



Anti – Bullying and Behaviour Policy

Policy Statement

Giga's art will not tolerate any form of bullying or disruptive behaviour in sessions and will support all those who are victims of bullying. Giga's art will support measures for identifying those who are the perpetrators of such unacceptable conduct.

Guidelines

All Giga's art foster carers, staff and children/young people will:

- Accept and support the Agency's anti-bullying policy
- Demonstrate an understanding of what bullying is
- Be vigilant in identifying the telltale signs that indicate a child/young person is being bullied
- Take preventative measures to reduce opportunities for bullying to occur
- Be available to listen sympathetically to complaints relating to bullying and investigate thoroughly (malicious complaint is as effective a form of bullying as any other)
- Have an understanding of the procedures for reporting bullying
- Have an understanding of the advice given to those caring for children/young who are being bullied
- Have an awareness of other organisations that offer help and guidance

What is bullying?

Bullying is hurtful. No-one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Anyone who is being bullied needs to learn personal coping strategies and to understand that their carers and other relevant adults are there to support them.

Bullying takes many forms. It can be physical, like being pushed, beaten or thumped with knuckles. It can involve a weapon and threats. Bullying can also be verbal and emotional.

Identifying the telltale signs that indicate that a child/young person is being bullied

A child/young person may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and should investigate if a child/young person:

- Is frightened of walking to and from school
- Is unwilling to go to school
- Begins to do poorly in schoolwork.
- Becomes withdrawn, starts stammering.
- Regularly has books or clothes destroyed.
- Becomes distressed, stops eating.
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares.
- Becomes disruptive or aggressive.
- Has possessions go 'missing' and money 'lost'.
- Starts stealing money (to pay bully).
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what's wrong.
- Attempts suicide or runs away.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but certainly bullying should be considered as a possibility and should be investigated. (Signs and symptoms taken from KIDSCAPE Stop Bullying! Booklet).

Procedures for reporting bullying

- Report any bullying incident to a member of Giga's art staff as soon as possible.
- In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by a member of Giga's art staff and a meeting arranged to discuss the problem.
- If necessary and appropriate, the Police will be consulted.
- The bullying behaviour and threats of bullying must immediately stop.
- An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour.
- The bully will offer an apology and other appropriate consequences may take place.

Advice for those caring for children/young people who are being bullied

1. Do not ignore the problem.
1. Encourage the child/young person to talk to you about his/her feelings – tell the child/young person you are always willing to listen.
1. Try not to over-react, even if you are furious – it might frighten the child/young person into silence, and we want victims to talk not retreat.
1. Ask the child/young person if he/she has any suggestions about changing the situation.
1. Find out how fearful the child/young person is and make sure that he/she feels protected.
1. Take any threats of suicide or other desperate pleas seriously and seek help – better safe than sorry and children/young people sometimes go to extremes if they are miserable.
1. Help the child/young person develop a sense of humour and a way of “throwing off” taunts.
1. Praise the child/young person and tell them how much you support them.
1. Try to sort out the bullying at first as quietly and constructively as possible.



Other organisations that offer help and guidance

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) 02073 548321

Childline 0800 111111

Children's Legal Centre 01206 873820

KIDSCAPE 02077 303300

Youth Access 02087 729900

KIDSCAPE also has three booklets about bullying:

- Stop Bullying!
- You Can Beat Bullying! A Guide for Young People.
- Preventing Bullying: A Parent's Guide.

You can send a large SAE with two 1st class stamps to:

KIDSCAPE,

2 Grosvenor Gardens,

London

SW1 0DH