

HARMONY MAIDSTONE

Charity no. 1128315

Anti Bullying Policy

VISION

- The team at Harmony Maidstone aim to prevent and be proactive in preventing bullying amongst all members of our community.
- They wish to inspire tolerance and respect to all in our community, and to bring procedures to support the vision to the attention of all involved.
- All participants, staff, volunteers and trustees must be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with this policy.

AIMS

The aim of this anti-bullying policy is to ensure that participants engage and learn in a respectful, supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at Harmony Maidstone. Our vision across the organisation is that we take bullying seriously.

Our aim is that all participants, parents and guardians should be assured that all incidents of reported bullying will be investigated, consequences/support implemented, and all parties liaised with throughout the process, from time of report to conclusion. We aim to inspire a supportive, caring and safe environment, without fear, where all participants celebrate differences, enjoy and thrive being part of the organisation.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying often stems from prejudice of difference. This could be related to disability, SEN, physical appearance, health condition/appearance, race, colour or culture, sexual orientation or social difference.

There are many definitions of bullying and it can be by staff, participants or parents; most consider it to be:

- deliberately hurtful (including aggression);
- repeated often over a period of time;
- difficult for victims to defend themselves against.

Bullying can take many forms, but the main types are:

- physical - hitting, kicking, taking belongings;
- verbal - name calling, insulting, making offensive or threatening remarks;

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- indirectly - spreading nasty stories;
- exclusion from social groups;
- being made the subject of malicious rumours;
- sending malicious emails or text messages on mobile phones;
- posting malicious, offensive or private material on the internet and/or social media;
- repeated sexual or racial harassment or unwanted physical contact;
- misuse of technology, ie camera and video facilities

TO MITIGATE RISK OF BULLYING

- Staff/volunteers to be trained in safeguarding and recognising signs of bullying.
- A named safeguarding lead or event coordinator to be present at every event.
- Clear code of conduct shared in advance with participants.

IF BULLYING OCCURS DURING A WORKSHOP OR EVENT

- Intervene promptly – A staff member or safeguarding lead calmly stops the behaviour
- Support the target – Ensure the affected person feels safe, offer to remove them from the situation, and check their wellbeing
- Address the behaviour – Speak privately with the person accused of bullying, explain why it is unacceptable, and issue a warning if appropriate
- Escalate if needed – If behaviour continues or is serious, the person may be asked to leave the event
- Record the incident in a safeguarding/incident log
- Follow up with both the complainant and alleged perpetrator (separately) after the event
- Disclose the incident to the DSL and Operations Manager at the earliest opportunity

FOLLOW UP ACTION

- The management team will look at each case and decide if further disciplinary action, safeguarding referrals, or exclusion from future events is necessary
- Potential consequences will range from a verbal warning to removal from the event, suspension from volunteering, or referral to safeguarding authorities/police if serious
- Each incident will be reviewed at the following trustee meeting, as to how it was handled
- Regularly update training, codes of conduct, and policies based on lessons learned

COMPANION DOCUMENTS

- [Safeguarding Policy](#)
- [Code of Conduct](#)
- [Safeguarding Process](#)