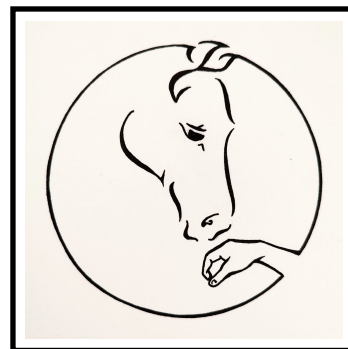


# WILTSHIRE EQUINE ASSISTED LEARNING

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## **Behaviour and Discipline Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy for Learners**

At W-EAL we expect and encourage self-regulation from the learners and understand that behaviour is their way of communicating. We will provide a safe environment for learners to explore their emotions through their behaviour in order to achieve an environment which enables emotional development, effective learning and high standards. We acknowledge our legal duties under the Equality Act 2010, in respect of Safeguarding, and in respect of learners with Special Educational Needs.

### **Aims**

- To develop a moral framework within which learners can mature emotionally and in which sound relationships can flourish
- To enable learners to develop a sense of self worth, respect and tolerance for others
- To produce an environment in which learners feel safe, secure, accepted and respected without being judged, forced, coerced or manipulated.

- **Objectives**

For learners to show

- Self confidence
- Self control
- Acceptance of others thoughts, feelings and behaviours
- Respect, courtesy and tolerance towards staff and each other
- Pride in their achievements
- Interest in their activities
- Empathy with others' feelings
- Respect for their environment and community

Staff are expected to be good at recognising emotional triggers in themselves and their learners and able to use their skills of active listening to manage and improve learner behaviour.

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- **Behaviour Management Methods**

A variety of methods are used to encourage and support learners to behave appropriately but mostly it involves active listening to the concerns of learners and using non-judgmental, non-violent communication with them to ensure that they feel that they are being heard. We promote a 'person-centred approach' and consider that 'behaviour is communication'. The theories of Carl Rogers and Marshall Rosenberg underpin our views on communication and person-centred approaches and facilitators are encouraged to communicate with learners to improve their level of understanding of the issues. A discussion to find out how we can resolve these issues and a plan to move forward then may lead to an improvement in behaviour. A learner who feels safe, listened to and valued is more likely to remain engaged and not need to use behaviour to demonstrate their feelings.

## **Rewards**

WEAL prefers the learner to be able to identify when they have behaved well and works on encouraging 'intrinsic' rewards. This is often achieved with 'reporting' what the learner has been doing and highlighting the good practice.

Extrinsic rewards in the form of treats, prizes or rewards are avoided as much as possible although we recognise the value of external qualifications and the motivation that can occur when a learner is awarded a certificate.

## **Unacceptable behaviour includes**

We recognise that if the learner is behaving in a way that may be considered 'unacceptable' in many situations it is often because they lack the skills to express their anxiety, fear, frustration or anger in any other form. In most cases of unacceptable behaviour from a learner we can often identify a trigger from an adult communication or other event.

The following list gives an idea of what might be considered to be unacceptable in many situations but can also be interpreted as the learner's reaction to anxiety, fear or an inability to communicate effectively with words.

- Disobedience to a reasonable instruction.
- Biting, spitting, hitting and/or kicking.
- Foul language and swearing.
- Making unkind remarks.
- Damaging property, including defacing property eg graffiti

- Aggression to adults or others. Stealing, including hiding another person's property.
- Carrying knives, drugs, alcohol or any offensive weapon into school.
- Racist or derogatory comments eg use of the word 'gay' or behaviour that causes offence eg all forms of bullying (see Anti-Bullying Policy)
- Fighting or encouraging others to fight.
- Forming gangs for the purpose of intimidating others.
- Bullying, in any form, eg cyberbullying (including from home), homophobic bullying.
- Wearing of any symbols that could cause offence to individuals and or groups, either by gender, sexuality, race, colour, culture, disability or religion.
- Putting themselves, other learner or adults at risk.
- Creating or spreading malicious 'gossip' about adults who work or volunteer in school, about other learner and families, and including the use of social media.
- Sexually inappropriate behaviour or suggestive language

#### **Management of Behaviour**

Our aim is to understand the cause of unacceptable behaviour and work with the person to help them to find more acceptable ways of communicating.

