

# Inspired Support

## Anti-Bullying Policy



**INSPIRED SUPPORT**

<b>Effective from:</b>	September 2022	<b>Review date:</b>	September 2025
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## 1. Statement

Inspired Support is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for everyone to enable them to reach their maximum potential, in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Customers of Inspired Support all have autism/neurodiversity. The nature of these difficulties can for some can make communication and understanding other points of view very difficult. This does not make us complacent to the nature of bullying, its causes and effects. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and if bullying does occur, all customers should be able to 'tell' and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a 'telling' organisation, which means that anyone who knows or suspects that bullying is happening is expected to inform those who are in a position to deal with it.

## 2. Aim

Our aim is to an atmosphere which is caring, protective and supportive where no one feels humiliated, intimidated or abused. Recognising bullying in all its forms is a vital part of this process. We aim to make it clear to customers, carers and mentors/volunteers that bullying is unacceptable. We believe that all customers have the right to live and learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment where difference is embraced and celebrated and individuals can flourish without fear of being bullied. Everyone has the right to be protected and it is the duty of all volunteers/mentors to work towards eliminating all forms of bullying. Finally, it is intended that this policy will complement other policies, including the:

- Equality Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Support Policy
- E-Safety Policy

## 3. Objectives of this Policy

- Mentors/volunteers, customers and carers should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- Mentors/volunteers, customers and carers should know what our policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All customers and carers should know what they should do if bullying arises.
- As an organisation we take bullying seriously. All parties should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

#### 4. Definition of Bullying

There is no single, agreed definition of bullying but it can take many forms. It makes other people feel intimidated, threatened or powerless to defend themselves. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim. We define bullying as behaviour that is:

- Repeated.
- Intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally.
- Often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation.

#### 5. Types of bullying

It takes many forms and can include:

- physical assault
- making threats
- verbal - name calling
- emotional - teasing, exclusion from games/activities
- Cyber bullying - via mobile or online. E.g. through email, messaging services and social media.

Cyber-bullying is defined as ‘an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual using electronic forms of contact repeatedly over time against a victim who cannot easily defend himself/herself.’ Cyber-bullying may be at a level where it is criminal in character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information in any media including internet sites (see E-Safety policy for further information including specific legislation).

#### 6. Common Factors

Whatever type of bullying behaviour happens, three factors are usually common:

- It is deliberately hurtful behaviour.
- It is a form of abuse which happens more than once and over a period of time.
- The person being bullied cannot defend themselves.

#### 7. Preventing and responding

We believe everyone can help to prevent bullying from beginning in the first place and can take action if they find out this is happening.

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Those who are bullying need to be supported to learn different ways of behaving. All organisations have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

#### 8. What can volunteers/mentors do?

- Always be alert to the possibility that people can be bullied, or, quite possibly, could be bullies themselves.
- Be supportive. If you sense something is wrong, then talk to the person to find out what the real problem is.
- Encouragement to 'Tell'. We recognise that it is important to create an atmosphere where those who are being bullied, or others who know about it, feel that they will be listened to and believed, and that action will be taken.
- Report the bullying to the appropriate person/organisation.

#### 9. What can the customer do?

- Ask the bully to stop.
- Do not retaliate by acting in the same way as the bully.
- Talk to a volunteer/mentor or family member - don't keep it a secret. Tell them what is happening so they can offer support.

#### 10. What can parents/carers do?

- Take an interest in their young person's day and social life encouraging them to talk openly about problems that they are facing.
- If parents/carers are worried their child may be experiencing bullying they should report the concerns to the director immediately.

#### 11. Procedures for mentors/volunteers

- Listen carefully to the customer, taking their concerns seriously and ensuring they know they are being listened to.
- Offer reassurance to the customer that they have taken a positive step discussing their concerns because strategies can be implemented to support them.
- Record the concerns in an appropriate format and pass this to the relevant people.

- The information should be reviewed and if it is identified that it is a one off then the information should be recorded and appropriate support provided to all parties to prevent the situation reoccurring.
- If a pattern of behaviour is identified or if it is of a more serious nature the incident should be discussed with the director.
- Ensure parents/carers are made aware of the situation and what action that is being taken to support the customer.

## 12. Procedures for directors

- Review the information and identify the process to be followed.
- Have a meeting with the person who is being bullied, avoid asking direct questions about incidents. Gain as much information as possible. Record minutes of the meeting.
- Contact all parents/carers to inform them of the situation and the intended action plan to deal with the situation.
- Meet with the person/s who are bullying explaining the situation and providing an opportunity to hear their views. Record minutes of the meeting.
- Discuss with the bullying individual or group the impact their actions have had on the other person/people.
- Discuss the action plan with them. Discuss how they will contribute to the action plan, can they make a commitment to make changes to their behaviour in the future.
- Action plan to be implemented which may involve educational sessions for e.g.
  - Visits from the police or other agencies relevant to the situation.
  - Individual sessions to focus on specific areas.
  - Personalised facilitated sessions that focuses on interaction between the individuals involved.
  - Personalised group sessions covering a range of topics linked to anti-bullying.
- Monitoring log to be kept up to date with any actions taken, ensuring the action plan is consistently reviewed to ensure strategies are being implemented to support the situation.
- After the incident/ incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.
- If necessary further action may need to be taken, such as a period of non-attendance at Inspired Support events.

Next review June 2023