

Fernheath Play

26: Bullying

Fernheath Play is committed to providing an environment for children that is safe, welcoming and free from bullying. Bullying of any form is unacceptable at Fernheath, whether the offender is a child or an adult. The victim is never responsible for being the target of bullying.

Everyone involved in the centre, staff, children and parent/carers, will be made aware of Fernheath's stance towards bullying. Such behaviour will not be tolerated or excused under any circumstances.

Fernheath Play defines bullying as the repeated harassment of others through emotional, physical, verbal or psychological abuse. Examples of such behaviour are as follows:

Emotional: Being deliberately unkind, shunning or excluding another person from a group or tormenting them. For example, forcing another person to be 'left out' of a game or activity, passing notes about others or making fun of another person.

Physical: Pushing, scratching, spitting, kicking, hitting, biting, taking or damaging belongings, tripping up, punching or using any other sort of violence against another person.

Verbal: Name-calling, put-downs, ridiculing or using words to attack, threaten or insult. For example, spreading rumours or making fun of another person's appearance. Using homophobic language.

Psychological: Behaviour likely to instil a sense of fear or anxiety in another person.

Cyber: Misuse of internet chat rooms, email and instant messaging.

Mobile: Threats, emotional or verbal by text message and phone calls or use of camera.

Preventing Bullying Behaviour

The centre manager and the staff will make every effort to create a tolerant and caring environment at Fernheath, where bullying behaviour is not acceptable. Staff will discuss the issues surrounding bullying openly, including why bullying behaviour will not be tolerated and what the consequences of bullying behaviour will be.

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. Children or adults who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

Dealing with Bullying Behaviour

Despite all efforts to prevent it, bullying behaviour is likely to occur on occasion and the centre recognises this fact. In the event of such incidents, the following principles will govern Fernheath's response:

- All incidents of bullying will be addressed thoroughly and sensitively.
- Children will be encouraged to immediately report any incident of bullying that they witness. They will be reassured that what they say will be taken seriously and handled carefully.
- Staff has a duty to inform the Centre Manager if they witness an incident of bullying involving children or adults at the centre.
- If a child or a member of staff tells someone that they are being bullied, they will be given the time to explain what has happened and reassured that they were right to tell.
- The individual who has been the victim of bullying will be helped and supported by the staff team. They will be kept under close supervision and staff will check on their welfare regularly.
- In most cases, bullying behaviour can be addressed according to the strategies set out in the Behaviour Management policy. The bully will be encouraged to discuss their behaviour and think through the consequences of their actions. Where appropriate, they will be encouraged to talk through the incident with the other person concerned.
- Where bullying behaviour persists, more serious actions may have to be taken, as laid out in the Suspensions and Exclusions policy.
- A member of staff will inform the parents/carers of all the children involved in a bullying incident at the earliest possible opportunity. If appropriate, staff will facilitate a meeting between the relevant parents/carers. At all times, staff will handle such incidents with care and sensitivity.
- All incidents of bullying will be reported to the manager and will be recorded in the Incident Record Book. In the light of reported incidents, the Centre Manager, Trustees and other relevant staff will review Fernheath's procedures in respect of bullying.

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Staff should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from the centre
- changes their usual routine
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings at the centre
- is frightened to say what's wrong

- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber-message is received

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

Accepted and approved by Management Committee

Date.....

Signed by.....

Fernheath Play

29: Uncollected Children

Fernheath Play has the highest regard for the safety of the children in our care from the moment they arrive to the moment that they leave.

At the end of every session, the centre will ensure that all children are collected by a parent, carer or designated adult for those under 8 years, in accordance with the Arrivals and Departures policy. If for some reason a child is not collected at the end of a session, the following procedures will be activated.

- If a parent, carer or designated adult is more than 15 minutes late in collecting their child, the Centre Manager will be informed.
- The centre manager will call the parent, carer or designated adult, and use any other emergency contact details available in order to try to ascertain the cause for the delay, and how long it is likely to last. Messages will always be left on any answerphone requesting a prompt reply.
- While waiting to be collected, the child will be supervised by at least two members of staff who will offer them as much support and reassurance as is necessary.
- If, after repeated attempts, no contact is made with the parent, carer or designated adult, and a further period of 30 minutes has elapsed, the centre manager will call the local social care team department for advice.
- In the event of the social care team being called and responsibility for the child being passed to a child protection agency, the centre manager will attempt to leave a further telephone message with the parent/carers or designated adults' answerphone. Furthermore, a note will be left on the door of the centre's premises informing the parent, carer or designated adult of what has happened. The note will reassure them of their child's safety and instruct them to contact the local social care team at Bournemouth Borough Council.
- Under no circumstances will a child be taken to the home of a member of staff, or away from the centre's premises unless absolutely necessary, in the course of waiting for them to be collected at the end of a session.
- The child will remain in the care of the centre until they are collected by the parent, carer or designated adult, or alternatively placed in the care of the social care team.
- Incidents of late collection will be recorded by the centre manager and discussed with parents/carers at the earliest opportunity. Parents and carers will be informed that persistent late collection may result in the imposition of a fine of up to £40.

Accepted and approved by Management Committee

Date.....

Signed by.....

Fernheath Play

30: Missing Children

Fernheath Play has the highest regard for the safety of the children in our care. Staff will always be extremely aware of the potential for children to go missing during sessions.

Even when all precautions are properly observed, emergencies can still arise. Therefore members of staff will undertake periodic head counts, especially at the transition points between sessions (in addition to the registration procedures set out in the Arrival and Departures policy). If for any reason a member of staff cannot account for a child's whereabouts during a session at the centre, the following procedure will be activated:

- The member of staff in question will inform both the centre manager and the rest of the staff team that the child is missing and a thorough search of the entire premises will commence. The staff team will be careful not to create an atmosphere of panic and to ensure that the other children remain safe and adequately supervised.
- The centre manager will nominate two members of staff, one male and one female, to search the area surrounding the premises. All staff will be extra vigilant to any potentially suspicious behaviour or persons in and around the centre.
- If after 15 minutes of thorough searching the child is still missing, the centre manager will inform the police and then the child's parent/carer.
- While waiting for the police and the parent/carer to arrive, searches for the child will continue. During this period, other members of staff will maintain as normal a routine as is possible for the rest of the children at the centre.
- The centre manager will be responsible for meeting the police and the missing child's parent/carer. The centre manager will co-ordinate any actions instructed by the police, and do all they can to comfort and reassure the parents/carers.
- Once the incident is resolved, the centre manager and the staff team will review relevant policies and procedures and implement any necessary changes (paying particular note to the relevant provisions of the centre's Site Security and Risk Assessment policies).
- All incidents of children going missing from the centre will be recorded in the Incident Record Book, and in cases where either the police or social care have been informed, Ofsted will also be informed, as soon as is practicable.

Accepted and approved by Management Committee

Date.....

Signed by.....