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|  | **Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedure** |

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| **Arrangement of Sections** |

1. Anti-Bullying Policy

2. Characteristics of bullying

3. What to do if you are being bullied

4. What to do if you see a child or young person being bullied or if someone tells you that

they are being bullied

5. Keeping a record of the bullying

6. Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs)

7. Useful contacts

8. Other documents in this series

9. Document details

Appendix 1: Bullying Report Form

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| **1. Anti-Bullying Policy** |

The purpose of this policy is:

* To prevent bullying from happening in BELS & TL, as much as possible.
* If bullying does happen, to make sure it is stopped as soon as possible and that those involved receive the support they need.
* To provide information to all staff, volunteers, young people and their families about what we should all do to prevent and deal with bullying.

The legal context for this policy is:

* The Children Acts 1989 and 2004.
* The Protection from Harassment Act 1997.
* The Human rights Act 2000.
* The Equality Act 2010.
* Government guidance: Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015.
* Government guidance on bullying 2015.

We all have a role to play in preventing and putting a stop to bullying.

BELS & TL seeks to prevent bullying bydeveloping a Code of Conduct for Young People (SG3) involved in our services, setting out how we expect them to behave.

If bullying occurs, we will respond to it by:

* Having a clear anti-bullying procedure in place
* Providing clear guidance to staff and volunteers on dealing with all forms of bullying
* Addressing the issue from the point of view of the person being bullied
* Reviewing the plan developed to address the bullying, in order to ensure that the problem has been resolved.

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| **2. Characteristics of Bullying** |

BELS & TL recognises that there is no legal definition of bullying. However, bullying does have numerous recognisable characteristics:

* Intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally.
* Often aimed at certain groups, e.g. because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation (

It may include:

* Verbal teasing or making fun of someone.
* Excluding children from games and conversations.
* Pressurising other children not to be friends with the person who is being bullied.
* Spreading hurtful rumours or passing around inappropriate photographs / images / drawings.
* Cyberbullying (i.e. using computers or mobile phones to bully someone).
* Shouting at or verbally abusing someone.
* Stealing or damaging someone’s possessions.
* Making threats.
* Forcing someone to do something embarrassing, harmful or dangerous.
* Harassment based on race, gender, sexuality or disability.
* Physical or sexual assault (although all sexual incidents and all but very minor physical incidents constitute abuse and must be dealt with in accordance with child protection procedures).

**The signs and symptoms of bullying**

If someone is being bullied, they might not tell anyone directly, this could be because they have been threatened and are afraid to say anything or because they believe that nothing can be done about it and that telling someone will only make it worse. It could even be because they don’t recognise that what is happening to them is bullying.

Signs that someone may be being bullied could include:

* Being unhappy, withdrawn and unwilling to spend time in a group, especially during unstructured periods e.g. break time
* Being without friends
* Missing meetings and activities and / or expressing a reluctance to attend
* Being clingy with adults
* Appearing to lose possessions or money (things that may have really been stolen by or given away to bullies)
* Unexplained injuries
* Uncharacteristic illness or aggression

Some of these signs might also indicate abuse at the hands of adults or other negative experience, so they should be treated with caution.

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| **3. What to do if you are being bullied** |

If you are being bullied, you should never keep it to yourself. Tell someone you trust. This could be your Team Leader, Mentor, Staff or Volunteer at BELS & TL or someone else. It could also be your parent or carer.

You may prefer to tell another child or young person first and ask that person to help you tell an adult.

If the bullying is happening at BELS & TL, we will sort it out here. If it’s happening somewhere else (at school, for example, or near your home), we will get other people involved to stop it happening there.

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| **4. What to do if you see a child or young person being bullied or if someone tells you that**  **they are being bullied.** |

If you are a child or young person and someone tells you that they are being bullied, don’t try to deal with it yourself. Talk to the person about getting help from an adult. If they won’t do this try to persuade them to go with you to explain the situation to their Key Worker or Staff or Volunteer at BELS & TL. The best way to help is to explain that you will have to tell an adult yourself – and then go ahead and tell someone.

If you are an adult and a child told you that he or she is being bullied, take the child seriously. Do not tell them to stop being silly or to keep out of the way of the bullies. This will not help and will make the child feel let down and less inclined to tell anyone else. Listen to the child’s full account of what is going on and complete the bullying reporting form with the child as soon as possible.

If you observe the bullying directly, act assertively to put a stop to it. Explain to all concerned that the incident would have to be reported properly to stop it happening again. Report the incident to the child’s key worker or, if you are the key worker, talk to the child about the bullying and discuss it with your manager.

Unless the incident is minor and can be dealt with informally, the child’s parent or carer should be informed by the key worker within one working day.

