

3E: Preventing Bullying Policy

Reviewed: Senior Management Team, April 2017 (Annually)

Ratified by Board: 16/05/2017

Full Review date: April 2018

EDI Check – May/Nov 2017 (MD)

This policy relates to bullying where students are involved only. There is an alternative Bullying and Harassment Policy to address incidents amongst staff (see Staff Handbook).

Introduction

At The Sheiling Ringwood, we believe that ‘Everyone has the right to learn and work in an environment free from harassment and discrimination, where they feel safe.’

Any behaviour where one individual ‘takes steps’ to hurt, to threaten, or to frighten another person, where the incidents are repeated and occur over a period of time is considered to be bullying behaviour.

As responsible people, we have a duty to be alert to occasions where a student may be at the receiving end of bullying behaviour and, should this arise, pay due diligence to the procedures below.

Bullying is defined as abusive, offensive, malicious, intimidating or insulting behaviour, abuse of power or unfair penal sanctions, which make the recipient feel upset, threatened, humiliated or vulnerable or which undermines their self-confidence. Bullying can take place either in person or by alternative means e.g. cyber bullying. It can be ostracizing or excluding of an individual.

Bullying can take many forms but there are three main types:

1. **Physical** - hitting, kicking, mimicking, pulling faces and taking belongings
2. **Verbal /written** – name-calling, teasing, taunting, insulting, making offensive remarks, cyber bullying (see E-safety Policy)
3. **Indirect** - being ostracised by a peer group, provocation, being picked on and forcing someone to act against their will.

Bullying can be seen as an exploitation of an inequality of power. Bullies are often motivated by getting their own way, having an experience of controlling and may get pleasure from other people’s pain, fear and humiliation.

In cases of bullying, it is difficult for the victim to defend themselves.

Bullying by staff

At The Sheiling Ringwood, we are committed to promoting an environment free from bullying in which all staff and students feel comfortable and where each individual is treated with respect and dignity, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, transgender status, marital or family status, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins, creed, culture, religion or belief, age, disability or any other personal factor or quality. As such, we will not tolerate bullying by staff to any other person, whether student or

colleague and, should this arise, staff should refer to Whistleblowing and Safeguarding procedures or the Bullying and Harassment Policy amongst staff.

Bullying by student

At The Sheiling Ringwood, we do not believe that our students generally have sufficient understanding of intent, due to their difficulties associated with their special educational needs, to 'take steps' and thereby exhibit 'bullying' behaviour towards another individual. There may be occasions when, as a result of behaviours which one student presents with, another may 'feel bullied' but, as this is not as a result of intent, we do not consider the instigator to be a 'bully'.

Having due consideration to the above we have a duty to be alert to occasions where a student may be at the receiving end of behaviour that may make them 'feel bullied', continually assess if any student may have capacity and be exhibiting bullying behaviour and should this arise, follow the procedures outlined below.

Aims and objectives

It is the policy of The Sheiling Ringwood that bullying and harassment behaviour is not tolerated. Active steps will be taken by all staff to counter it in all situations and aspects of community life.

This policy, as an aspect of Behaviour Support, Care and Welfare Policies, places emphasis on anticipation, prevention and de-escalation in good time and the use of minimum levels of restraint appropriate to the incident and level of aggression. This is in line with PROACT-SCIP® -UK.

We believe that taking action and making both parties involved in bullying aware of their actions and inter-dependence are important steps in dealing with bullying and should occur as soon as bullying is observed, as is appropriate to their level of understanding. In this way we support and guide both parties in their growth towards maturity and empower them to develop appropriate social skills.

We recognise that it can be difficult for those at the receiving end, or witness to bullying behaviour, to come forward. However, staff need to make the Internal Safeguarding Team aware that an incident occurred between two students without delay. The procedures below set out the steps that you should take with regard to bullying behaviour.

Procedures

These procedures are intended for staff to respond to incidents of bullying. There is a student-friendly policy related to supporting students to understand and deal with bullying behaviour. As most bullying occurs when students are less supervised, the individual member of staff should in the first instance:

- Ensure that students are supervised as per agreed level of support and be aware of risk assessments in place
- act quickly and decisively when an incident occurs/is observed
- follow proactive, active and reactive strategies as described in individual Behaviour Support Plans to deal with the behaviour displayed
- offer reassurance and a possibility of a debrief, if appropriate, to the person that was targeted
- record all incidents using the cause for concern or incident reporting procedure.
- after the event, inform the Internal Safeguarding Team and agree initial actions
- implement strategies that would be beneficial to minimise the risk of the behaviour reoccurring and avoid possible retaliation
- monitor the student that was targeted for any delayed signs of upset

Monitoring:

Incidents of challenging behaviour or bullying that involve two students are closely monitored.

The Behaviour Support team will:

- review the Behaviour Support Plan accordingly
- look at the function of the behaviour and suggest a risk reduction plan
- provide data to the internal Safeguarding Team to highlight if there are any patterns of behaviours

The Internal Safeguarding Team will:

- Assess the impact and severity of each incident
- Assess which parties need to be informed of the incident – i.e. parents, social workers, local Safeguarding Teams, Ofsted/ CQC
- Assess the impact and efficiency of agreed strategies in minimising the risk of bullying

Intervention techniques

The Sheiling Ringwood aims to provide a pro-active environment in line with PROACT-SCIP®-UK which supports students to learn positive behaviours and to respect any other person. All staff receive training in how to deal with incidents of challenging behaviour, as well as how to actively support an individual student to communicate if they are worried.

The 24-hour curriculum - which aims to support choice and the ability to have their say for all students - includes the following:

- Communication passport for individual students - including details about student's family, likes/dislikes of foods and activities
- Weekly house meetings and termly student council meetings, 'talk' time, talking mats sessions and debriefs - students are encouraged to express their feelings and needs around safety, understand their rights and responsibilities, relationships and personal space, within a social setting of a house community or classroom as is appropriate to their individual needs and abilities
- 'Talk about' groups – students learn about individuality and how to respect others
- 'Helping hand' - students are encouraged to create a 'helping hand'/ have a visual story, which shows trusted people and friends who can be called upon when 'in need' as is appropriate to their individual needs and abilities.
- PHSE sessions - sessions where students learn to name their feelings and learn about private and public spaces.

The Sheiling Ringwood undertakes to:

- Ensure the procedures for preventing bullying and harassment in The Sheiling Ringwood are made available to parents, students and staff.
- Ensure that all parents, students and staff know that bullying is unacceptable and that they will be supported if they help to stop it.

References

Safeguarding Policy

Behaviour Support, Care and Welfare Policy

Staff Handbook and Bullying and Harassment Policy

E-Safety Policy

Behaviour and discipline in schools-advice for head teachers and school staff (January 2016)

Appendices

Student-friendly Preventing Bullying Policy