

Futures Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy

Policy Number	FUT002
Policy Name	Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy
Issue Date	9 th January 2023
Review Date	10 th January 2024
Owner	Futures Development Lead
Reviewing Body	Executive Team

Futures seeks to engage, inspire and empower young people to become active contributors in their local communities by offering bespoke learning opportunities, work placements, employability skills and supported housing experiences.

Stay local, learn local, live local

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Introduction

Futures is committed to the promotion and development of equality and respect for diversity, providing a supportive, friendly and safe environment for learners, staff and visitors without fear of being bullied or harassed.

Any form of bullying or harassment will not be tolerated, and all learners are encouraged to inform the staff at Futures if they are being bullied or harassed or if they are aware that others are. This includes bullying and harassment in the online world (social networking sites /mobile phones) as well as in the real world.

Definition of bullying

Bullying is defined as: ‘behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.’ ([DfE Guidance, Preventing and Tackling Bullying, 2018](#))

Forms of bullying

- **Physical:** Pushing, hitting, kicking, pinching or any use of violence or unwanted physical contact
- **Verbal:** Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, repeated teasing, making threats

- **Emotional:** excluding from social groups, tormenting (e.g., hiding books, clothes etc.) and could be linked to medical, SEN or disability
- **Cyberbullying:** sending of unsolicited emails, unauthorised taking or posting photographs, use of text and social networking sites to bully others
- **Racial/cultural/religious in nature** – including taunts, graffiti or gestures
- **Sexual:** unwanted physical contact, gestures or sexual language and attitudes
- **Homophobic:** upsetting comments, gestures, name calling focusing on sexuality or the use of homophobic or transphobia language

Futures is committed to ensuring the protection and support of groups identified under the Equality Act 2010. We recognise that bullying can occur in or outside of Futures and may involve any member of Futures, including adults (staff or parents), and we will respond to it in all its forms.

Definition of harassment

Harassment is unwanted behaviour that you find offensive or makes you feel intimidated or humiliated. It can happen on its own or alongside other forms of discrimination.

Unwanted behaviour could be:

- spoken or written words or abuse
- offensive emails, tweets or comments on social networking sites
- images and graffiti
- physical gestures
- facial expressions
- jokes

You don't need to have previously objected to something for it to be unwanted.

Harassment is unlawful discrimination under the [Equality Act 2010](#) if it's because of or connected to one of these things:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

The Equality Act calls these things **protected characteristics**. Harassment because of one of these characteristics is called **harassment related to a protected characteristic**.

How Futures responds to bullying or harassment

All reports of bullying or harassment will be taken seriously and addressed as quickly as possible. The team at Futures will determine the nature and the extent of the incident(s) and will take actions appropriate to the circumstance.

Staff procedure for reporting bullying or harassment

- If bullying or harassment is suspected or reported (this includes bullying or harassment that you have been told about or witnessed), the incident must be responded to immediately by the member of staff who has been approached.
- All reports will be logged by the Futures Manager and investigated with HR support where appropriate.
- Once a report of is received, the Futures Manager should meet with the "victim" and agree how they would like to proceed/resolve the situation. The Futures Manager will lead the investigation.

- If there is evidence that bullying or harassment has occurred, it will be dealt with through the disciplinary process.
- The Futures Manager is also the designated safeguarding lead and will make a report and take further guidance from the Safeguarding Lead in the charity if they believe the learner is at risk of significant harm.
- It may be appropriate to involve parents/carers or the police at this stage. Anonymity cannot always be guaranteed as the Futures team has a duty to safeguard and protect learners. Still, every effort will be made to deal with the matter sensitively and maintain anonymity where possible.
- All follow-ups and outcomes will be recorded on student's personal folders to ensure that the process is adhered to and any issues resolved.
- Records will be kept secure, and any reference to these in the quality folder will be anonymised but reflected upon to improve practice once a term at quality improvement meetings.
- The Futures Manager will analyse this and share the findings with the Executive Team.

Recording incidents

When a learner reports bullying or harassment, the following information should be gathered:

- Dates, times and place of incidents
- Name of any witnesses
- What actually happened
- How it made them feel
- Any action taken, e.g. reported to a member of staff
- Original copies of any correspondence or written material connected with the issue
- Where cyber incidents have taken place, printouts should be obtained wherever possible. If the incident involves indecent images, stop the investigation and inform the Safeguarding Lead. Do not ask to see the images or for them to be shared with you. Ask the learner not to delete or share while the investigation takes place

Support

Learners who allege they have been bullied or harassed will be supported by being:

- Given an immediate opportunity to share their concerns with a member of staff of their choice
- Given reassurance
- Offered continuous support

Learners who have been accused of bullying or harassment or have been found to have bullied or harassed another learner will:

- Have the opportunity to discuss what has happened and reflect on their involvement
- If appropriate, will be given the opportunity to change their behaviour, being supported and encouraged to do so
- Might be reported to the police by the Futures Manager if a criminal offence has occurred

Futures Anti-Bullying and Harassment – Learner Guide

What do we mean by bullying or harassment?

Any behaviour that is unwelcome, unwanted, inappropriate or unacceptable to someone. It can include inappropriate behaviour of a sexual nature, sometimes sexual harassment. It will often cause someone to feel embarrassed, uncomfortable, humiliated or distressed.

Can you give me some examples?

It can include

- Name-calling
- Using words associated with a person in negative way, for example, using the word 'gay' in a negative way
- Graffiti
- Embarrassing comments or suggestions that make people feel uncomfortable
- Offensive jokes
- Spreading rumours
- Inappropriate touching
- Physical or verbal abuse
- Making fun about someone, for example, because they are Muslim, disabled or gay or from a black and minority ethnic background
- Sending offensive emails or texts
- Refusing to work with someone
- Sexual innuendo

What should I do if I am being bullied or harassed?

Talk to someone you trust, for example your Futures Education Lead, Futures coaches or Futures Manager who will note the details of your concern.

What will we do?

We will take your concerns seriously and listen to what you have to say. We will talk to you about taking action, which can be:

- Formally reporting the behaviour so we can investigate using the charities disciplinary procedures
- Not take any further action at the moment. You can choose to formally report the harassment or bullying at a later date or if it happens again

Our expectations

Everyone is responsible for ensuring that Futures is a provision where everyone is respected and no one experiences harassment and bullying. Any learner or member of staff found to be bullying or harassing someone will be subject to the relevant disciplinary procedures.

AU staff = disciplinary policy that we have in place. Staff Handbook

The Futures team will promote harmony and group cooperation amongst all learners and staff, and tutorial sessions will involve researching and resolving issues that may arise.

There is an expectation of mutual respect and collaboration between learners for the greater good, and this is promoted and embedded in the ethos of Futures and preparing for adulthood.

Anti-bullying or harassment organisations and helplines

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Bullying UK: www.bullying.co.uk
- Childline: www.childline.org.uk Tel: 0800 1111
- Internet Matters: www.internetmatters.org
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk Tel: 0808 800 500
- The UK safer Internet centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk

Reviewed - Annually