Midlothian Residential Services

Anti-Bullying

Contents:

Statement of Purpose.

Every Young Person has the right to be protected from any and all form of intimidation and the fear of Bullying behaviour. Such Bullying behaviours can and often do impact on a young person's health and well-being and ultimately influence their attainment, inclusion and participation.

Bullying should never be seen as a normal part of growing up and as such Midlothian Residential Services promote positive relationships and embeds the values of Equality, Fairness, Inclusion and Respect, in both of our Young Person Residential Houses.

It is through the establishment of a positive ethos and culture that all of Midlothian's Residential Experienced Young People can be allowed to flourish and attain their best possible outcomes.

This policy is founded in the legal framework which underpins Residential Care in Scotland.

Legal Framework

- *Children (Scotland) Act 1995.*
- *Children and Young People (Scotland) Act (2014).*
- *Curriculum for Excellence and the continued focus on the Health & Well-being agenda.*
- *Education (Scotland) Act 1980.*
- *Education (Scotland) Act 2016.*
- *Equality Act 2010.*
- *Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC).*
- *Human Rights Act 1998.*
- *National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2014).*
- *Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People (2017).*
- *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).*

Purpose of this Policy and Framework.

The purpose of this Policy and Framework is to:

- Nurture, Promote, and Support positive relationships.

- Makes positive steps towards the prevention of bullying behaviours.

- Establish and implement a consistent approach to dealing with instances of bullying behaviour.

Over the coming 3 years look to further promoting the six actions:

Midlothian Residential Services will:

- **Create, nurture and sustain:** an open, positive and supportive environment for all Midlothian young people.

- **Listen to:** all Midlothian Children and Young People, so that they feel safe, secure and able to discuss sensitive issues confidently.

- **Model Pro-social behaviour:** In order to promote health and well-being as well as building young person's resilience.

- **Understand Getting it Right for Every Child:** and our duties/responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.

- **Promote:** positive relationships between young people, staff, parents and corporate parents.

- **Continue to work towards:** confident, included and resilient young people capable of achieving their best outcomes.

- **Ensure:** all staff will be confident and responsible for implementing a positive ethos and culture in Midlothian Residential houses.

- **Increase:** parental awareness, understanding and engagement in the approaches used by their child's primary care provider Midlothian Residential Services.

What is Bullying?

Bullying behaviour can harm people in many different ways.

It can cause emotional/psychological and physical harm and although the actual behaviour may not be repeated, the perceived threat and associated fear can and often does remain over time.

- Name calling, teasing, put downs or threatened (both face-to-face or on-line).
- Physical assaults - hitting, kicking, pushing or tripping.
- Having belongings damages or taken.
- Social Isolation - ignoring, leaving out or spreading rumours spread about an individual (both face-to-face or on-line).
- Cyber bullying - sending abusive/threatening messages, pictures or images vis social media, on-line gaming platforms or mobile phone.
- Coercive behaviour - which makes an individual feel like they are not in control of themselves or their lives (both face-to-face or on-line).
- Targeting - because of who you are or who you are perceived to be (both face-to-face or on-line)

Sometimes there can be attempts at bullying which have no clear or lasting impact or effect on either an emotional/psychological or physicall level for the young person.

This can happens when an individual attempts to bully another by a variety of means or methods (as detailed above) but with no effect.

Although this may not constitute bullying, the behaviour should appropriately and consistently be challenged. Bullying behaviour or attempts at bullying should never be ignored and only by appropriately challenging these types of behaviour through a restorative approach will a positive ethos, culture and relationships be achieved, nurtured and sustained.

Types of Bullying.

Prejudice-based bullying:

Under the **Equality Act 2010**, Midlothian Residential Services have an important responsibility to ensure that no one: young person, staff or visitors, are discriminated against, harassed or victimised for any of the protected characteristics outlined in the legislation.

Protected Characteristics Equality Act 2010:
- Age.
- Disability.
- Gender reassignment.
- Marriage and Civil Partnership.
- Pregnancy and maternity.
- Race.
- Religion or belief (including lack of belief).
- Sex.
- Sexual orientation.

