Learner Anti Bullying and Harassment Policy

Effective from 1.1.21

Approved: Board of Directors

Responsible officer: Cordelia Singh

Next renew due: January 2022

Scope

The Policy applies to all learners within Skills4 and should be read in conjunction with The Student Discipline Procedure and Safeguarding and Vulnerable Adults Policy.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate Skills4's determination to ensure that all learners can enjoy a learning programme free from bullying of any kind physical or emotional via direct or distant (cyber bullying) interface.

Comment

Skills4 will promote anti bullying and harassment behaviour and an awareness of the seriousness with which bullying will be viewed through:

- The Curriculum delivery

- Pastoral support

- Policy statements within appropriate student literature

- Staff development

Within each of these areas lies an understanding that every individual has a responsibility to prevent bullying.

Responsibility for the implementation of our approach lies with everyone. All staff has a duty to ensure that all learners are aware of their responsibility.

General guidance on the nature of bullying and harassment, bullying behaviour and the effects of bullying is provided within this document.

Learners should be aware of the procedures for complaints, details can be found in the learners' literature.

Learners and parents should follow the complaints procedure if bullying occurs or is suspected. An allegation of bullying will be fully investigated and dealt with appropriately to ensure there is no recurrence.

When a person is suspected of bullying every effort will be made to establish the facts and appropriate action will be taken to ensure there is no recurrence.

The victim and bully will be offered support in the form of counselling if required.

Skills4 regards bullying and harassment behaviour as a serious offence and will apply disciplinary procedures where appropriate.

Policy Statements

Skills4 is committed to providing a safe, secure and positive environment in which everyone can develop and learn, making full use of the range of facilities available to them.

All Skills4 learners are entitled to be treated with respect and understanding, and to participate in any activity free from intimidation.

All learners at Skills4 are expected to listen actively to learners and act appropriately on information received in order to ensure that a safe, secure, positive environment exists.

Aims of the Policy

- To prevent bullying of any form, physical, verbal, cyber or mental

- To ensure that everyone is aware that bullying will not be tolerated

- To comply with all relevant Human Rights legislation

- To ensure that everyone understands that they have a responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of others

Objectives

- To provide and encourage a safe, listening environment in which learners feel free to discuss their concerns regarding bullying behaviour

- To raise everyone's awareness of bullying during induction and ongoing thereafter

- To identify and provide appropriate training for all staff in relation to identifying and preventing bullying

- To review annually the policy and procedures relating to bullying

- To monitor procedures and their effectiveness in preventing bullying

- To fully investigate any incidents of bullying and provide summary reports to senior management team

- To take positive actions to deal with bullying behaviour

- To provide appropriate training and support for victims of bullying and those involved in bullying behaviour

GENERAL GUIDANCE
The Nature of Bullying

Bullying may be defined as the repeated intentional abuse of power by an individual or group with the intent and motivation to cause distress to another individual or group. It may be physical, sexual, verbal or psychological in nature. It may occur frequently or infrequently, regularly or irregularly, but it should be taken seriously even if it has only occurred on one occasion.

It may also take the form of harassment and could include verbal and written harassment., displays of obscene messages, graffiti or inappropriate use of social network sites.

Bullying is not a phenomenon which occurs solely between young people. The above definition can also be seen to characterise some adult/adult, adult/child and child/adult relationships.

In more serious instances where adults abuse their power over a young person or a young person does over another young person bullying may be viewed as child abuse and should be seen within this content.

Not all aggressive behaviour is bullying. Behaviour, which appears to be bullying, may be exhibited by some young people, especially very young children, without the intention or awareness that it causes distress.

Some individuals may feel they are being bullied, even when there is no intention from others to cause them distress. Such perceptions of bullying should be taken seriously and action taken to address them.

Why it is important to do something about bullying?

Bullying is always damaging to those involved. The victim, the bully and those who witness or even know about the bullying are affected.

Victims

Victims may spend their life in fear. They often feel isolated from their peers and may believe that it is something about themselves which has led the bully to pick on them.

The victim's life may be characterised by unhappiness, a sense of desolation and desperation an exclusion from normal social experiences. Those feelings can permeate all aspects of the victim's life and may lead to a strong desire to escape the situation by running away from home, truanting from school, training, absences from work, and in some cases, self harming or taking their own life

The victims of bullying may have reduced self-esteem and self-worth and their performance in school, training, work and other areas often deteriorates.

Research evidence has shown that victims of bullying may be more likely to experience mental health problems and also that they are more likely to become bullies themselves.

Bullying Behaviour

Bullying is not a natural behaviour pattern and should not be seen as such.

People who often bully are likely to experience difficult and unhappy relationships with their peers and frequently need help to overcome these difficulties.

People who bully are unlikely to stop while they can continue unchallenged.

Cyber Bullying

Bullying also occurs by misuse of technologies e.g. emails, text messages and internet social network sites. Such occurrences must be tackled with equal importance as physical bullying.

Others

Bullying behaviour does not just affect the victim and perpetrator. Those who witness or know of bullying may live in fear that it will be their turn next.

Bullying promotes poor models of behaviour and may encourage others to imitate these models. People who have been bullied in one setting may well become bullies in another.

Evidence has shown that bullying is a major concern for parents and young people of all ages.

Organisations

Organisations which encourage or even tolerate bullying are less effective. Where values and culture of the organisation are dominated by fear and subordination, individuals are less efficient, morale is lower and absenteeism is more frequent.

Supporting documents and procedures

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy
Student Disciplinary Procedure
Staff Disciplinary Procedure
Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy