



Countering Bullying Policy

Approved by: Camilla McInnes	Date: 27/01/23
Last reviewed on:	27/01/23
Next reviewed on:	26/01/24

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Introduction

At Cameron and Cooper Limited, we are committed to providing a nurturing and supportive environment for young people, where their diverse needs are acknowledged and addressed. We recognise that in order for young people to reach their full potential, it is important to support them not only in their education, but also in their emotional, spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development. To achieve this goal, we strive to provide a variety of programs and resources that promote holistic growth and well-being, as well as a safe and inclusive environment where all young people feel valued and respected. We also work closely with parents, carers, and other relevant professionals to ensure that our young people receive the support they need to succeed. Ultimately, our goal is to empower young people to reach their full potential and become confident, responsible, and contributing members of society.

At Cameron and Cooper Limited, we strive to create an inclusive and safe environment for all young people, where they can reach their full potential. However, we understand that bullying can have a detrimental effect on this aim, and we take it seriously. Our staff lead by example and promote values of equality, respect, openness, and honesty in all interactions. They are proactive in addressing any form of bullying, whether it's through the use of strategies and systems in place, or by providing opportunities for change for both the bullies and the targets. We strive to work closely with young people to promote positive relationships, and to reduce bullying in line with the following relevant legislation and guidance:

- Children Act 2004
- Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations including the quality standards April 2015
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Education Act 2011
- Preventing and tackling bullying Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022

Furthermore, we understand the importance of prevention and education, so we provide regular training for staff and young people on how to recognise and prevent bullying, as well as providing resources and support for those who have experienced it. We also have a zero-tolerance policy for any form of bullying and we investigate and take appropriate actions for any reported incidents. Our goal is to create an environment where every young person feels safe and respected and can reach their full potential without fear of bullying.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

Cameron and Cooper Limited Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy

Cameron and Cooper Limited Complaints Procedure

3 Promoting Positive Relationships and Behaviour Policy
Cameron & Cooper Limited

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is a repeated behaviour by an individual or group that intentionally causes harm to another individual or group, whether it be physical or emotional. This type of behaviour can take on many forms and is often driven by prejudice or discrimination against certain groups. At Cameron and Cooper Limited, we understand that stopping violence and ensuring immediate safety is our top priority. We recognise that bullying entails an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the target and can manifest in various ways, with the perpetrator often having control over the relationship, making it difficult for the target to defend themselves.

It is crucial to understand that not all types of bullying can be handled within our organisation. Some forms of bullying can be considered criminal behaviour and may require involvement from external agencies such as the police or a child protection referral. At Cameron and Cooper Limited, we follow strict protocols and guidelines as outlined in our Child Protection and Safeguarding policy. Our staff are trained to recognise and report any incidents that may fall under this category, and we work closely with external agencies to ensure the safety and well-being of our young people. Additionally, we take appropriate actions to address the situation and provide support for both the target and the perpetrator, and we keep records of the incident for future reference. We strive to create a safe and inclusive environment for all young people, and we take all necessary steps to ensure their safety and well-being.

It is important to recognise that bullying is not limited to young people and can also occur among adults. As a staff team, it is crucial that we remain vigilant and address any indication of bullying among colleagues through our Staff Disciplinary, Grievance, harassment, and Whistleblowing Policy. We understand that bullying can be motivated by various factors, including race, and in such cases, we refer to our Equality and Diversity Policy to work with the individual(s) to help them understand and develop new perspectives on race and equality. It is important to remember that "bully" and "target" are labels that describe behaviour, not the person as a whole. We understand that bullying behaviour is learned and can be unlearned, and we strive to create a safe and inclusive environment for all.

Online bullying

The growing use of technology and the internet has led to the emergence of a new form of bullying, known as online bullying. This type of bullying can occur both inside and outside of school and can happen at any time of the day. The anonymity and ease of access provided by the internet can also make online bullying more pervasive, as

content can be easily shared with a large audience. In the UK, The Education Act 2011 provides teachers with specific powers to address online bullying by allowing them to search for and delete inappropriate images or files on electronic devices. Additionally, the Children Act 1989, the Care Act 2014 and the Mental Health Act 1983, and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) provide additional guidelines and protection for young people in the care setting, to ensure that they are safe and well-protected from any form of bullying.