Prejudice-based bullying is not only directed at those with a protected characteristic. It may also be used against a young person who is perceived to or has an association with another individual with a protected characteristic. Therefore, it is important that Midlothian Residential Services include consideration of all protected characteristics across their service provision to ensure young people have the understanding and confidence to respond to incidents of prejudice-based bullying effectively.

There are a number of bullying behaviour that are prejudice-based however are not listed as a protected characteristic under the **Equality Act 2010**. When these behaviours are exhibited Midlothian Residential Services have a responsibility to address this to ensure no: young person, staff or visitors, are discriminated against, victimised or harassed for any of these additional characteristics. More detailed information on this is available from Respect Me.

On-line Bullying:

It is essential that a consistent approach is taken to address all forms of bullying. On-line Bullying should not be treated any differently from that of face to face bullying. Midlothian Residential Services will ensure that all young people fully understand that unacceptable behaviour will always remain unacceptable whether on-line or not, and that the individual is responsible for their choice of behaviour.

Where on-line bullying (or any form of bullying) occurs during the school day, Midlothian Residential Services and the School should adopt a restorative and balanced response to the behaviour involving all relevant individuals in this process.

Where on-line bullying occurs out with the house (e.g. in the community), Midlothian Residential Services will work in partnership with other Corporate parents, the young person and their parents in order to address the bullying.

There is a parental responsibility to monitor a young person's behaviour on-line and it should not be assumed that the sole responsibility for dealing with the associated bullying behaviours rests with Midlothian Residential Services, rather that it lies with all Corporate Parents involved in the care of the young people involved, either as the perpetrator or the victim.

Responding to Bullying

When bullying does occur, **a clear consistent response is a necessity.** There are many different ways in which staff can respond to bullying.

However, the goals of any intervention should always be the same.

- To make the victim safe.

- To stop the bullying and change the bully's behaviour.

- To make clear to every other young person that bullying is unacceptable.

- To learn lessons from the experience that can be applied in the future.

If bullying is reported, the member of staff to whom the disclosure is made should immediately investigate in order to understand the nature of the incident. The staff member should contact the house's anti-bullying lead or manager. In a small team, (as is found in each of Midlothian Residential Services Houses) consulting colleagues can be helpful to bring a broader understanding.

Bullying is a complex behaviour and if it is not clear who the perpetrator is, it may be more productive to focus on the future than to spend time while each party denies it. In these cases steps should be taken to agree with the young people how they will move forward and behave in the future.

Support the young person who is bullied:

The starting point for any intervention should be to talk to the person who has been bullied, establish what has happened and agree a way forward:

- Make time - listen to the victim calmly, using effective/active listening techniques (page 10).

- Take bullying seriously - avoid telling the young person to 'just ignore it'.

- Action plan - agree with their consent.

- Support - avoid demeaning the young person by taking actions which may make them seem weaker, powerless or a "grass".

- Build Resilience - by building the individuals self-confidence, focusing on their strengths and helping them to develop positive friendships.

- Educate - Cybernate-bullying can be traced and tracked to find proof.

Change the emotional environment:

Address any prejudice displayed with all the young people involved – whether within the house or outside it. If a group of young people are behaving in a prejudice motivated manner i.e. in a racist way – this needs to be addressed with them all. They may be doing this outside the house or inside it. But in either case this will require sensitive work to address the behaviour. It may be appropriate to invite a guest in to talk to them, chose a film or some other form of challenge to their perceptions or understanding.

Work with the bullying young person:

It is important to work with the bully to help them understand their behaviour and its effects on others. The overall goal should be to ensure the bullying stops and the bully's behaviour changes:

- Make it clear that it is the behaviour that is 'bad', not the young person.

- How does bullying make them feel? Why do they need to do this?

In order to move forward and change behaviours, it is necessary to help the young person to find other ways other than bullying to help them to feel recognised and to manage their emotions.

Help the young person to learn how to recognise their emotions, perhaps marking on a chart how they feels today. Is there a warning moment before they 'kick off'? What skills/tools/methods can be used before it all becomes 'too much'? Help them to identify patterns to their behaviour – i.e. on certain days or situations? Help to identify what works for this young person. Remember, anger management and conflict resolution skills can be taught. Consider identifying tasks for the young person that can earn them praise or rewards for pro-social actions such as helping another young person with something they are good at or laying the table and helping with meals.

- Good relationship established - this can be used to try and evoke some understanding of the impact on the victim, and challenge the prejudice. Prejudice views may be shared

among the community in which the young person lives or may be driven by anxieties about identity and geographical area. Young people can adopt these views in order to be accepted into a group or in order to protect themselves. By engaging with these issues rather than dismissing them, it may be possible to help all the young people involved.

- Resolution - How can this person make apologise for the distress caused? Can they offer some ideas?

- Bully-victims - many of those who bully others have been and may still be victims. These cases may be more complex and as such these young people may need professional help and counselling.

- What to avoid - granting the bully hero status or marginalising them so that you have no influence.

- Want to change - ssometimes a young person who bullies will be relieved at being challenged with regards to their behaviours, because they have been uncomfortable with it. They may have been pressured by a group into behaving this way (this in its self is a form of bullying). Others may alter their behaviour because they have a new understand the harm they have caused and wish to change.

Monitor and Record:

Bullies may appear to comply – but in reality may bully someone else, or their behaviours may become more secretive so as to avoid being caught. They may appear to comply because of strong controls and boundaries being strictly enforced, but it is unclear whether or not their behaviour and prejudices have been effectively changed.

It is important to consider whether your intervention has secured lasting change and check from time to time. Encourage and praise any positive behaviours by the bullying young person.

- Monitor - the situation.

- Record - any bullying incidents and action taken.

- Report - back to the victim.

- Follow up - with the victim to make certain the bullying has stopped and that they feel safe and supported. Discreetly.

- Support - do nothing to perpetuate the image of a young person as a victim, but try to put across a positive strong image of them instead.

- Build Resilience - Help the victim to come to believe in themselves starting with small steps.

- Educate - use an incident as a learning opportunity for everyone.

Check your practice:

Do you -

- Encourage all young people - to make sure that all young people develop emotional resilience?
- Ensure you never leave young people unsupervised?
- Give constructive criticism?
- Know where to get help if a serious case of bullying emerges?
- Look at seemingly small incidents to see if there is a pattern?
- Make sure that individuals are not ridiculed in front of others?
- Notice if one young person or a group is being targeted?

Responding to serious or persistent bullying:

Sometimes bullying can involve a specific serious incident, i.e. a serious physical or sexual assault. Bullying may continue despite all attempts to intervene. In this kind of situation, a different response may be needed, however the goals of the intervention must remain the same: to make the victim safe and to stop the bullying behaviour.

The house's Anti-bullying Policy should set out a clear process of escalation for dealing with serious and persistent bullying, explaining the roles of the anti-bullying lead and other members of staff, including senior management, in making decisions.

Whatever action is taken, staff involved should make sure that all bullying incidents and actions are recorded.

Working with Partners:

If a serious incident or a pattern of bullying is identified outside the house, staff should engage with other corporate parents and practitioners to agree a joined up response. Educational establishments and activity providers may have a role here. Where staff are unsure about how to deal with a particularly serious or continuous pattern of bullying, partner agencies such as the police, the local authority anti-bullying lead and other organisations such as anti-bullying charities may be able to provide advice and support (see Appendix 1).

Resolving Conflicts:

Even when bullying has been serious or continuous, the most effective response may be to resolve matters between the victim and the bully.

Consider using conflict resolution approaches including restorative justice techniques to help the young people understand how each other feels, make amends and move on, but only if both parties agree to this approach.

Involving the Police:

Bullying behaviour may result criminal offences, such as:

- Assault.
- Criminal Damage
- Harassment offences.
- Hate crime offences.
- Sexual offences.
- The misuse of communication offences.
- Theft.

