

SOUTHEND YMCA ANTI-BULLYING POLICY 2020-2022

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The 'Southend YMCA Anti-Bullying' Policy MUST be considered alongside the following Policies:

Southend YMCA Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
 Southend YMCA Safer Operations Procedures
 Southend YMCA Digital
 Southend YMCA Complaints
 Southend YMCA Equality and diversity policies.
 Southend YMCA Code of conduct for staff and volunteers
 Southend YMCA Staff Handbook

1. INTRODUCTION

Southend YMCA works with children, young people, their families and carers. Our activities include: housing, education, positive activities and health and wellbeing interventions delivered through group-work and 1-2-1 methods.

Southend YMCA has a duty of care to protect children and young people from bullying i.e. from those who wish to deliberately hurt them either physically or emotionally. We are responsible for providing a safe, secure, caring and friendly environment and to protect children and young people. Our safeguarding procedures are in line with current legislation and advice and we promote the welfare of all children and young people in our care.

1a. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is:

- To prevent bullying from happening between children and young people who are a part of our organisation, or take part in our activities.
- To make sure bullying is stopped as soon as possible if it does happen and that those involved receive the support they need.
- To provide information to all staff, volunteers, children and their families about what we should all do to prevent and deal with bullying.

Southend YMCA staff, volunteers and Partner Agencies will work diligently to eliminate all forms of bullying, keep records of all incidents of bullying and the different types of bullying that occur in this charity along with remedial actions.

1b. DEFINITIONS

Bullying may be understood as:

'Behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences'.
(DfE)

This policy upholds the charity's ethos and enables consistency and quality of practice across the charity's projects and activities. We acknowledge that if bullying is left unaddressed it can have a devastating effect on individuals. It can be a barrier to personal and social development and have serious consequences for their mental health' not only in childhood but also into adulthood. We are aware that bullying can cause anxiety, depression, hyperactivity and behavioral problems.

We will work diligently and pro-actively to prevent bullying from happening. We will support children and young people who have been bullied offering interventions such as mentoring, coaching, group work and signposting to other projects and activities all with the aim of helping their recovery.

We believe it is our moral and legal duty to protect lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people from all forms of bullying and to educate all children and young people about the important role that lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people play in society. All forms of homophobic and transphobic bullying must be challenged, dealt with and recorded.

We believe by creating a safe, secure and caring environment we will encourage all children and young people to report any incident of bullying to a member of staff or volunteer. All reported incidents of bullying will be recorded, investigated and acted on.

Under no circumstances will we tolerate any form of bullying and all incidents of bullying will be dealt with promptly and effectively as we wish to promote the wellbeing of all children and young people.

We will demonstrate the effectiveness of this policy by undertaking an annual review of incidents, investigations and outcomes as part of the safeguarding review – led by the Designated Senior Person in liaison with the safeguarding trustee.

We wish to work closely with the charity's youth Board, to hear their views and opinions as we acknowledge and support Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child that children should be encouraged to form and to express their views.

We believe it is essential that this policy clearly identifies and outlines the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the procedures and arrangements that is connected with this policy.

2. AIMS

The aims of the Policy are:

1. To protect children and young people from bullying.
2. To provide a safe, secure, caring and friendly environment.
3. To look out for all signs of bullying and to take the appropriate action to stop it.
4. To have in place established systems that will deal with incidents of bullying.
5. To develop confident children and young people who will notify staff or volunteers of any incident of bullying.
6. To inform everyone connected with the charity of the charity's anti-bullying policy.
7. To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation connected to this policy.
8. To work with schools, other charities and the local authority to share good practice in order to improve this policy.

3. **RESPONSIBILITIES**

3.1 ROLE of the BOARD

The Board of Trustee Directors will not condone bullying.

The Board has **responsibility for** ensuring that funding and resources are in place to support the policy. That this policy and all policies are maintained and updated regularly and are made available to stakeholders including: parents, carers and professionals from other agencies and that the charity complies with all equalities legislation.

The Board has nominated a **Trustee Director** with responsibility for scrutinising child protection and safeguarding practice - bullying will fall within the scope of their activity.

The Board has **delegated responsibilities** to the CEO to ensure that:

- The Anti-Bullying Policy is implemented and embedded into the culture of the charity
- All staff and volunteers are aware of and comply with the policy and are supported to do so through continuing professional development (CPD)

Managers will be **responsible for** eliminating all forms of bullying within the projects and activities they lead and manage. They will promote positive behaviour in children and young people through setting appropriate ground rules and activities. They will provide guidance to and be supported by their staff teams.

Parents/carers will be made Southend YMCA does not tolerate bullying through: The provision of our Welcome Pack, awareness of our Behaviour Code (which young people will be asked to comply with) and access to this Policy which is available on our website.

3.2 ROLE of the CEO and SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

The CEO (with the support of the Senior Management Team) will create and maintain a safe, secure, caring and friendly environment in which projects and activities take place. They will ensure that the behaviour of children and young people is monitored at all times and that they receive effective supervision during break times. All children and young people will understand that bullying is wrong and be provided with appropriate boundaries and clear expectations of behaviour. Through monitoring and evaluation activity they will gauge the thoughts of children and young people as to whether Southend YMCA provides a safe environment and whether children feel listened to and supported. Through their leadership and vision the CEO and SMT will set high expectations for all children and young people and offer them every opportunity to succeed.