Online bullying can include:

- **Harassment and trolling** – this is where a person may call someone names, or tease or humiliate them. For example, they might post nasty sexual comments posted on their social media or within an online game.
- **Gossip, rumours or lies** – this is where someone may share information about a person which is damaging to their reputation. It might be true or made up. For example, they may share gossip about a person’s sexual behaviour.
- **Impersonation** – this is where a person pretends to be someone else online, to share nasty or embarrassing things such as images and videos.
- **‘Outing’** – this is when someone may share personal information about another. For example, this might be publicly announcing someone’s sexuality or gender identity online. They may also share someone’s private images and videos without consent.
- **Excluding people** - this is when a person, or people, leave someone out of a group on purpose – for example, in group chats, apps and games.

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/> Advise the following steps to counter online bullying:

1. Tell an adult you trust.

Bullying can be hard to talk about but you shouldn’t feel that you have to handle it alone. Talk to an adult you trust. This could be your mum or dad, another family member or a teacher. They will support you and help you to make it stop. You can also talk to Childline by calling 0800 1111 or speaking to a Childline counsellor online.

2. Talk to someone your age.

Talk to a friend or if you don’t want to talk to someone you know, you can post messages and get advice on Childline's Message boards.

3. Block the bullies.

Most websites will let you block people to stop them from communicating with you. Find out how on most popular sites.

4. Keep the evidence.

Keep any nasty emails, texts, or web pages so you can show someone what’s been going on.

5. Report mean videos, pictures, comments or pages to the website you’ve found them on.

If your nude images have been shared in order to cause you harm and distress or someone is forcing you to take and share one, you can report it to [CEOP](#). CEOP will work with other professionals, which includes other police agencies, to help keep the young person safe.

Protected Characteristics

Any form of language or behaviour that makes an individual feel excluded or marginalised based on their protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010, will be considered as bullying. These protected characteristics include, but are not limited to, sexual orientation, gender identity, and association with individuals who are or are perceived to be gay, bisexual, or transgender. Such behaviour will be taken extremely seriously, and the appropriate measures outlined in this policy will be implemented. It is essential that all staff members understand that discrimination of any kind will not be tolerated and take proactive steps to prevent and address any incidents.

The Equality Act 2010 defines protected characteristics as:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

Working Proactively with Young People

Young people entering the care of Cameron and Cooper Limited will be provided with a comprehensive introduction to the Code of Conduct, which is outlined in the young person's handbook. This is to ensure that they have a clear understanding of the expected and acceptable behaviours while in care. During the placement and admissions meeting, young people will be made aware of the stance and processes in place to counter bullying. They will also be asked to agree and sign the Multimedia contract, which sets out guidelines for the use of technology and social media.

To further support young people in their understanding of bullying, tailored and creative key working sessions will be provided. These sessions will focus on addressing the specific needs of each individual and providing them with the tools and strategies to navigate and overcome bullying.

In addition to these targeted sessions, all young people will participate in PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic) sessions. These sessions will cover a range of topics related to interpersonal relationships and online safety. This will provide young people with the knowledge and skills to navigate the complexities of relationships and online interactions.

To further raise awareness and educate young people about bullying, the organisation will also run awareness days and group work sessions in the homes. These sessions will provide an opportunity for young people to discuss their experiences and learn from one another in a supportive and safe and supportive environment.

To ensure the safety and well-being of the young people in our care, Cameron and Cooper Limited closely monitors all forms of online communication through the Circle and Questido systems. Any alerts or concerns regarding safeguarding or bullying issues are immediately brought to the attention of relevant staff, who will follow up and investigate as necessary.

