

Anti-Bullying Policy

Version 4

Version Control				
Version	Date	Content	Manager Approved	Board Approved
V1	Apr 2020	General review and update	G Phillips	M Howlett
V2	Nov 2022	General review and update	G Phillips	M Howlett
V3	Jul 2025	Policy rewritten (new policy)	G Phillips	M Howlett
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1. Purpose

Cheshire Young Carers believes that every child, young person, volunteer, employee and trustee has the right to be treated with dignity, respect and kindness.

We are committed to providing a safe, inclusive and supportive environment in which bullying is not tolerated.

As an organisation supporting vulnerable children and young people, we recognise that bullying can have a serious impact on emotional wellbeing, confidence, mental health and personal development. We are committed to preventing bullying wherever possible and responding promptly and appropriately whenever concerns arise.

This policy should be read alongside the charity's Safeguarding Policy, as some bullying behaviour may amount to emotional abuse or present wider safeguarding concerns.

We recognise that many of the children and families we support may already have experienced adversity or trauma. Our approach is therefore child-centred, trauma-informed and focused on helping children feel safe, develop positive relationships and build confidence.

Bullying has no place within our charity, and everyone shares responsibility for creating a culture where children and young people can thrive free from fear, intimidation or discrimination.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Children and young people accessing our services.
- Parents, carers and families where appropriate.
- Trustees.
- Employees.
- Volunteers.
- Contractors.
- Visitors attending charity activities.
- Anyone representing the charity.

It applies to:

- face-to-face activities;
- online activities;
- telephone and video communications;
- social media connected with charity activities;
- events organised by the charity;
- any location where charity activities take place.

3. Our Commitment

We are committed to creating an environment where everyone:

- feels safe;
- is treated with dignity and respect;
- feels listened to;
- is valued regardless of their background;
- can raise concerns without fear of retaliation.

We believe that everyone shares responsibility for preventing bullying.

4. What is Bullying?

Bullying is behaviour that is intended to hurt, intimidate, threaten, humiliate or exclude another person. It is usually repeated over time but may also involve a serious one-off incident that causes significant harm.

Bullying may be carried out by one person or a group.

5. Types of Bullying

Bullying may include:

Verbal bullying

- name-calling;
- insults;
- teasing;
- threats;
- offensive remarks.

Physical bullying

- hitting;
- kicking;
- pushing;
- damaging belongings;
- intimidating physical behaviour.

Emotional or Psychological Bullying

- excluding someone;
- humiliation;
- spreading rumours;
- manipulation;
- intimidation

Online (Cyberbullying)

- abusive messages;
- social media harassment;
- sharing embarrassing images;
- impersonation;
- exclusion from online groups.

Discriminatory Bullying

Bullying relating to:

- disability;
- race or ethnicity;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation;
- gender reassignment;
- age;
- pregnancy or maternity;
- any other protected characteristic.

Discriminatory bullying is treated particularly seriously.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Trustees

Trustees will:

- approve this policy;
- promote a culture of respect;
- ensure appropriate safeguarding arrangements;
- review serious incidents.

Managers

Managers will:

- promote positive behaviour;
- respond promptly to concerns;
- support staff and volunteers;
- ensure concerns are recorded appropriately.

Staff and Volunteers

Everyone working for the charity must:

- treat others respectfully;
- challenge inappropriate behaviour where safe to do so;
- report concerns promptly;
- model positive behaviour;
- support children experiencing bullying.

7. Expectations of Behaviour

Everyone involved with the charity is expected to:

- be respectful;
- be inclusive;
- value differences;
- listen to others;
- resolve disagreements calmly;
- use appropriate language;
- avoid behaviour that could intimidate or exclude others.

Bullying, harassment and victimisation will not be tolerated.

8. Working with Vulnerable Children

Children who have experienced trauma, abuse or neglect may be particularly vulnerable to bullying or may display behaviours linked to their experiences.

Staff and volunteers should:

- respond calmly and fairly;
- avoid labelling children;
- consider underlying needs;
- consider family circumstances where appropriate;
- promote restorative approaches where appropriate;
- always prioritise safeguarding.

Support should be tailored to the child's age, understanding and individual needs.

9. Recognising Bullying

Possible indicators include:

- withdrawal;
- anxiety;
- unexplained injuries;
- damaged belongings;
- reluctance to attend activities;
- changes in behaviour;
- loss of confidence;
- emotional distress.

These signs do not always indicate bullying but should be explored sensitively.

10. Reporting Concerns

Anyone who experiences or witnesses bullying should report it as soon as possible.

Reports may be made to:

- a member of staff;
- a volunteer supervisor;
- the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- a manager.

Children should be reassured that they will be listened to and taken seriously.

11. Responding to Bullying

When concerns are raised, the charity will:

- listen carefully and take the needs into consideration of the person being bullied;
- listen carefully and take the needs into consideration of the person displaying bullying;
- respond to all parties involved in the bullying incident, including bystanders/witnesses and the organisation as a whole;
- record concerns;
- assess any safeguarding risks;
- speak to those involved where appropriate;
- take proportionate action;
- support those affected;
- monitor outcomes.

Every situation will be considered individually, and every reported incident of bullying will be investigated. Our aim will always be to try and find a positive way forward for all concerned.

12. Safeguarding

Some bullying behaviour may amount to emotional abuse or indicate wider safeguarding concerns.

Where appropriate:

- safeguarding procedures will be followed;
- referrals may be made to statutory agencies;
- parents or carers may be informed where appropriate and safe;
- external agencies may be involved.

Safeguarding always takes priority.

13. Online Safety

The charity recognises that bullying can occur online.

Staff and volunteers should:

- promote safe online behaviour;
- report online abuse connected to charity activities;
- avoid communicating with children through personal social media accounts;
- follow the charity's Acceptable Use of IT Policy.

Children should be encouraged to tell a trusted adult if they experience online bullying.

14. Confidentiality

- Information relating to bullying concerns will be handled sensitively.
- Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis and in accordance with safeguarding and data protection requirements.
- Absolute confidentiality cannot be promised where someone's safety is at risk.

15. Support

Support may include:

- listening and reassurance;
- pastoral support;
- involving parents or carers where appropriate;
- behaviour support;
- referrals to specialist services if required;
- restorative conversations where suitable.

The needs of all children involved will be considered.

16. False or Malicious Allegations

- All concerns will be taken seriously.
- Where it is established that a complaint has been made deliberately to cause harm, appropriate action may be taken.
- However, children and adults who raise concerns in good faith will always be supported.

17. Training

Staff and volunteers will receive appropriate training covering:

- recognising bullying;
- safeguarding responsibilities;
- responding to disclosures;
- equality, diversity and inclusion;
- online safety;
- recording concerns.

18. Monitoring

- The charity will monitor bullying concerns to identify patterns, emerging risks and opportunities to improve practice.
- Lessons learned will be used to strengthen prevention measures.

19. Policy Review

The Board of Trustees will review this policy annually or sooner if:

- safeguarding guidance changes;
- legislation changes;
- significant incidents occur;
- organisational needs change.

Anti-Bullying Code

Everyone involved with the charity is expected to:

- Be kind.
- Be respectful.
- Include others.
- Listen to each other.
- Celebrate differences.
- Speak up if bullying happens.
- Support anyone who is being bullied.
- Treat everyone fairly.
- Help create a safe environment.