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# HOPE2FAMILIES SAFEGUARDING POLICY

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**Preventing and responding to bullying**

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## **Table of contents:**

<b>How Hope2Families understands bullying:</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Vulnerability factors:</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Signs and indicators:</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Reporting:</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Responding to incidents:</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Preventing bullying:</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Form for recording incidents concerning young person/ leaders:</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Contact details:</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Find out more about:</b>	<b>17</b>

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## How Hope2Families understands bullying:

Bullying is when individuals or groups seek to harm, intimidate or coerce someone who is perceived to be vulnerable.

(Oxford English Dictionary, 2021).

It can involve people of any age, and can happen anywhere – at home, school or using online platforms and technologies (cyberbullying). This means it can happen at any time.

Bullying encompasses a range of behaviours which may be combined and may include the behaviours and actions we have set out below.

### Verbal abuse:

- Name-calling
- Saying nasty things to or about a child or their family

### Physical abuse:

- Hitting a child
- Pushing a child
- Physical assault.

### Emotional abuse:

- Making threats
- Undermining a child
- Excluding a child from a friendship group or activities.

### Cyberbullying/online bullying:

- Excluding a child from online games, activities or friendship groups
- Sending threatening, upsetting or abusive messages

- Creating and sharing embarrassing or malicious images or videos
- 'Trolling' - sending menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games
- Voting for or against someone in an abusive poll
- Setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child
- Creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name.

Bullying can be a form of discrimination, particularly if it is based on a child's disability, race, religion or belief, gender identity or sexuality.

### **Vulnerability factors:**

Any child can be bullied. Children who are seen by others as 'different' in some way may be targeted (Children's Commissioner for Wales, 2017).

This might be because of their:

- Physical appearance
- Race
- Faith or culture
- Gender identity
- Sexuality
- Disability or additional needs.

(Ditch the Label, 2019)

Or it could be because they:

- Appear anxious or have low self-esteem
- Lack assertiveness
- Are shy or introverted

### **Signs and indicators:**

Indicators that a child could be experiencing bullying include:

- Being reluctant to go to school
- Being distressed or anxious
- Losing confidence and becoming withdrawn
- Having problems eating and/or sleeping
- Having unexplained injuries
- Changes in appearance
- Changes in performance and/or behaviour at school

Adults may notice that a child isn't spending time with their usual group of friends, has become isolated or that other children's behaviour towards a child has changed.

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## Reporting:

If we have a concern about bullying, we will follow our anti-bullying procedures as soon as possible.

If we think a child is in immediate danger, we will contact the police on **999**. If we're worried a child is at risk of serious harm but they are not in immediate danger, we will share our concerns.

- **Follow our child protection and procedures.** As a charity that works with children and families we must have safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place.
- **Contact the NSPCC Helpline** on 0808 800 5000 or by emailing [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk). These trained professionals will talk through our concerns and will give us expert advice.
- **Contact our local child protection services.** Their contact details can be found on the website for the local authority the child lives in.
- **Contact the police.**

Services will risk assess the situation and take action to protect the child as appropriate either through statutory involvement or other support. This may include making a referral to the local authority.

> See information about recognising and responding to abuse via the NSPCC website

## Responding to incidents:

Hope2Families has a consistent approach to how we respond to bullying, which is outlined in this anti-bullying policy and our main safeguarding policy. This should be linked to your child protection policy.

## When responding to incidents or allegations of bullying it's important for staff and volunteers to:

- Listen to all the children involved to establish what has happened
- Record details of the incident and any actions they've taken
- Inform our nominated child protection lead
- Inform parents and carers (unless doing so would put a child at further risk of harm)
- Provide support to the child/children being bullied, children who witnessed the bullying and the child/children who has been accused of bullying

- Ask the child/children who have been bullied what they would like to happen next
- Consider appropriate sanctions for children that have carried out bullying
- Continue to monitor the situation even if the situation has been resolved.

It's important to review our anti-bullying policies and procedures regularly in the light of any incidents that have taken place, any new information learned and best practice.

Our anti-bullying procedures include information about how we will respond to bullying that takes place outside our charity, but involves children who know each other through our activities. This should include online bullying, bullying that happens on the way to and from school, and bullying that happens in other public places.

Bullying outside our charity setting, will be addressed by the leadership by applying our existing procedures, contacting external parties involved, ie. schools, churches, to ensure the leaders/parents there resolve the problem concerning the young people who attend our events.

### **When responding to online bullying:**

- We want to make sure children know not to retaliate online or reply to any bullying messages
- Make sure children understand how they can take steps to prevent online bullying from happening again, for example by changing their contact details, blocking contacts or leaving a chat room
- Ask the child if they have shared the bullying content with anyone else (if so, who)

### **If bullying content has been circulated online, take action to contain it:**

- If appropriate, ask the person responsible to remove the content
- Contact the host (such as the social networking site) and ask them to take the content down
- Contact the NSPCC helpline for advice about what to do.

**\*If the content is illegal, contact the police who can give advice and guidance\***

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## Preventing bullying:

It's important that we create a culture where it is clear bullying will not be tolerated and children feel they can tell someone if they have a problem..

This might include:

- talking to young people about healthy relationships and challenging unhealthy behaviours
- promoting sources of help and information such as Childline.

## Talk to children about:

- What bullying is
- How it affects the people involved
- Why people bully others
- What bystanders should do when they witness bullying
- The importance of children telling someone if they or someone else is being bullied

> Find out more about how to have difficult conversations with children via the NSPCC website

Consider whether there are any areas where bullying may be more likely to happen, for example areas that feel unsupervised. We should take steps to make these areas safer, for example making sure staff do regular checks.

Our staff and volunteers should be alert to the dynamics of children's relationships. Consider what approaches might be appropriate to prevent any situations that might escalate into bullying.



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## Form for recording incidents concerning young person/ leaders:

The leaders details:

Name:	Role:
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Young person/ incident in question:

Name

Age

Date

Time

Gender

Parents names

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Specific needs:

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What is the nature of concern?

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When and where did the incident/ disclosure?

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What was happening before the incident took place?

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What the child said or did that gave you cause for concern (write down their exact words if possible)

Whether the behaviour appeared spontaneous or premeditated?

Who witnessed the incident?

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**What did the young person say or do?**

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**Was there indicators/ signs of abuse (if applicable)**

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**Did the young person indicate any particular abuser?**

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**Details of any immediate action taken (if applicable)**

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**Any additional comments**

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**Person reporting**

<b>Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
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**Designated officer**

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Date received:</b>
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**Summary of explanation & initial actions | including dates**

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**Who was informed?**

<b>Time/ Date:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Their role:</b>	<b>Notes:</b>

**Witness 1**

<b>Name/ role:</b>	<b>Address:</b>
<b>Phone no:</b>	<b>Signature:</b>

**Witness 2**

<b>Name/ role:</b>	<b>Address:</b>
<b>Phone no:</b>	<b>Signature:</b>

Line manager

Name/ role:
Summary & explanation of initial actions including dates:

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**Contact details:****Nominated child protection lead:**

Marc Taylor

**07514993163****wildfireministrys@gmail.com****Deputy child protection lead:**

Heather Taylor

**07856201383****wildfireministrys@gmail.com****NSPCC Helpline****0800 800 5000****We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.****This policy was last reviewed on:**..... **24th May 2022** .....(date)**Signed:** ..... *Marc Taylor* .....

***[this will be signed by the most senior person with responsibility for safeguarding in our charity, for example the safeguarding lead on our board of trustees].***

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**Find out more about:**