In cases where online bullying is reported, staff may request access to young people's electronic devices to investigate further. If young people refuse to cooperate or if the content found on their devices is concerning, the matter may be referred to the police for further investigation.

To proactively address any safeguarding or bullying concerns, staff may also actively monitor young people's online communications. This is done to ensure that any issues are quickly identified and addressed and that the young people in our care are kept safe and protected.

Procedure

At Cameron and Cooper Limited, we take the issue of bullying very seriously and have implemented a comprehensive procedure to address any instances of bullying that may occur within our organisation. The first step in this procedure is to ensure that all young people are familiar with the Code of Conduct and the stance on bullying, which is outlined in the young person's handbook. This is to ensure that they have a clear understanding of the expected and acceptable behaviours while in our care.

If a young person reports an instance of bullying, our staff will immediately investigate the matter. This may involve speaking with the young person who has reported the bullying, as well as any other young people or staff members who may have information about the incident. Our staff will also review any relevant electronic communications, such as email and social media, to gather additional information.

Based on the findings of the investigation, our staff will take appropriate action to address the bullying. This may include speaking with the young person who engaged in the bullying behaviour, providing support and counselling to the young person who was bullied, and implementing additional measures to prevent future instances of bullying. We will also provide support and counselling for the target, and work with all relevant parties to address the situation.

Responding to the needs of the target

At Cameron and Cooper Limited, the well-being and safety of the young people in our care is our top priority. If a member of staff witnesses a bullying incident or has one reported to them, they should take immediate action to support the target of the bullying. This includes checking in with the young person at the time of the incident to ensure that they are feeling okay and that they feel safe.

To ensure that the young person is receiving ongoing support, staff will follow up with the target, later, to check in and make sure they are still okay and coping well after having time to process the incident. Staff will also provide counselling and support, as well as take appropriate actions to address the bullying incident and prevent future occurrences.

In addition, staff should also report the bullying incident to the relevant parties, such as the shift leader, and document the incident, the actions taken and the outcome in the young person's file on Clear Care.

At Cameron and Cooper Limited, it is crucial that the views and experiences of the young people who have been targeted by bullying are taken into account when addressing the incident. Staff should actively listen to the young person and take their input into consideration when responding to the incident. It is important for the young person to understand that the incident is being taken seriously and that appropriate action will be taken.

When responding to the incident, staff will use a restorative approach, which may include measures such as counselling, support, and mediation. Staff should also explain to the young person that any consequences that may arise will be in line with the restorative approach and that they should not take any retaliatory action themselves.

It is important for young people to understand that restorative practice is not about blame or punishment, but rather it's about promoting healing and repair and fostering positive change. Staff should also remind young people that it's not their fault and that they should not feel guilty.

Recording

Staff are responsible for maintaining recording systems to ensure effective monitoring of bullying and proper management of persistent behaviour. Young people should be able to report bullying in any way they feel comfortable, and it is the staff's duty to handle each incident appropriately and document it accordingly.

All instances of bullying must be logged on Clear Care within 24 hours of occurrence. The perspectives of the young people involved should be included in the process as part of a restorative approach. If they decline participation, this should be noted with an explanation. Staff should document all bullying incidents, even if they are resolved immediately, to provide a comprehensive understanding of the bullying. The Bullying records are reviewed by the Home Managers and Senior Management Team.

Regular monitoring will reveal individuals who are frequently bullying or being bullied, enabling the staff to take action to change negative behaviours and support those who are being bullied.

At Cameron and Cooper Limited, we foster a culture that recognises and rewards positive, supportive, and friendly behaviour, and have implemented systems and practices to promote and acknowledge success. It is important to acknowledge and celebrate young people who make the effort to change negative behaviours learned out of necessity.

Monitoring Arrangements

The Senior Management Team (SMT) will oversee the implementation of this policy by conducting annual reviews and sharing them with relevant governors. The Lead Teacher will ensure compliance within the school and incorporate it into the education of students as appropriate. The Homes Managers will also ensure adherence to the policy in care settings.