

Merton Mencap

**Anti-bullying
Policy & Procedure**

July 2017

Merton Mencap
Anti-bullying
POLICY & PROCEDURE

This policy and procedure has been adopted by Merton Mencap through its Executive Committee which remains responsible for its review.

Original signed version is kept at the Merton Mencap office.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____

Chair of Executive Committee

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____

Chief Executive

Record of adoption and review of this policy and procedure:

Adopted:	28 June 2011
Reviewed:	9 September 2014
Reviewed:	13 July 2017

Merton Mencap

Anti-bullying Policy & Procedure

1. Introduction

Staff and staff member includes Merton Mencap consultants, employees, bank workers and volunteers.

Merton Mencap is committed to promoting the safety of the people who use our services. We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment so service users can take part in activities in a relaxed and secure atmosphere.

Therefore, the purpose of this policy is to provide our staff, service users and their parents and carers with clear information about Merton Mencap's commitment to prevent and respond to bullying.

Reference should be made to Merton Mencap's other policies and procedures, particularly those which deal with safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, health and safety and making complaints.

2. Scope of this policy

This policy covers the bullying of a service user by another service user(s). Allegations of bullying of service users by Merton Mencap staff or any person unknown to Merton Mencap will be covered under Merton Mencap's policies which deal with safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

3. Statement

Merton Mencap is committed to the following:

- Every person has a right to an environment where safety, security, praise, recognition and opportunity to participate is commonplace
- There is respect for individuals' feelings and views
- Everyone is important and that our differences make us unique
- We show appreciation of others by acknowledging individual qualities, contributions and progress

Merton Mencap will not accept or condone any form of bullying. All forms of bullying will be addressed.

4. Definition

Government guidance defines bullying as

‘Behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally’ (Preventing and Tackling Bullying, DfE 2017)

Examples of bullying can be:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Physical: | Pushing, kicking, hitting, any use of violence, low level but persistent disruption or intrusion (e.g. invading person space, making noises that are known to disturb the other person), over-enthusiastic physical horseplay aimed at triggering a negative response from the other person |
| Emotional: | Unfriendly, being excluding |
| Verbal: | Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, offensive language, annoying or persistent banter |
| Motivated by prejudice: | Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, attacking someone’s religion, sexual orientation, disability, family circumstances, triggered by a perceived difference between children |
| Discriminatory: | Homophobic, related to appearance or difference |
| Cyber: | Threats by text message, email, gaming or social media (which can include the use of images and video) |

5. Signs and symptoms

A service user may indicate that they are being bullied by showing some of the signs and symptoms, below.

It is important to note, however, that the presence of these is not proof that any bullying has occurred, nor does their absence mean that bullying has not occurred.

In this context, it is essential that staff remain alert, in particular to unexplained changes in behaviour and should be concerned if the service user:

- does not want to attend our services and activities
- becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- has possessions which are damaged or go missing
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- seems too frightened to say what is wrong
- is afraid to use the internet or their mobile phone

6. Procedure for responding to bullying

Merton Mencap recognises that service users who are being bullied may not report the matter to staff. Therefore, staff will be alert to the signs and symptoms of bullying, through their safeguarding training.

If an instance of bullying is suspected or reported, the following steps will be taken:

- The matter will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff, who will ensure the safety of all involved
- A clear account of the concern will be recorded on the relevant incident form by the member of staff, which will be given to the relevant Projects Manager or Chief Executive, as appropriate
- The matter will be discussed with the relevant service user and/or their parent or responsible carer, as appropriate

Where it has been identified that bullying may have occurred, the person who has been bullied will be supported by Merton Mencap staff by:

- offering them an opportunity to discuss the experience
- providing reassurance that any bullying will be addressed
- discussing the matter with the person, their parent or responsible carer

If it is established that bullying has occurred by another service user, we will discuss this with the person responsible and try to support the person to change their behaviour. Those who bully will be counselled and encouraged to stop bullying. The person carrying out bullying and may be moved to a different session time or different service in order to prevent further access to the person they have been bullying and to protect that person. The outcome of the matter will depend on the circumstances, but Merton Mencap also reserves

the right to exclude any service user from attending or continuing to attend a service or activity.

Any incident of bullying involving a child will be discussed with their parent or responsible carer. If an incident involves someone over the age of 18, details will be discussed with their parent or carer if the service user gives us permission to or if a parent carer acts as a deputy for that person or has power of attorney for that person with regard to their care needs.

7. Reporting

The Chief Executive of Merton Mencap will report all instances of bullying at the next possible Executive Committee Meeting for review.

8. Points of contact

Service users attending Merton Mencap' services and activities will be provided with the name of a person at Merton Mencap whom they can contact if they have any concerns. This may be the Team Leader or a Projects Manager.

Merton Mencap's named person with specific responsibility for all matters relating to safeguarding children and adults at risk is:

Andrew Whittington

Chief Executive

Tel: 0208 687 4676

Mob: 07767 670134

Email: chief.executive@swlondonmencap.nhs.uk

In this person's absence, please contact any person listed on the contacts page of the Merton Mencap web site (www.mertonmencap.org.uk).

Audit Guidance

Check	Evidence
Are all staff aware of the provisions within this policy?	Speak to a range of staff including managers, projects staff and volunteers. Ask what they would do if a service user disclosed that they were being bullied.
Are all instances of Bullying being reported to the Executive Committee?	See CEO report to Executive Committee meetings to check that this is included. Check the action taken (and any follow up)

Have all instances of bullying been managed appropriately?	Check incident report forms of any cases of bullying. Check how these cases were managed. If involving a child / young person, was the parent/ responsible carer involved? What was the outcome?
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