



Policy Reviewed:	April 2026
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Anti Bullying Policy

This policy has regard to DfE Guidance - *Prevention and Tackling Bullying 2017*

At Plan B, our activities and community is based upon respect, good manners and fair play. We are committed to providing a safe and caring environment that is free from disruption, violence and any form of harassment so that every one of our pupils can develop his/her full potential. We expect our pupils to treat members of staff with courtesy and co-operation so that they can learn in a relaxed, but orderly, atmosphere. All pupils should care for and support each other.

Parents/carers have an important role in supporting Plan B in maintaining high standards of behaviour. It is essential that our workshop and class activities and homes have consistent expectations of behaviour and that they cooperate closely together. Acceptance of this policy forms part of our standard terms and conditions.

Bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination will not be tolerated. We treat all our pupils and their parents/carers fairly and with consideration and we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff and the school. Any kind of bullying is unacceptable. Where necessary, we will apply the sanctions described in our Level of Misconduct for behaviour that constitutes bullying or harassment of any kind.

This anti-bullying policy is designed to be clear, practicable and sensible. The aim is to prevent bullying and to deal effectively with bullying if it does occur.

We shall do this by:

- maintaining an environment characterised by warmth, positive regard and mutual respect, so that bullying will be less likely
- raising awareness of bullying through the sessions and other activities
- having a clear Behaviour Policy, and Rules for participants
- developing effective strategies for recognising and supporting victims of bullying and for recognising and dealing with bullies;
- ensuring that all staff, trainees and volunteers know what to do if they come across bullying, that they treat incidents seriously and that they are consistent in their approach;
- assuring parents/carers and pupils that all reports of bullying will be treated seriously.



DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying can mean different things to different people and takes different forms, but two major elements are that:

- bullying is persistent behaviour, repeated over time which intimidates individuals or groups through verbal, emotional or physical aggression.
- bullying is the wilful, conscious desire to intentionally hurt, threaten or frighten someone else.

Bullying may be defined as the intentional hurting, harming or humiliating of another person. It can take the form of racial, religious, cultural, sexual, sexist, homophobic or special educational needs / disability related bullying. It may occur directly through physical (including sexual) contact or intimidation, verbal comments and emotional means (by excluding, tormenting or spreading malicious rumours). It can also occur indirectly through cyber-technology (social websites and chat rooms, email, e-photos, mobile phones and text/SMS messages) and emotional means (by excluding, tormenting or spreading malicious rumours). It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It can involve complicity that falls short of direct participation. Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and intimidatory.

Bullying may involve actions or comments that are racist, homophobic, which focus on special education needs and/or disabilities, health condition, home circumstances and their culture or other physical attributes (such as hair colour or body shape).

Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time. It can cause serious and lasting psychological damage and even suicide. Harassment and threatening behaviour are criminal offences. We always treat bullying incidents seriously.

SIGNS OF BULLYING

Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is being bullied include:

- Unwillingness to return to the activities
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually bad work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others
- Bags and other belongings suddenly go missing, or are damaged
- Change to established habits (e.g. change to accent or vocabulary)
- Psychological damage and diminished levels of self confidence
- Frequent visits to a Medical Centre or practitioner with symptoms such as stomach pains, headaches
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to workshop
- Choosing the company of adults
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact
- Difficulty in sleeping, experiences nightmares
- Talking of suicide or running away

Although there may be other causes for some of the above symptoms, a repetition of, or a combination of these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents and teachers.



RECOGNISING THOSE WHO MAY BE VULNERABLE TO BULLYING

Bullies usually pick on vulnerable pupils. Vulnerability is not always visible to adults and the victim may look and behave like any other pupil. Recognition is made more difficult as some victims are 'passive' whilst others are 'active'. Even though it is not always easy, teachers should try to identify those who might be vulnerable.

Pupils vulnerable to bullying may be:

- new to the activities or to Plan B
- different in appearance, speech or background from other pupils
- suffer from low self-esteem, whether as cause or effect of bullying
- nervous, anxious, insecure – tend to be sensitive and quiet
- younger and weaker than the rest of the peer group – less likely to retaliate
- isolated, lonely or 'loners' – sometimes 'only children' with minimal experience of socialising and who are close to their parents
- appear or have in the past been powerful, aggressive, provocative and disturbed: these are 'active' victims
- evidently more academically able than others

RECOGNISING THOSE WHO MAY BE POTENTIAL BULLIES

Identification of the 'typical' bully is difficult as the background, nature, motivation and actions of bullies can vary considerably. Those who act aggressively and overtly are obviously easier to identify as bullies than those who are subtler and covert in their actions.

Staff, trainees and volunteers must use their experience, training and professional judgement in recognising a bully, who may exhibit the following characteristics:

- is aggressive to peers, teachers, parents and siblings
- likes to dominate, calls out, shows off
- has a positive attitude to violence and exhibits anti-social behaviour
- uses abusive or inappropriate language

Staff, trainees and volunteers should understand that such behaviour often masks academic or other inadequacies, insecurity, humiliation, the effects of being bullied themselves and other emotional and family problems. Alternatively, such pupils may be academically clever, confident, arrogant, undisciplined at home and spoilt.



PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

Plan B takes the following preventative measures:

- The appropriate meetings and induction sessions to explain the school policy on bullying. Our programmes are structured to enforce the message about community involvement and taking care of each other. It specifically tells participants whom they should inform if they are being bullied or are worried that another participant is being bullied.
- Some activities cover the issue of bullying and teach moral and spiritual values that show bullying to be unacceptable and develop social skills.
- All our participants are told to tell a member of the teaching staff if they know that bullying is taking place. Every member of staff is trained on how to respond to such allegations as part of their induction training.
- All reported incidents are recorded and investigated at once. We always monitor reported incidents. Records of bullying are kept enabling any possible patterns to be identified.
- Plan B has a strong Senior Management Team who are trained in handling any incidents as an immediate priority and are alert to possible signs of bullying.
- Our staff provide support and guidance to other staff on handling and reporting incidents, and on the follow-up work with both victims and bullies.
- Our staff can provide advice and counselling support to pupils who can refer themselves to them when they have social, emotional or behavioural concerns, or be referred to them by the pastoral team. Plan B can provide advice on where participants can seek help, including details of confidential helplines and websites connecting to external specialists, such as Childline, NSPCC and the Samaritans. All participants can have access to a telephone enabling them to call for support in private.
- Staff are trained to be alert to inappropriate language or behaviour.
- Plan B provides leadership training which specifically covers the importance of offering support and assistance to vulnerable participants.
- Plan B reserves the right to investigate incidents that take place outside activity hours, on visits and trips involving our pupils
- Plan B welcomes feedback from parents and guardians on the effectiveness of our preventative measures.

CYBERBULLYING – DEFINITION

Mr Bill Belsey, the creator of the web site: <http://www.cyberbullying.org/> defined this unpleasant phenomenon in the following terms:

“Cyberbullying involves the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others.”

Cyberbullying can involve Social Networking Sites, like Instagram, Facebook and Snapchat, emails, and mobile phones, used for both SMS messages and as cameras.

CYBERBULLYING – PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

In addition to the preventative measures described for the prevention of bullying above, Plan B seeks to prevent cyberbullying through the following measures:



An alternative approach to education

- All participants using the projects computers must read and agree to Plan B's Computing Policy
- All participants are expected to adhere to its charter for the safe use of the internet. Certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and staff will monitor participants' use.
- Plan B may impose sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse of the internet.
- The use of cameras on mobile phones is not allowed without prior permission.

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH REPORTED BULLYING

Reports of bullying will always be taken seriously. Staff will listen to parents/carers or participants and assure them that matters will be investigated fully and will take appropriate action. Parents/carers and participants will be informed of the outcome. Parents/carers are assured that reporting any incident will not aggravate the situation, and that no significant action can be taken unless the perpetrator is named.

If an incident of bullying is reported, the following procedures are adopted:

- The member of staff to whom it was reported or who first discovers the situation, will seek to control the situation and reassure and support the pupils involved.
- He/she will inform an appropriate member of the Senior Management Team
- The participant affected will be interviewed on his/her own and asked to write an account of events or have one written for them by the member of staff dealing with the matter, in the case of younger children.
- The alleged bully, together with all others who were involved, will be interviewed individually, and asked to write an immediate account of events or have one written for them by the member of staff dealing with the matter, in the case of younger children.
- Records of the incident(s) will be kept.
- The alleged bully will be seen at a later stage by a member of the DSL team, and it will be made clear why his/her behaviour was inappropriate and caused distress. He/she will be offered guidance on modifying his or her behaviour, together with any appropriate disciplinary sanctions.
- The parents/guardians of all parties should be informed. In serious cases parents/guardians will be invited into Plan B to discuss the matter, and a way forward, including disciplinary sanctions and appropriate counselling, should be agreed. A meeting might also be held involving all the parties, with close staff supervision, to help develop a strategy for all concerned to close the episode.
- In very serious and persistent cases, strong sanctions may be necessary such as exclusion, and in such cases, it may also be necessary to make a report to the Police or to the Social Services.

RAISING AWARENESS OF BULLYING

Participants:

Need to be made aware that Plan B disapproves of bullying and will not tolerate it, that victims will be supported and that bullies will be punished. Initial class groupings will consider any previous recommendations so that participants are placed in groups which are likely to prove supportive.

Staff:

Staff should be especially vigilant when supervising break times, and lunch times, carrying out patrols, walking to and from activities and off-site visits. Staff at Plan B will also be actively encouraged to increase their awareness of bullying and their expertise in dealing with incidents.

- All Staff will be made aware of the need for special vigilance when supervising pupils on an outing, whether for the day or overnight, ensuring that rooming plans chosen by pupils are not used to isolate individuals.
- The Senior management team will pass on any advice received from professional bodies to the staff,



trainees and volunteers.

Parents/carers:

The management of the projects and activities and the degree of cooperation and communication between home and Plan B must be such that parents do not worry about their sons and daughters being bullied at Plan B. Parents/carers must feel confident that Plan B staff, volunteers and trustees will listen, take their concerns seriously and act against aggressive, bullying participants: they must feel confident that any victims will be supported and that effective strategies are in place to try to prevent and to deal with instances of bullying. Parental awareness will be raised through:

- Informing them of the existence of the anti-bullying policy and making it available to them.
- Talking to the parents of new pupils at the appropriate new parents meeting about lines of communication and assuring them that any concerns will be taken seriously.
- Reminding parents/carers that bullying is not acceptable at Plan B.
- Communication and co-operation with parents of both bullies and those affected by bullying discussing what they can do at home to prompt new behaviour in the bully and to build self-confidence in the victim.