

Big Voice London Anti-bullying policy

This policy applies to all volunteers, including Group Leaders, Project Co Coordinators, trustees, funders, supporters, students or anyone working on behalf of Big Voice London.

We (Big Voice London) recognise that:

1. bullying is “behaviour, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group, physically or emotionally”.

(Safe from bullying in youth activities, DCSF 2009).

2. One person or a group can bully others;
3. Bullying can occur either face to face between individuals or groups or online, using information Technology, such as computers or mobile phones;

Bullying can include:

- verbal teasing or making fun of someone;
- excluding young people from games and conversations;
- pressurising other young people not to be friends with the person who is being bullied;
- spreading hurtful rumours or passing round inappropriate photographs/images/drawings; shouting at or verbally abusing someone;
- stealing or damaging someone’s belongings;
- making threats;
- forcing someone to do something embarrassing, harmful or dangerous;
- harassment on the basis of race, gender, sexuality or disability;
- physical or sexual assault (although all sexual incidents and all but very minor physical incidents constitute abuse and must be dealt with in accordance with child protection procedures).

4. bullying causes real distress. It can affect a person’s health and development and, at the extreme, can cause significant harm;
5. people are often targeted by bullies because they appear different from others;
6. we all have a role to play in preventing bullying and putting a stop to bullying.

The purpose of this policy is:

- to prevent bullying from happening in our organisation, as much as possible;
- when bullying does happen, to make sure it is stopped as soon as possible and that those involved receive the support they need;

- to provide information to all volunteers, children and their families about what we should all do to prevent and deal with bullying

We will seek to prevent bullying by:

1. Developing a code of behaviour that sets out the “dos” and “don’ts” in terms of how everyone involved in Big Voice London is expected to behave, both in face-to-face contact and online;
2. Developing a plan that describes how we welcome new members and help them to settle in;
3. Holding regular discussions with volunteers, young people and families who use Big Voice London to ensure that they understand our anti-bullying policy. These discussions will focus on:
 - a) group members’ responsibilities to look after one another and uphold the behaviour code;
 - b) practising skills such as listening to each other; respecting the fact that we are all different;
 - c) making sure that no one is without friends;
 - d) dealing with problems in a positive way;
 - e) checking that the anti-bullying measures are working well.
4. Developing a complaints policy and procedure;
5. Making sure that staff, volunteers, young people and parents and carers have clear information about our anti-bullying policy, complaints procedure, code of behaviour and anti-bullying procedure.

When bullying occurs, we will respond to it by:

1. Having a clear anti-bullying procedure in place;
2. Providing support and training for volunteers on dealing with all forms of bullying, including racial, sexist, homophobic and sexual bullying;
3. Addressing the issue from the point of view of the person being bullied, the bully, any bystanders and Big Voice London as a whole;
4. Reviewing the plan developed to address the bullying, in order to ensure that the problem has been resolved;
5. Avoiding any punishments that make the individuals concerned seem small or look or feel foolish in front of others.

Monitoring and review

The Management Board in conjunction with the Big Voice London Policy Sub Committee shall be responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of this policy.

This policy will be reviewed every two years. The next review is due to take place on or shortly after: **19 March 2020.**