In instances where bullying is particularly serious or continuous, it may be necessary – in order to:

- protect the victim or get the bully to
- change the bullies behaviour

To involve the Police in dealing with offences that have been committed. The house's anti-bullying lead should make the decision as to whether to involve the Police with the support and consent of senior management.

While it may be necessary to involve the Police in some serious cases, it may also be beneficial to involve the Police in other aspects of our anti-bullying work. For example, the Police can explaining to the young people how such bullying behaviours may be considered a crime. This may prove to be an effective way of building a partnership with local Police and Community Support Officers, rather than only bringing them in once an offence has been committed.

Bullying as a Child Protection Issue:

Under the **Children (Scotland) Act 1995** an incident of bullying should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is *'reasonable cause to suspect that a child – is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'*. As such, it will sometimes be appropriate to report bullying incidents to Children and Families Child Protection Officers. In making this decision, staff should follow the house's Child Protection procedures.

Be aware - a young person may be bullying others because of problems in their own life, as such we should prepare for disclosures. For example, it is not unusual for young people to make a disclose of domestic violence when undertaking anti-bullying work. At this time aappropriate Child Protection procedures should be applied.

Removing a child from the home:

In exceptional cases, where all attempts have been made to resolve continuous bullying behaviour and have proved unsuccessful, a change of placement may need to be considered and might be in the best interests of both the young person carrying out the bullying behaviour and other residents of the house. In such cases, staff at the house must discuss this option with the young person's social worker in order to ensure that this option is considered in the context of the young person's holistic needs and of their Care Plan.

Young People who are the victims of bullying should not be removed from the house for their own protection, unless at their explicit request to move away from all the young people in the house for a fresh start.

Supporting the victim:

In order to make sure the victim feel safe, they may need further support while the bullying is being addressed, and after it has stopped. Trained peer supporters can be asked to support a victim, and an empathetic adult will need to carefully monitor how the young person is doing.

How do we know our actions have been successful?

Regular consultation with young people is the most effective way to find out if anti-bullying interventions are working and young people feel safe.

There are three key questions to ask about intervention:

- Does the victim feel safe?
- Did the bully's behaviour change?
- What have we learned?

Restorative Approaches

What are Restorative Practices?

Midlothian Residential Services will use Restorative Approaches as part of a planned response to bullying behaviour.

Restorative Approaches are a set of questions that help young people think about their behaviour and understand/identify how they can correct it. These approaches can have a positive impact on a house environment and their efficient/effective use should help to support positive relationships within the house.

Restorative approaches can include the use of a *'restorative conversation'*. This can take place at any-time and the use of restorative language and questions helps to enable young people to understand the wider impact of their behaviours – on both themselves and others.

Any parent/carer wishing to find out more about what type of restorative approach is used within the young person's home, should contact the Midlothian Residential Services directly.

The use of restorative approaches does not mean there are no consequences for young people exhibiting bullying behaviour. Midlothian Residential Services may use a mix of restorative approaches as well as other interventions.

Why Restorative Approaches?

It is common for many to prefer a form of punishment or consequence for young people exhibiting bullying behaviour. However, this more traditional approach can be ineffective and breed resentment. It can also negatively impact the situation for all concerned as the young person may become resentful at the punishment; as opposed to reflecting on their actions and their impact.

Benefits of Restorative Approaches:

- Accountability.
- Attempts to resolve the harm caused due to the behaviour.
- Embeds values which separate the person from the behaviour.
- Help children and young people become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.
- Help create positive, forward-thinking environments.
- More effective than traditional forms of punishment.

Recording & Monitoring

All instances of bullying will be recorded by Midlothian Residential Services. Recording instances of bullying is an integral part of the approach adopted by Midlothian Residential Service's in preventing and managing bullying behaviour.

Midlothian Residential Services will have a consistent approach to recording and monitoring instances of bullying behaviour. This will enable Midlothian Residential Services and Children's Services to identify any trends or specific issues which exist.

All instances of prejudice-based bullying that fall under any of the protected characteristics listed under the Equality Act 2010 must be recorded and monitored. As per Midlothian Residential Service's Poverty Strategy, bullying behaviour based on an individual's socio-economic background must also be challenged, recorded and monitored.

