviours.

Bullying in any form, is entirely contrary to the values and principles we work and live by; SIL believes that all members of the SIL community have a right to work in a secure and respectful environment. We all have a responsibility to contribute, in whatever way we can, to the protection and maintenance of such an environment. The aim of this anti-bullying policy is to ensure that all learners can learn in a supportive, caring, and safe environment without fear of being bullied.

"Bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals. It can be a barrier to their learning and have serious consequences for their mental health. Bullying which takes place at school does not only affect an individual during childhood but can have a lasting effect on their lives well into adulthood. By effectively preventing and tackling bullying, schools and colleges can help to create safe, disciplined



environments where pupils are able to learn and fulfil their potential." 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' DfE July 2017

This policy aims to ensure that:

- Bullying is not tolerated in any form; by anyone, on any SIL site; including off-site trips, visits, residential visits, within any SIL accommodation settings or in the workplace.
- The Trustees, Senior Leadership, teaching and non-teaching staff know what the procedures are and know when and how to report bullying.
- Learners and parents/guardians are assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

Step into learning will:

- Work to create a welcoming and safe environment for everyone
- Encourage the values of mutual respect and tolerance, in line with our wider SIL values.
- Model fair and respectful behaviour through leadership.
- Challenge all forms of prejudice and promote equality and diversity.
- Discourage young people from colluding with bullying.
- Consult with learners about bullying through our Learner Voice process.
- Make sure that learners and parents/guardians of Learners, know what SIL position is on bullying and know how to report any incidents or concerns.
- Respond to bullying incidents in a timely manner.
- Work to create change in the perpetrator of bullying behaviours, wherever possible.

Step into Learning adopts a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and will not tolerate bullying in any form. If bullying behaviour does occur, all learners and staff should be able to report their concerns easily and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and

effectively. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a member of the SIL staff or Safeguarding Team.

If a learner feels that they are being bullied by a member of SIL staff; then they should be directed the Designated Safeguarding Lead in the first instance.

## **2. Scope**

This policy applies to all learners and staff at Step into Learning and visitors to the centre and sites.

## **3. Definitions**

### **3.1 Harassment**

It is generally described as conduct or behaviour that is unwelcome, unwarranted and is detrimental to the well-being and self-esteem of the person affected.

### **3.2 Bullying**

"Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyberbullying via text messages, social media, or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences." 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' DfE July 2017

Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation



of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

### **How does bullying differ from banter?**

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

Banter is defined as 'the playful and friendly exchange of teasing remarks is seen as a form of bonding and humour.' However, banter can become a bullying activity when it is directed at an individual, is persistent and offensive to them. Low-level disruption and the use of offensive language can have a significant impact on its target. If left unchallenged or dismissed as banter or horseplay it can also lead to reluctance to report other behaviour.

Bullying can be:

#### **Emotional**

Being unfriendly, excluding someone, tormenting (e.g., threatening gestures, interfering with personal possessions), threatening language, persistent teasing, or harassment.

#### **Physical**

Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of physical violence.

#### **Racist and Religious**

Racist and Religious bullying can be defined as 'a range of hurtful behaviour, both physical and psychological, that makes a person feel unwelcome, excluded, powerless or worthless because of their colour, ethnicity, culture, faith community, national origin or national status'

#### **Sexual**

Sexual bullying includes any behaviour, whether physical or non-physical, where sexuality is used as a weapon. It includes unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.

### **Transphobic**

Transphobic bullying refers to bullying because someone is or is thought to be transgender.

### **Homophobic**

Homophobic bullying targets someone because of their sexual orientation (or perceived sexual orientation).

### **Verbal**

Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, and graffiti.

### **Cyber**

All areas of internet, such as social networking, email, and chat room misuse. Threats/abuse by text messaging or calls from any mobile device. Misuse of associated technology i.e. phones, tablet, camera, video...

### **Disablist**

Bullying involving young people with disabilities employs many of the same forms as other types of bullying, with name calling and pushing and shoving being common.

This is not a definitive list of behaviours but identifies some of the key aspects we understand as bullying type behaviours.

## **4. Policy Statement**

Everyone in Step into Learning has a responsibility to report and deal with bullying.

This leadership role includes responsibility for:

- Responding to bullying incidents
- Maintaining the policy
- Delivering or arranging training for staff and learners
- Ensuring that records are kept and that data on bullying incidents is collected and held securely.
- Reporting to the Trustees and the Safeguarding Team on bullying data
- Linking with partners and multi-agency groups where appropriate

#### **4.1 How to Respond to Bullying**

When bullying does occur, a clear consistent response is essential. The goals of any intervention should always be the same, no matter who is dealing with the incident. The aims should be to:

- Take the victim/alleged victim safe
- Stop the bullying immediately
- Change bullying behaviours in individuals and groups
- Make clear to every learner that bullying is unacceptable at Step into Learning
- Reinforce the anti-bullying message through curriculum, activities, events and campaigns

#### **4.2 Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?**

- Step into Learning has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to all issues of bullying.
- Bullying hurts and has long term consequences for the victim and for the bully.
- Everybody has the right to be treated with respect and no one deserves to be a victim of bullying.
- Learners who are bullying others need to learn different ways of behaving.

#### **4.3 Signs that Bullying may/is taking place.**

All employees should be aware and alert to possible signs which could include an individual:

- Being frightened of walking to or from training centres
- Not wanting to go on their usual mode of transport
- Changing their usual routine
- Being unwilling to go to home.
- Unwilling to attend training.
- Having a poor attendance record or showing changes to a usually good attendance record.
- Becoming withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- Self-harming behaviours
- Talking about feeling suicidal or attempting suicide

- Running away/going missing
- Having difficulty sleeping
- Showing signs that their work is suffering.
- Having personal possessions damaged or being taken/go missing.
- Having unexplained physical injuries
- Becoming aggressive, disruptive, or unreasonable
- Bullying other students
- Showing changes in their eating habits
- Being frightened to say what's wrong.
- Giving improbable excuses for any of the above
- Being afraid to use the internet or mobile phone.
- Being nervous or jumpy when a cyber/digital message is received.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other safeguarding concerns, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two young people of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of young people sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child/young person or group of children/young people.

Children/young people who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, likely, adversely affect their educational attainment. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable. It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support.

Step into Learning is aware the importance of:

- Making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;

- Not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as "banter," "part of growing up," "just having a laugh" or "boys being boys".
- Challenging behaviour (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia and flicking bras and lifting skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them
- Understanding that all of the above can be driven by wider societal factors beyond Step into Learning, such as everyday sexist stereotypes and everyday sexist language.

Consideration must always be given when investigating bullying concerns around sexual violence and harassment. Any allegation or concern must be taken seriously and reported to the Safeguarding Team through the CPOMS system where it will be checked, recorded and dealt with appropriately.

#### **4.4 Monitoring, Review and Evaluation**

Anti bullying report are submitted directly onto CPOMS, where the safeguarding team will review, monitored and evaluation.

This policy will be reviewed every year by safeguarding and senior management.

## **5. Resources**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>

<https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2022/11/18/what-we-are-doing-to-help-combat-bullying-in-education/>

<https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/bullying-and-law/what-does-law-say-about-bullying>