

**NEW GENERATION CHURCH**

**Anti-Bullying Policy (children and young people)**

Updated March 2021

Review date March 2022

**Definition of bullying**

The Anti-Bullying Alliance defines bullying as:

*The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can* happen *face to face or through cyber space.*

 Children can bully each other, be bullied by adults and can sometimes bully adults. Any form of bullying results in pain and distress to the victim and is unacceptable behaviour within this organisation. Some common forms of bullying can be:

* Verbal -name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing including via emails or test messaging
* Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, graffiti, gestures, racial taunts
* Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
* Sexual - sexually abusive comments or gestures
* Racial - any of the above because of, or focusing on the issue of racial differences
* Homophobic - any of the above because of, or focusing on the issue of sexual orientation
* Unofficial activities such as initiation ceremonies and practical jokes which may cause children physical or emotional harm even though this may not be intended

There will be a known zero tolerance to bullying, so if it does occur, children and leaders will be able to report the matter and it can be dealt with promptly and effectively. There will be an expectation that anyone who knows that bullying is happening will report it.

Whilst the child being bullied needs protection, the person/people doing it need to address the reasons for their behaviour and be encouraged to relate to others in more positive ways. .

All children, workers, parents and carers should be aware of the anti-bullying policy and what they should do if bullying arises

All workers should have an understanding of what bullying is, be aware of possible signs if it is happening and follow the policy when it is reported

Children and parents/carers should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported

**Prevention**

Strategies can be adopted to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

* Writing a set of group rules
* Signing a behaviour contract
* Having discussions about bullying and why it matters

**Procedures**

Report the bullying incident to children’s/youth leaders

Ensure that details are carefully checked before action is taken

In all cases of bullying, the incidents should be recorded by the worker

Consideration should be given to informing the parents/carers of the bully, but this should only be done if workers are satisfied there is no bullying/abuse going on at home that might exacerbate the situation

If it is thought that an offence has been committed, consideration should be given to contacting the police

The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and stopped quickly

Help should be offered to help the bully address his/her behaviour

**Outcomes**

The children’s worker involved in dealing with the incident should issue a warning to the child concerned

An apology should be given by the child who has bullied another

If possible, those involved will be reconciled

After the incident has been investigated and dealt with, the situation should be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place

After the incident(s) have been investigated parents/carers should be informed of the action taken

All incidents must be recorded in the log book

**Useful sources:**

*Helpline services* : HSE InfoLine - 0845 345 0055; BullyingUK: 0808 800 2222

*Websites*: [Anti-Bullying Alliance](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/resources/what-is-bullying/) & [Bullying Intervention Group](http://www.bullyinginterventiongroup.co.uk/index.php)

**Cyberbullying**

These days bullying doesn’t just happen in the playground. Cyberbullying – or bullying via digital technologies like mobile phones and computers – is a different threat to children.  It can be harder to spot and more difficult to stop than ‘traditional’ bullying, but understanding the dangers can help keep children safe.

What's different about Cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is different to other forms of bullying because:

* it can occur anytime, anywhere – the victim can even receive bullying messages or materials at home
* the audience to the bullying can be large and reached very quickly and easily if messages are passed around or things are posted online
* it can be unintentional – people may not think about the consequences of sending messages or images

**Characteristics of Cyber Bullying**

Anonymous – cyber abusers can use the internet using pseudonyms

Accessibility  - cyber bullies can approach their victims at any time

Loss of inhibition – the anonymity of the internet can encourage cyber bullies to commit acts which they might otherwise not do in person.

**Ways of Cyberbullying**

The most common ways of cyberbullying are through:

* **Video chat apps, chat rooms, blogs and forums** – although many of these are moderated, people involved in discussions can be sent abusive responses
* **text messaging** – abusive and threatening texts can be sent to mobile phones
* **abusive or prank phone calls** – these can be made to a child’s mobile phone
* **picture and video clip messaging** – offensive images can be sent to mobile phones
* e**mail** – new addresses can be set up in minutes and used to send offensive messages and images
* **social networking and messaging apps** – offensive or humiliating messages and images can be posted on these sites
* **identity theft** – in many cyber environments fake profiles can be set up pretending to be someone else with the aim of bullying others
* **instant message services** – quicker than email, these allow users to have 'real time' conversations, and offensive messages or content can be sent in this way
* **webcams** – usually used to view each other when chatting online, children can also be sent abusive images or encouraged to act in an inappropriate way while being filmed
* **video chat apps** – children may find themselves the subject of films being shown (e.g. what is wrongly called ‘happy slapping’) or be accidentally exposed to pornographic images
* **gaming sites, consoles and virtual worlds** – chatting is possible within many games, and name-calling, abusive remarks and picking on particular players can occur

**Protecting children from Cyberbullying**

As with other types of bullying it’s important for you to listen to children and react with sympathy. You should let children know that bullying is always wrong and that seeking help is the right thing to do.

It’s important for them to learn to respect and look after their friends online and to think before they post or text. To help keep children safe you can:

encourage them to talk to you or another adult about anything that’s upsetting them

watch out for them seeming upset after using the internet or their mobile phone

try to understand the ways in which they are using their digital technologies

ask them to think about how their actions affect other users

suggest that they only use moderated chat rooms

encourage them to show you any abusive or offensive emails or messages they’ve received and keep a record of them

help them report any abuse to their  internet service provider, the website manager/moderator, the mobile phone company or the police

tell them never to respond to any abusive messages or calls – this is frequently what the abuser wants

discuss keeping their passwords safe and avoiding giving their name, email address or mobile phone number to people outside their circle of friends and family

change email address or telephone number if the abuse continues

turn on in-built internet safety features and install computer software to ensure that you only receive emails from people you have chosen and to block unwanted images

tell them about places where they can go for help and support like ChildLine, CEOP’s ThinkuKnow and Childnet International, Bullying UK.