



Anti Bullying Policy

Mendip Outdoor Pursuits Education Centre

Introduction

The staff at Mendip Outdoor Pursuits recognise the contribution they make to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. We recognise that all staff, have a full and active part to play in protecting them from harm. All staff believe that Mendip Outdoor Pursuits should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment which promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child or vulnerable adult. All staff believe that bullying will not be tolerated in any form and is defined to mean; "Deliberate hurtful behaviour repeated over a period of time and in circumstances where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves"

The aims of this policy are:

- To support the child or vulnerable adult's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.
- To raise the awareness of both teaching and non-teaching staff of the need to safeguard bullied young people.
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring young people known or thought to be at risk of harm from bullying.
- To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff, schools and centre users.
- To develop a structured procedure within the company, that will be followed by all members of Mendip Outdoor Pursuits staff in cases of suspected bullying abuse.
- To be aware of other agencies and contact, especially within the Schools, Police and Social Services.
- To ensure that all adults within our company who have access to children and vulnerable adults have been checked as to their suitability, and make them aware that bullying has no place in or out of school.

Procedures

We will ensure that:

- We have a designated member of staff for Safeguarding who undertakes regular training, where bullying is identified as abuse in its own right.
- We have a Deputy member of staff who will act in the Designated Person's absence and deal with any bullying issues.
- All members of staff develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse and all permanent staff have received training under the guidance of the designated member of staff following the NSPCC Safeguarding manual.
- All members of staff know how to respond to a young person who discloses bullying.
- Our procedures will be regularly reviewed and up-dated.
- All new members of staff will be given a copy of our safeguarding procedures as part of their induction into Mendip Outdoor Pursuits.

Responsibilities

The Designated Person is responsible for:

- Keeping written records of allegations of bullying and concerns about a child or vulnerable adult even if there is no need to make an immediate referral for action.
- Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from general information.
- Ensuring that an indication of further record-keeping in terms of verbal advice given is logged on a specific form.
- Ensuring that any young person who may be at risk is accommodated accordingly in consultation with user groups and their Designated Person.

Supporting Children and vulnerable adults

We recognise that a child who has intermittent or persistent abuse by bullying may find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self worth. We recognise that a child or vulnerable adult in these circumstances may feel helpless and humiliated. We recognise that a child or vulnerable adult may feel self blame. We recognise that the school, and voluntary organisations, may provide the only stability in the lives of children and vulnerable adults who have been abused or who are at risk of harm. We recognise that this stability could be compromised if bullying is not taken seriously. This will be addressed as soon as it is known or signs of it become apparent. We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child or vulnerable adult in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.

Mendip Outdoor Pursuits will support all young persons by:

- Encouraging self-esteem and self-confidence whilst not condoning aggression or bullying.
- Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment with respect to others within their time at Mendip Outdoor Pursuits. Wherever possible/appropriate the delivery of anti bullying messages in group based activities.
- Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults; including, wherever possible, the staff involving themselves in thematic Local and National anti bullying campaigns.
- Notifying Children's Social Services as soon as there is a significant concern.

Confidentiality

We recognise that all matters relating to bullying and general Safeguarding are confidential. The Designated Person at Mendip Outdoor Pursuits will disclose any bullying information about a young person to other members of staff on a need to know basis only. All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share bullying information with other agencies in order to safeguard children and vulnerable adults. All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child or vulnerable adult to keep secrets.

Supporting Staff

We recognise that staff working at Mendip Outdoor Pursuits who have become involved with a child or vulnerable adult who has suffered harm from bullying, or appears to be likely to suffer harm from bullying may find the situation stressful and upsetting. We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the Designated Person and to seek further support as appropriate.

Allegations against staff

We understand that a pupil may make an allegation of bullying against a member of staff. This will be treated like any other form of abuse. If such an allegation is made, the member of staff or company user receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Mendip Outdoor Pursuits Designated Person. The Designated Person on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the Principal Officer Safeguarding for Schools & Early Years, or in their absence, the Safeguarding Advisory Service. If the allegation made to a member of staff or company user concerns the Designated Person, then they will immediately inform the Deputy Head at Mendip Outdoor Pursuits, who will consult with the Principal Officer for Schools & Early Years or the Safeguarding Advisory Service.

Whistleblowing

We recognise that children and vulnerable adult cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues or other users.

Physical Intervention

We have adopted a policy on Physical Intervention and understand that staff must only use physical intervention as a last resort, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person. We understand that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child or vulnerable adult may be considered under safeguarding or disciplinary procedures.

Prevention

We recognise that the company plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to young people by providing pupils with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.

The Mendip Outdoor Pursuit's team will therefore:

Establish and maintain an ethos where children and vulnerable adults feel secure and are encouraged to talk about bullying and are always listened to, whether they are the victim or the perpetrator. Ensure that all children and vulnerable adults know there is an adult in or out of the Mendip Outdoor Pursuits setting, whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty in regards to bullying as a specific issue. Access to helpline numbers will be displayed and encouraged. Include in the Mendip Outdoor Pursuits syllabus, where possible, opportunities to

equip children and vulnerable adults with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help.

Health & Safety

Policies on Health & Safety are set out in a separate document. It reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children and vulnerable adults both within the company's environment when undertaking trips and visits. This includes all staff working with children and vulnerable adults. Our staff adhere to high standards of instruction and follow National Governing Body Guidelines in all Outdoor and indoor activities.