



FORMERLY KNOWN AS SHABBAT WALK

ANTI BULLYING POLICY

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STATEMENT OF INTENT

At Hand in Hand we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our staff, volunteers and service users, so they can feel relaxed and secure. Hand in Hand benefits from having staff and volunteers from a cross-section of varying levels of observance within the Orthodox Jewish culture. Our staff and volunteers bring a diversity of experience and understanding which adds to the richness of our environment.

Bullying or discrimination of any kind is unacceptable at Hand in Hand. If bullying does occur, any member of staff, volunteer or service user should be able to disclose this and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

We are a 'telling' organisation. This means that anyone who knows that bullying or discrimination is taking place is expected to tell the staff.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim. Bullying can be:

- Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding items, threatening gestures), exploiting known issues, humiliating, being judgmental, ignoring, using body language to upset others.
- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, spitting, or any form of violence (including 'wedging', bundling en masse on top of individuals etc);
- Unwanted: physical contact or sexually abusive comments;
- Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, targeting 'differences' such as background, disability, skills, appearance (e.g. hair colour, size etc.), nature of family units, alternative lifestyle choices.
- Online – including over phone, email, computers etc

PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

Hand in Hand will not tolerate discrimination or bullying of any kind that goes against any areas of the Protected Characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity). This may include any of the unwanted and unacceptable behaviours mentioned above as well as:

- Race and religion: racial taunts, mockery, demeaning language, graffiti, gestures;
- Homophobic: because of, or focusing on the issue of, sexuality;
- LGBT: bullying against those that define themselves as LGBT. Indeed, Hand in Hand will protect and support children that identify themselves as LGBT (or wish to pursue another alternative lifestyle);
- Familial: taunts and other verbal examples regarding family circumstances;

- Disability: mockery, taunts, humiliation, exploitation, torment and physical bullying towards those with a disability or any other handicap, including and as well as those children with Special Educational Needs.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO RESPOND TO BULLYING?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Individuals who harass need to learn different ways of behaving. We have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying. At Hand in Hand we take bullying seriously.

Staff, volunteers and service users should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported. Bullying will not be tolerated.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

A child or young person or vulnerable adult may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of possible signs and they should investigate if a child or vulnerable person:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school/home/to a different location suggested by the Hand in Hand volunteer, such as a park;
- Changes their usual routine;
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic);
- Begins to truant;
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence;
- Starts stammering;
- Runs away;
- Discloses to you that they cry themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares;
- Feels ill in the morning;
- Begins to do poorly in school work;
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged;
- Has possessions which are damaged or “go missing”;
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully);
- Has monies continually “lost”;
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises;
- Comes home starving (frightened to go to dining hall);
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable;
- Is harassing other children or siblings;
- Stops eating;
- Is frightened to say what’s wrong;
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above;
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

PROCEDURES

What a child or young person or a vulnerable adult should do if they feel they are being bullied:

- They should not ignore comments or actions that upset them or make them feel uncomfortable.
- When another person says or does something to a child or young person or vulnerable adult which makes them feel they are being bullied, they should say one of these two key phrases to the person:
 1. "I've had enough. I want you to stop doing that" or
 2. "I've had enough. I want you to stop saying that".
- These phrases are not intended to make the other person stop the bullying immediately, however, if the victim uses these phrases, it is easier for Hand in Hand to manage the bullying.
- Any child or young person or vulnerable adult saying these phrases would let the offender know that they regard the situation as one of bullying and that the incident would be reported to a member of our staff.

FOLLOWING UP A COMPLAINT OF BULLYING

1. When a complaint is lodged by a service user with a member of staff alleging bullying by a volunteer, this will be followed up by the coordinator and FLO initially.
2. Depending on the nature of the complaint, this may well be immediately elevated to the CEO, who takes personal responsibility for managing allegations of bullying in Hand in Hand.
3. The complainant may be asked to write out their version of events or it will be recorded by the member of staff they are speaking with. This may include asking background questions to try to ascertain the extent of the misunderstanding, any possible provocation on their part; any past relationships with the person(s) accused et cetera.
4. As soon as possible the volunteer subject to the allegation will be spoken with. They will be informed of the allegation. They will be asked for their version of events. Specifically, they will be asked to comment on whether the allegation is true. Their version of events will be recorded and whether they feel the other person has been harassed. Other relevant questions, as mentioned in point 1 above, will be put to the accused.
5. At this point, resolution is usually possible and an agreement covering the relationship and future conduct of the initiator of bullying may be made, if this were appropriate.

OUTCOMES

a) If it is clear and proven that bullying has occurred then written records will be kept at each stage of the investigation by staff involved in monitoring or investigating, usually the FLO or coordinator. All staff at Hand in Hand have an important role in detecting and reporting incidents of suspected bullying, whether during or outside of when volunteering takes place. Any concerns should be mentioned to the CEO so that a picture can be built up and a decision taken about what action and support is required.

b) Depending on the nature of the bullying, volunteers may be dismissed from Hand in Hand and excluded from all future participation.

c) If it is deemed that a child, young person or vulnerable adult who is also a service user has bullied, it will be up to the CEO to determine whether Hand in Hand will continue to offer support to their family.