If possible, there should be a three-way meeting between the child, the key worker and the parent.

If the bullying is taking place in another environment (e.g. school) the key worker should ask what support the parent and child would like, in order to engage with whoever, the responsible agencies might be. The key worker should aim to work in partnership with both parent and child and any other people who may be involved.

If the bullying is taking place within BELS & TL, the parent / carer and child should be reassured that it will be dealt with as a priority and should be asked for their views on what would be helpful to deal with the situation.

The key worker, having spoken to the child who has been bullied and the child’s parent / carer, should also speak to the bully (or bullies) and obtain their account of what has happened or is happening. This should be noted in writing and the parent / carers should be asked for their views on what should be done to put a stop to any further bullying and to repair the damage that has been done.

Apart from very minor incidents that have been directly observed by a staff member and dealt with at the time, all bullying that takes place at BELS & TL should be discussed within the staff group within five working days wherever possible.

At the meeting, the bullying incident should be discussed, and the details of a draft plan drawn up to address the situation, considering any suggestion made by the children involved and their parents / carers.

The following area should be covered:

* Details of any apology that has been or should be offered by the bully (or bullies).
* Details of any support for the person who has been bullied e.g. use of buddy scheme, extra input from BELS & TL Staff, referral to another service.
* Details of any consequences for the bully, in addition to making an apology, with reference to the behaviour code.
* Details of any further discussions or work to be done with others in the group, including children who may have observed or encouraged the bullying.
* Details of any changes in how the Staff Team may handle issues of bullying in future.

The plan should be shared with the children concerned and their parents and should be reviewed regularly.

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| **5. Keeping a Record of the Bullying** |

Use the bullying reporting form to take clear notes of any discussions or meetings that take place following the bullying incident. The plan for dealing with the aftermath of the incident should be copied to the child who has been bullied and their parent / carer and to the bullies and their parents / carers. It should be placed on the file of all the children directly involved.

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| **6. Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs)** |

**Katherine O’Donnell**

**Gemma Pinkney**

**Deb Walters**

**0191 2635770**

[**team@belsnorthtyneside.org,uk**](mailto:team@belsnorthtyneside.org,uk)

**Management Committee Safeguarding Representative**

**Charlotte Kennedy**

**0191 2635770**

[**charlotte.e.osborne@gmail.com**](mailto:charlotte.e.osborne@gmail.com)

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| **7. Useful Contacts** |

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| Local Police | Emergency: 999  Non-emergency: 101 |
| North Tyneside Council  Front Door service  Early Help and Coordination | Office hours: 0345 2000 101  0191 2006800  0191 643 8178 |
| NSPCC Helpline | 0808 800 5000  [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk) |
| Childline | 0800 1111  [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk) |
| Child Exploitation and Online  Protection Centre (CEOP) | [www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk) |

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| **8. Other Documents in this Series** |

This document is one of a series of nine that detail BELS & TL’s strategy for protecting children and young people. The other documents are:

SG1- Safeguarding Children and Young People

SG2 - Code of Conduct for Adults working with Children and Young People

SG3 - Code of Conduct for Young People

SG5 - Procedure for Protecting Children and Young People at possible Risk of Abuse

SG6 - Dealing with Allegations made against an Employee or Volunteer

SG7 - Dealing with Allegations made against another Child

SG8 - Guidelines for sharing Confidential Information

SG9 - Guidelines on the Storage and Retention of Records

In addition to the above this policy should be read alongside our policies and procedures on:

* Acceptable Access to and Use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

e-safety Policy

* Communications Policy
* Complaints Procedure
* Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
* Equality and Diversity Policy
* GDPR Privacy Policy
* Grievance Policy and Procedure
* Health & Safety at Work Policy
* Recruitment & Selection Policy and Procedure
* Staff Induction Checklist
* Volunteer Policy and Procedure
* Whistleblowing Policy

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| **9. Document Details** |

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Updated January 2023 (Change of DSOs and minor changes)

Updated 30.1.2024.

This document has been adapted with permission from:

VODA North Tyneside

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| **Appendix 1: Bullying Report Form** |

This form allows children and young people to give BELS & TL details of an incident of bullying.

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| Name: |
| Age: |
| Male / Female |
| Contact details (address, email, telephone number) |

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| Describe what happened / is happening: |
| Where did it happen? |
| When did it happen? |

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| Who was doing the bullying? |
| Did anyone else see it happen and if so, who? |
| Was the bullying a one-off incident or part of a bigger problem? |
| How did the bullying make you feel? |
| Were you physically hurt during the incident? |
| Have you told anyone else about the bullying? (friends, family, staff, etc) |
| What sort of help would you like from BELS & TL to stop the bullying? |