We aim to not punish or exclude learners but aim to support them in managing their behaviour. In extreme circumstances or where it was felt that staff or other learners were at risk from the behaviour exclusion may be necessary but this would follow every attempt to help the learner and discussion with the learner/ parents/referrer

Incidents of unacceptable behaviour will be recorded as an incident and in learner reports. We will liaise with referrers as needed.

#### **Confiscation of Inappropriate Items:**

A member of staff may confiscate, retain or dispose of a learners' property so long as it is reasonable in the circumstances. The law protects staff from liability of damage to, or loss of confiscated items, provided they acted lawfully.

Once an item is confiscated, the member of staff must make an effort to keep the property safe. The confiscated item must then be returned to the child's parent, at which time, the member of staff will explain to the parent why the property was confiscated. Staff also have the power to search without consent for prohibited items, including;

- Knives, weapons
- Stolen items
- Cigarettes, lighters, matches (incl lighter fuel and propellants)
- Drugs, alcohol
- Fireworks
- Pornographic material
- Any article that could be used to commit an offence, damage property or cause
- injury to self or another person
- Where appropriate, items may be handed to the police. The Centre Manager will decide whether it is appropriate to involve other outside agencies e.g. Social care Team.
- **Racist remarks:**  
Any words or actions that cause offence to another person and are considered racist by the offended person will be deemed as a racist remark. In this case the learner will be reprimanded, the Centre Manager is informed

Signed:

Hannah Lindsay,

31st August 2024

# Anti Bullying Policy

*WEAL is completely opposed to bullying. It is contrary to the values and principles we work and live by. All learners who attend sessions at WEAL, no matter what their age or ability, have a right to a safe, secure and caring environment. They also have a responsibility to contribute, in whatever way they can, to the protection and maintenance of such an environment.*

We believe that:

- everyone has a right to learn free from intimidation and fear
- reported incidents will be taken seriously and thoroughly investigated.

## **Definition of Bullying**

Bullying is an act of aggression, causing embarrassment, pain or discomfort to someone. It can take a number of forms; physical, verbal, making gestures, extortion and exclusion. It is an abuse of power. It can be planned and organised, or it may be unintentional. It may be perpetrated by individuals or by groups and can happen to any learner at any age.

## **Forms of Bullying**

- Physical violence such as hitting, pushing or spitting at another learner
- Interfering with another learner's property, by stealing, hiding or damaging it
- Using offensive names when addressing another learner
- Teasing or spreading rumours about another learner or his/her family
- Belittling another learner's abilities and achievements
- Writing offensive notes or graffiti about another learner
- Excluding another learner from a group activity

- Ridiculing another learner's appearance, way of speaking or personal mannerisms
- Misusing technology (internet or mobiles) to hurt or humiliate another person.
- Sexually inappropriate or aggressive behaviour or comments  
This policy needs to be read in conjunction with:
- Safeguarding
- Child Protection
- Behaviour Policy
- Internet and Online Safety Policy.
- Staff Discipline Policy

## **Responsibilities**

### **Staff have a responsibility to:**

- Foster in our learners self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others •  
Demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social  
behaviour we expect of our learners
- Discuss bullying when appropriate so that every learner learns about the  
damage it causes to both the child who is bullied and to the bully and the  
importance of telling a member of staff about bullying when it happens
- Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying
- Listen to children who have been bullied, take what they say seriously and  
act to support and protect them
- Report suspected cases of bullying to the Centre's Designated  
Safeguarding Officer
- Follow up any complaint by a parent about bullying, and report back

promptly and fully on the action which has been taken.

- Deal with observed instances of bullying promptly and effectively, in

accordance with agreed procedures.

**Learners have a responsibility to:**

- Refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity
- Intervene to protect the learner who is being bullied, unless it is unsafe to do so
- Report to a member of staff any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying, to dispel any climate of secrecy and help to prevent further instances.

*Anyone who becomes the target of bullies should:*

Not suffer in silence, but have the courage to speak out, to put an end to their own suffering and that of other potential targets.

