



Policy on Bullying when working with children/young people

Cottage Autism Network will not tolerate any bullying behaviour by children/young people or adults and will deal with any incidents immediately in accordance with this policy. This policy covers:

- Children/young people bullying other children/young people.
- Adults bullying children/young people.
- Children/young people bullying adults.

Policy is as follows:

- All children/young people and adults who take part in activities run by CAN will be treated with dignity and respect by adults and by other children/young people and will not be subject to bullying.
- All children/young people and adults who participate in activities run by CAN have a responsibility to treat other children/young people with dignity, respect and refrain from bullying behaviour.
- It will be made clear to all children/young people and adults participating in CAN events/activities that bullying is not acceptable and that other children/young people and adults should be treated with dignity and respect.
- There will be adequate supervision by CAN directors and other staff/volunteers at all events/activities run by CAN involving children/young people. This will help to prevent bullying.
- CAN or other staff/volunteers will monitor all events/activities run by CAN involving children/young people to ensure that no bullying is taking place.
- If a CAN employee or other staff/volunteer witnessed bullying or suspects that bullying is taking place he/she will following the procedure outlined below:
- If a child/young person witnessed bullying or suspects that bullying is taking place he/she should report it to CAN facilitators or other staff/volunteer. CAN facilitators or other staff/volunteers will follow the procedure outlined below.
- If a child/young person is the victim of bullying he/she should report it to a CAN facilitator or other staff/volunteer who will follow the procedure outlined below.

Procedure for dealing with bullying

All reports of bullying will be recorded, investigated and dealt with by an appropriate CAN Board member or other volunteer.

CAN Board member or other volunteer/ staff who has received the complaint or witnessed the bullying will consult with CAN Designated Liaison Person, if present or the most senior CAN member present to decide who is the most appropriate person to follow up on the complaint.

The person dealing with the complaint will keep a record of the alleged bullying incidents and the investigation and action taken.

The person dealing with the complaint will speak separately to all involved in order to get all sides of the story. The person should also speak to others and will seek answers to what, where, when who, and why.

If the victim of the alleged bullying is a child, their parent/guardian will be informed of the complaint and the outcome of the investigation.

If the perpetrator of the alleged bullying is a child, their parent/guardian will be informed of the complaint and the outcome of the investigation.

If the perpetrator of the bullying is an adult, the Chairperson of CAN will be informed of the complaint and the outcome of the investigation.

If a person dealing with the complaint concludes that bullying has not taken place, the following action will be taken:

- The complainant, alleged victim and alleged perpetrators will be informed of the outcome of the investigation and the reasons why it was concluded that bullying did not take place.
- Support will be given to the complainant, alleged victim and alleged perpetrator's if necessary.
- A meeting will be arranged between the alleged victim and alleged perpetrators to discuss the issues involved if both are agreeable and it is deemed appropriate.
- If the staff member dealing with the complaint concludes that bullying has taken place, the following action will be taken:
 - The complainant, alleged victim and alleged perpetrator will be informed of the outcome of the investigation and the reasons why it was concluded that bullying took place.
 - Support will be given to the victim.
 - A meeting will be arranged between the alleged victim and alleged perpetrators to discuss the issues involved if both are agreeable and it is deemed appropriate.
 - A meeting will be held with the perpetrator to discuss the bullying behaviour.
 - They will be informed of the disciplinary action which will be taken as a result of this bullying behaviour.

Disciplinary action

When the enquiry into the alleged bullying incident has taken place and it has been concluded that bullying occurred, it will be necessary to take some disciplinary action against the perpetrator of the bullying. The disciplinary action should be agreed between at least two CAN directors and should be appropriate to the seriousness of the incidents. If the perpetrator of the bullying is a child/young person, the parent/guardian of the child/young person and the child/young person will be informed

of the disciplinary action which will be taken. If the perpetrator of the bullying is an adult the following people will be informed of the disciplinary action which will be taken:

- CAN Chairperson
- The Perpetrator

The options for disciplinary action include:

- For serious incidents involving children/young people, sending the child/young person home and not allowing them to participate in any further CAN events/activities.
- For less serious incidents involving children/young people, allowing the child/young person to continue to participate in the event/activity once they have apologised to the victim and stated that they would not engage in any further bullying behaviour. Their behaviour would then be closely monitored.
- Providing support to the child/young person to get them to understand that their behaviour is not acceptable and monitoring their behaviour.
- For serious incidents involving a CAN volunteer, he/she will be removed from all contact with the children.

Updated September 2021