

Anti Bullying Policy

The aim of this policy is to provide procedures and practical guidance for all ACE programme employees, volunteers, and other professionals and or partners working alongside the programme to safeguard children and young people.

Introduction

ACE programme is committed to providing a caring, friendly, inclusive and safe environment for all our participants so that they can train and participate in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable. If bullying does occur, all participants should be able to tell and know that incidents will be taken seriously and dealt with promptly and effectively. We encourage a culture of telling. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the Staff.

Objectives of this policy

- All Staff should know what the programmes policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported
- All participants and parents/carers should know what the programmes policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises
- ACE takes bullying seriously so participants and parent/carers can be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated in the ACE programme

Definition of bullying

Bullying is defined as the repetitive, intentional harming of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

- Deliberately harmful
- Repeated, often over a period of time
- Difficult to defend against

Types of bullying

- Emotional, being unfriendly, deliberately excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding kit, threatening gestures)
- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Prejudicial – sexuality/race/religion/disability
- Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber: All areas of internet, such as email and internet chat room misuse. Mobile threats by text messaging and calls. Misuse of sociated technology, i.e., camera and video facilities

Why is it important to respond to bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Participants who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving and may also be a victim.

The programme has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to instances of bullying affecting any participant at ACE.

Our approach centres on prevention. There are core principles and expectations of respectful behaviour for all participants. Participants and staff are encouraged and expected to show respect to others and to be treated with respect. Levels of adult supervision, training and a culture that bullying is not tolerated mean that all staff are aware of different forms of bullying and their responsibility to act upon it.

Signs and symptoms

Participants may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- Says they are being bullied
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to attend the programme
- Becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- Comes home with clothes torn or belongings damaged
- Has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- Has unexplained injuries (possible self-harm)
- Mood swings, defensiveness or periods of low mood, depression

In more extreme cases, the child might:

- Start stammering
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Begins bullying other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Attempts or threatens suicide, self-harm or runs away

Whilst any of these symptoms may be because of bullying, it may be because of something else that is troubling the child. It is important to discuss concerns with a child to find out what the problem is.

1. Listen to participants who raise concerns, take these seriously, without judgement and follow these up by further investigation
2. Record and Report bullying incidents to the Safeguarding Officer promptly
3. Parents should be informed and will be asked to come into a meeting to discuss the problem
4. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated, and the bullying stopped quickly
5. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted- for example if there has been an assault, harassment, or theft
6. Any victims will be supported and where necessary signposted to further help and intervention
7. An attempt will be made to support the bully (bullies) change their behaviour to prevent further incidents
8. Staff will be kept up to date with policy and procedures for dealing with behaviour and bullying incidents

In cases of adults reported to be bullying children (Remember Under the Child Act 2004 a child is a person under the age of 18 years) or a young person the director of programmes must immediately be informed and will advise on action to be taken.

Prevention

- All participants, parents/carers are made aware of the code of conduct which will be introduced during their induction
- Providing a copy of the behaviour policy and anti-bullying policy

Email: Safeguarding@aceprogramme.com

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/support-for-parents/dealing-with-bullying/>

<https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/advice-and-support>

Policy updated by the Safeguarding lead Georgina Mackenzie November 2025