The CEO (with the support of the Senior Management Team) will ensure that staff, volunteers and partner agencies:

- Provide personalised support to children and young people so they are able to regulate their behaviour
- Embed opportunities for personal, social, cultural and moral learning within 1-2-1 and group activities to prevent bullying occurring in the first place
- Proactively gather intelligence about issues between children and young people which might provoke conflict and develop strategies to ensure de-escalation.

We will ensure that all incidents of bullying are reported and investigated and where this leads to a safeguarding concern this is escalated to the Designated Senior Person.

Records of bullying will be stored securely; for a specific period of time; in a central log in order to build up a picture of concerns of individual children and young people and in identifying patterns of behaviour. Through a systematic approach we can identify specific types of bullying and their outcomes; categorise according to the protected characteristics which gives a clear picture of patterns of behaviour over each the academic year and use these to effectively track children and young people through the charity.

Perpetrators of bullying will be given time to discuss why they have bullied and why their actions were wrong. They will be encouraged to change their behaviour and offered support to do so. It may be appropriate to impose disciplinary sanctions where a child or young person continues to bully or the act of bullying is so serious it requires immediate action. For example, Southend YMCA may exclude a young person from a service.

We will inform parents/carers of any incident of bullying and how it is proposed to deal with this. Support mechanisms such as counselling, mentoring additional 1-2-1 support and referrals to specialist agencies may be made available to the victims of bullying.

Even when we withdraw a service based on poor behaviour (*an example being an eviction from a housing scheme*) the ending will be managed to enable the child or young person to move on in a supported way and receive any specialist projects and activities.

We will make effective use of relevant research and information to inform the approaches we use, work closely with external agencies to support children and young people and work proactively work with the police, parents/carers and the local community to help reduce local tensions where bullying /anti-social behaviour takes place outside of/ to and from the charity.

The **effectiveness** of this policy will be monitored through recording: the number of incidents in an academic year; the types of bullying that occur in an academic year and how swiftly incidents of bullying are dealt with. This will inform conclusions around how good are charity personnel in dealing with incidents of bullying? This will form part of the annual safeguarding report to the e Board of Trustee Directors on the success and development of this policy.

3.3 ROLE of STAFF, VOLUNTEERS and CONTRACTORS

All staff, volunteers and contractors must abide by and adhere to this policy and act as positive role models to promote equality, inclusion and good relations throughout the Southend YMCA furthering an ethos of respect and tolerance. Children and young people should be encouraged to share their experiences of different cultures, religions etc. and diversity should be reflected in displays and resources

All staff, volunteers will undertake appropriate training. Contractors will demonstrate they are supplying suitably qualified and trained personnel to Southend YMCA.

All staff and volunteers must:

- Be aware of the signs of bullying and take all forms of bullying seriously.
- Use preventative strategies and raise awareness of the wrongs of bullying through personal and social education
- Challenge inappropriate language behaviour; racial harassment and bullying and report any concerns to their manager
- Have high expectations for all children and young people, set individual targets and monitor progress to ensure they achieve positive outcomes and reach their potential
- Provide stimulating, relevant and exciting activities that will motivate and challenge children and young people using a variety of methods
- Activity plans, schemes of work etc. must be differentiated to provide full access for all children and young people – this will include the provision of specialised resources for children and young people with disabilities;

3.4 CHILDREN and YOUNG PEOPLE

Taught through induction, ground rules and activities that they can have a role in challenging bullying, bias, and stereotypes. They can treat others with respect, use appropriate language and behaviours and promote equality, inclusion and good relations. This will be furthered through codes of conduct /ground-rules. They will know how to report incidents of discrimination and harassment and feel assured that adults will listen to them and act on their concerns.

4. RECRUITMENT PROCESS

We are an Equal Opportunities employer and we adhere to the principles of equal opportunity in all aspects of the recruitment process. We welcome applications for vacant posts from appropriately qualified persons regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

5. COMPLAINTS

The Complaints Policy and Procedures will be used for children, young people, their families and other agencies when investigating allegations of bullying. Complaints from staff and volunteers will be dealt with using the grievance and disciplinary procedures as set out in the Staff Handbook.

6. RAISING AWARENESS

6a. INFORMATION and GUIDANCE

We will raise awareness of this Policy via: marketing materials, the charity website, in house information boards. A Welcome Pack is provided to parents, carers and young people on the Charity website where Policies are available for download. This is signposted in the Welcome Letter.

6b. TRAINING

All staff and volunteers have opportunities for training on induction and through periodic training so that they are kept up to date with new information.

Training may specifically cover: How to identify, prevent and manage bullying; types of bullying such as cyberbullying, homophobic bullying and bullying around race, religion and culture, anti-bullying strategies, building children and young people resilience, working and co-operating with parents and carers

6c EQUALITY

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

All children, and young people regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse. We recognise that bullying causes real distress. It can affect a person's health and development and, at the extreme, can cause significant harm.

Consequently, we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practice in a way that protects them. Everyone has a role to play in preventing all forms of bullying (including online) and putting a stop to bullying.

We will seek opportunities to learn about and celebrate difference in our diverse community of staff, volunteers, children and young people. It is anticipated that project programmes and sessional plans will feature learning opportunities focusing on inclusion, equality and acceptable behaviours.