

Anti Bullying Policy

Date Written: May 2007

Last reviewed: March 2010



Rationale

The Lifehouse, like society, has standards and expectations of behaviour that include mutual respect for all members of the community. It is understood that everyone must feel valued and safe in their environment if they are to flourish. Individuality is celebrated and members are encouraged to accept others in a non-judgemental way. Bullying comes in many guises and will not be tolerated on any level.

Aims

- Everyone can feel confident to be themselves
- Encouraged to behave supportively to others
- Able to fulfil their potential
- Free from prejudice and judgement

Systems

The Lifehouse operates a community-teaching ethos and as such each member is responsible for ensuring that incidents of bullying behaviour are reported and dealt with. Staff will monitor discussion time and moderate ideas if they are felt to be inappropriate. Explanation will be given if it is felt the view comes from a point of ignorance rather than maliciousness.

Awareness of bullying

Staff should constantly be vigilant for:

- Physical intimidation
- Verbal animosity
- Prejudicial comments
- Judgemental comments
- Put-downs
- Abusive language
- Ostracising from the group
- Intimidating body language

Any form of behaviour that causes distress for another member of the community is an issue that needs to be dealt with. Some forms of intimidation can be quite subtle and be aimed at a particular area of weakness which others may be unaware of.

Raising Awareness

- Open and frank discussion about any incidence that has taken place
- Clear definition of the sanctions that took place as a result of this
- Constant affirmation that everyone is valued and encouraged to be their own voice
- Discussion around areas where individuals have experienced bullying in other areas of their life
- 'Student Awareness' workshop on bullying

The Lifehouse staff are aware that because it is a small community the choice of adults to disclose to is limited. Therefore relationships between pupils, and staff and pupils will be constantly monitored by ourselves at staff meetings.

If we are aware of bullying that is taking place to a pupil outside of the Lifehouse community we will endeavour to get support for the pupil from an appropriate person. We may involve other agencies such as Youth Workers, Young Carers or Walkways. We will clearly define if an instance is, in fact, abuse. If so, this is covered in our child protection policy.

Sanctions

Any student who resorts to bullying behaviour will be given opportunity to discuss the emotions that lie behind that. This will be done in a one to one setting and then time to discuss with the victim may also be considered appropriate. Each case will be taken on its own merit and individuals ability to cope with such an opportunity taken into account. A task will be set that involves working away from the main group. The sanction will be discussed during open forum time and then it will not be dwelled on again. Minor incidents will not be noted. Serious incidents will be noted on students' files and parents/carers also told either verbally or by note in the home liaison notebook.