Benefits of Recording and Monitoring:

- Can identify any improvements that are required in our approach.
- Helps identify trends, patterns and specific issues.
- Helps inform approaches to preventing and managing bullying behaviour.
- Provides valuable information on the scope and scale of the bullying.

What we will consider when recording bullying incidents

- What was the behaviour?
- What is the impact on the house, learning or health and well-being?
- What does the young person want to happen?
- What do I need to do?
- Is there evidence of any prejudice-based attitudes or behaviour?

Actions 2019 – 2022

Will be included and reviewed throughout Quality Assurance process and will form part of our Improvement Planning Process.

Further information, advice and support

Action for Children:
www.Actionforchildren.org.uk.

Anti-Bullying Alliance:
www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

For a description of ways to enable participation for children and young people with special needs http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/ downloads/pdf/youngvoice_participation.pdf.pdf.

CEOP (The Child Exploitation Online Protection Centre): Hosts the Young people's online charter and is responsible for safety on the internet. There is advice for parents and carers and for young people http://www.ceop.gov.uk.

Childnet/Becta: For information and materials on a range of online safety aspects such as social networking, being a good digital citizen and cyberbullying http://www.digizen.org/cyberbullying.

Childnet also offers activities, posters and materials on: http://www.kidsmart.org.uk.

EACH (Educational Action Challenging Homophobia): Provides training for local authorities to challenge homophobic bullying. EACH also provides a national helpline for young people experiencing homophobic bullying: Tel: 0808 1000 143.

Leap: Offers training and workshops in confronting conflict and hosts the Academy for Youth and Conflict for formal training leading to qualifications for staff http://www.leaplinx.com.

Mencap: The Don't Stick it, Stop It! campaign contains stickers and useful materials, such as line animations and video clips, which can be used for training/awareness purposes www.mencap.org.uk/dontstickit.

NSPCC: Offers a wide range of advice and support in this area, including what to do when a child may disclose a further problem such as domestic violence or neglect. Visit www.nspcc.org.uk.

Stonewall: Information on tackling homophobic bullying www.stonewall.org.uk.

Transforming Conflict: For information on restorative practices and training http://www.transformingconflict.org.

A more comprehensive list including ideas for training and suggestions for developing policies is available in the training resources as part of this suite of guidance.

Respect Me

Anti-bulling Procedure/Process.

Bullying Incident Reported

Speak with the Young Person who is the "Victim" and collect a statement.
Re-assure the young person they are doing the right thing in telling you.

- Identify the young person(s) doing the bullying.
- Identify young person(s) who may have witnessed this.
- Identify what, where and when this happened.
- **CONTACT THE RELEVNAT PARTIES TO LET THEM KNOW YOU WILL BE INVESTIGATING THIS**.

Liaise with the Senior Children's Services Practitioner and ensure that they speak with any witnesses.

- Identify the young person(s) doing the bullying.
- Identify young person(s) who may have witnessed this.
- Identify what, where and when this happened.
- Record the incident in the Bullying Log.

Evidence

No Evidence

Speak with the young person(s) who allegation was made against.

- Agree actions to prevent further incidents
- Agree future actions for further incidents.
- Completed within 72 hours.

- Speak to the young person who the allegation was made against.
- Explain there is not enough evidence but you will be monitoring situation moving forward.

Speak with Victim

- Ensure they are satisfied with the outcome.
- Completed within 72 hours.

CHECKBACK WITH THE CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON ON A WEEKLY/FORTNIGHTLY BASIS TO CHECK EVERYTHING IS FINE

Anti-bullying Procedure for Young People.

Report It.

LadyBrae Houses   Woodburn Court

Norma Ardic   Debbie Brosnan
Lizanne McGinty   Rachel Persheyeva
                                                   Bernie McShane
                                                   Marc Clugston

Record It.

Write it down
Complete the Anti-bullying paperwork with a member of staff.

Tackle It.

Residential Staff or your key worker will work with you to develop strategies to help you.

Resolve It.

Staff will put strategies in place and deal with all individuals involved.