**Parents / Carers have a responsibility to:**

- Watch for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children, which might be evidence of bullying.
- Advise their children to report any bullying and explain the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other learners.
- Advise their children not to retaliate violently to any forms of bullying.
- Be sympathetic and supportive towards their children, reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken;
- Keep a written record of any reported instances of bullying
- Inform the centre of any suspected bullying, even if their children are not involved

- Co-operate with the centre, if their children are accused of bullying, try to ascertain the truth and point out the implications of bullying, both for the children who are bullied and for the bullies themselves.
- Behave in a way that encourages respect for others and role model

acceptable ways to behave towards others.

### **Action if bullying (including sexual harassment) is suspected:**

Bullying is also classed as abuse and the LSCB procedures should also be followed. If the allegation is against a member of Wilts-EAL staff then the procedures should be followed in the LSCB flow chart 'Allegations against Staff'. If the allegation is against another child then the LSCB flow chart 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused or neglected' can be used and confidential advice sought in the first instance regarding the most appropriate action to take.

### **Action to help the victim and prevent bullying:**

- Take all signs of bullying very seriously. This could be cyber bullying (through online activity such as gaming or social media sites) so staff will be aware of how to support learners to keep safe online
- Encourage all children to speak and share their concerns (It is believed that up to 12 children per year commit suicide as a result of bullying, so if anyone talks about or threatens suicide, seek professional help immediately).
- Help the victim to speak out and make all children aware of the importance to tell a trusted person or someone in authority.
- Create an open environment.
- Investigate all allegations and take action to ensure the victim is safe. Speak with the victim and the bully separately.
- Reassure the victim that you can be trusted and will help them, although you cannot promise to tell no one else.
- Keep records of what is said (what happened, by whom, when).
- Report any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Officer

### **Action towards the bully:**

- Talk with the bully, explain the situation, and try to get the bully to understand the consequences of their behaviour.
- Seek an apology to the victim(s).
- Inform the bully's parents.
- Insist on the return of 'borrowed' items and that the bully compensates the victim.
- Impose sanctions as necessary.
- Encourage and support the bully to change behaviour.

- Where possible, hold meetings with the families to support and report on progress.
- Inform all staff members of action taken.
- Keep a written record of action taken.
- Most 'low level' incidents will be dealt with at the time by staff and volunteers. However, if the bullying is severe (e.g. a serious assault), or if it persists despite efforts to deal with it, incidents should be referred to the WEAL Designated Safeguarding Lead and may lead to criminal charges.

### **Bullying towards staff:**

Staff may experience bullying from other members of staff, from learners or from parents/ carers of learners.

- Staff bullying other staff will be dealt with by the Managing Director in line with the Staff Discipline Policy
- Learners who intimidate, threaten or make staff feel uncomfortable or persistently make comments that are unacceptable will be dealt with as above (Action towards the bully)
- We have zero tolerance for bullying or abuse of our staff by parents/carers and should this behaviour occur on the premises they will be asked to leave taking their son/daughter/child with them. This will be recorded and reported back to the referrer by the Managing Director. Meetings to discuss any issues will be arranged and to discuss a way forward that is acceptable to WEAL staff so that they can continue to work with the learner.

### **Prevention**

The close supervision of learners which is necessary within an equine assisted learning environment means that bullying is unlikely to occur during sessions. We aim to educate learners about bullying through sessions and events such as anti-bullying week which can raise awareness, offer support and guide learners in the event of experiencing or witnessing bullying.

### **Disclosure**

Learners often disclose incidents of bullying in other settings during their sessions. When this happens, the member of staff should:

- support and respond to the needs of the learner
- decide on what action is required

- record the disclosure in the learner notes
- contact parents / carers / school of all learners concerned
- feedback to all concerned
- contact relevant professionals as necessary.

**Continuous Professional Development**

Staff will be encouraged to take part in continuing professional development to ensure that they understand how to recognise and deal with bullying.

**Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually.

**Signed: Adopted on:**

Hannah Lindsay, Director

31st August 2024

Anti-bullying policy/Behaviour Management Policy need to be read in conjunction with Safeguarding Policy and Staff Code of Conduct