

Our anti-bullying policy for young people

Statement

We want to provide an environment in which our young people can be safe and thrive, free from all types of bullying. We take this issue very seriously and never allow any type of bullying. Everyone is responsible for reporting bullying, and we want everyone to bring issues to us to be dealt with.

What is bullying?

We say that bullying is: *“Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally, whether intentionally or not.”*

Types of bullying

- **Emotional** – such as being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding property, threatening gestures)
- **Physical** – pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence, including play fighting
- **Racist** – racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- **Identity** – abuse based on issues of identity such as gender, transitioning, beliefs or being part of a particular community
- **Disability** – comments about physical disabilities, learning difficulties or conditions affecting how we process information or relate to other people socially
- **Sexual** – unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- **Homophobic** – because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- **Verbal** – name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- **Cyber** – any bullying using phone, internet or similar, such as email and online messaging; mobile phone threats by calls or messaging; sexting; any misuse of associated technology, e.g. camera and video.

Who does this apply to?

All young people of any age at Mentoring Plus have to follow our anti-bullying policy with everyone they meet, both adults and other young people. Adults also have codes of conduct which make sure they avoid all of these behaviours and treat you with respect.

Where does this apply?

This policy applies everywhere. It is in place when you are part of any type of group activity with Mentoring Plus, when you go on trips with Mentoring Plus including residentials, when you are being transported, when you are with your mentor, when you visit our office or go to another venue with Mentoring Plus. There is no area where this policy does not apply.

What disciplinary action will happen?

All breaches of this policy will be taken very seriously. If there is any bullying during a session, the member of staff can immediately remove people from the session or even terminate it.

We have a four-step process for dealing with bullying as outlined below. At each stage, it will be clearly explained to you and anyone else involved:

- the specific behaviours that are of concern
- the potential impact of these actions
- the next stage of action that will be taken by staff if these behaviours continue.

If the bullying is serious, staff can move to stage 2 or 3 of the process immediately.

1. A verbal warning – no further record required
2. An official verbal warning – to be recorded on their file
3. Final warning and removal from the activity. This will be followed up with a written letter detailing concerns.
4. If the bullying is very serious or happens more than once, staff may follow up with a behaviour review meeting. This is a meeting with the young person, the relevant Practitioner, and their mentor (if appropriate). This will be to discuss the next steps which may include suspension or termination of support from the charity.

Review date: September 2025

Next review due: September 2026