



ARK at Egwood

Changing lives within our community

Anti-Bullying Policy

At ARK we pride ourselves in providing young people with a safe and supportive environment in which all can attend without any element of fear. While we recognise that bullying can take place in all walks of life, our aim is to ensure that all who attend feel supported in a proactive and consistent manner if they do experience any form of bullying.

What is bullying?

Bullying can be experienced by both children and adults. Although there is no legal definition of bullying, Tattum and Lane in their book, 'Bullying in Schools', describe bullying as: '...a wilful, conscious desire to hurt another and put him or her under stress'.

Bullying is defined by the DFE in its paper 'Preventing and tackling bullying' July 2017, as

'behaviour by an individual or group that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.'

Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by difference, real or perceived between children.

Bullying can be:

- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting or pinching, any form of violence, threats.
- Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing.
- Emotional: tormenting, threatening ridicule, humiliation, and exclusion from groups or activities.
- Relational:• Relational: damaging someone's relationships or social status.
- Cyber: the use of the internet and related technologies to harm other people, in a deliberate, repeated, and hostile manner, for example via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and videos.
- Racist: racial taunts, graffiti, gesture.
- Extortion: money, gifts etc.

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- Sexual: unwanted physical contact, sexualised language, abusive comments.

Child-on-child abuse

Child-on-child abuse is behaviour by an individual or group, intending to physically, sexually or emotionally hurt others. All staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing other children.

All staff should be aware of safeguarding issues from child-on-child abuse including:

- bullying (including cyberbullying)
- physical abuse
- sexual violence and sexual harassment
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals. (Hazing – forcing someone to take part in dangerous or humiliating tasks, or to play humiliating tricks on someone as part of a ritual or test to join a group.)

Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is the first priority of any education setting, but emotional bullying can sometimes be more damaging than physical. ARK staff, alongside their Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or Deputy, have to make their own judgments about each specific case and should use this policy guidance to help.

Symptoms of bullying

Children who are being bullied will not always be prepared to tell those in authority.

However, when a disclosure is made, it should always be treated seriously. While others may not feel that certain actions or words are of a bullying nature, if the recipient feels they are being bullied that is sufficient evidence to treat the case as prima facie bullying.

For those young people who are unable to inform staff about their problem, observations regarding specific behaviour patterns can be routinely established within the setting. Signs of bullying might include:

- Unwillingness to come to the provision.
- Withdrawn, isolated behaviour.
- Complaining about missing possessions

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- Easily distressed.

We believe that:

- Bullying is undesirable and unacceptable.
- Bullying is a problem to which solutions can be found.
- Seeking help and being open are regarded as signs of strength not weakness.
- All members of the ARK community will be listened to and taken seriously.
- Everyone has the right to work and learn in an atmosphere that is free from fear.
- All of us have a responsibility to ensure that we do not abuse or bully others.
- Young people should talk to an adult if they are worried about bullying and have a right to expect that their concerns will be listened to and treated seriously.
- We all have a duty to work together to protect vulnerable individuals from bullying and other forms of abuse.

The law

The Children Act 1989 regards a bullying incident as a 'child protection concern' when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm'. In this kind of situation, staff should report their concerns to the YP lead or Manager and in turn the local authority (LA)

Criminal law

Although bullying is not defined in the UK as a crime, nevertheless certain types of harassing or threatening behaviour or communication can constitute a criminal offence. This could come under:

- The Public Order Act 1986.
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988.
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997.
- The Communications Act 2003.

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If the provision feels that an offence may have been committed, they should seek advice from the police as soon as is reasonably practicable. This is most likely to occur because of a malicious electronic communication, for example via a social networking site.

Strategies to reduce bullying

ARK will adopt a range of strategies to prevent and reduce bullying, to raise awareness of bullying and support victims and bullies.

Including:

Group work

Circle time

1:1 sessions working in a therapeutic environment, i.e. with animals when practicable.

Anti-bullying initiatives

Active listening.

Adequate support (ARK staff member to be on duty) during all break and lunchtimes.

Aims of this policy

- To assist in creating an ethos in which attending the AP is a positive experience for all members of the ARK community.
- To make it clear that all forms of bullying are unacceptable at ARK.
- To enable everyone to feel safe while at ARK and encourage young people to report incidences of bullying.
- To deal effectively with bullying.
- To support and protect victims of bullying and ensure they are listened to.
- To help and support bullies to change their attitudes as well as their behaviour and understand why it needs to change.

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- To ensure all members of the ARK community feel responsible for combating bullying.

Confidentiality

Staff cannot promise absolute confidentiality if approached by a young person for help. Staff must make this clear.

Child protection procedures must be followed when any disclosures are made. It is very rare for a student to request absolute confidentiality. If they do, in situations other than those involving child protection issues, staff must make a careful judgement whether or not a third party needs to be informed.

This judgement will be based upon: the seriousness of the situation; the degree of harm that the young person may be experiencing; and, their age, maturity and competence to make their own decisions.

Where it is clear that a young person would benefit from the involvement of a third party, staff should seek consent of the young person to do so. If appropriate, staff might inform the third party together with the young person.

Unless clearly inappropriate, young people will always be encouraged to talk to their parent, teacher or carer. An underlying principle in supporting young people at ARK is that all young people are listened to sensitively and objectively and all incidences of bullying will be taken seriously. Although we cannot guarantee confidentiality young people will be informed of national and local helplines, if appropriate, where confidentiality can be maintained.

This policy will be evaluated and reviewed by ARK at Egwood CIC annually to ensure that it is supporting the required behaviour change.

Signed

Date: 22/03/25

To be reviewed annually

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