

Number	Title	Owner	Last Updated	Next Review Date
-	Anti-Bullying Policy	CEO	February 2024	December 2024

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

British Exploring Society is committed to preventing and tackling all forms of bullying. This is part of its commitment to the safeguarding of all children and vulnerable adults where those groups are affected, and also encompasses a broader commitment to prevent bullying throughout British Exploring Society including for employees, trustees and our broader community.

British Exploring Society's purpose is the empowerment and personal development of young people. Through its programmes it helps young people to build their confidence, resilience and communication skills. We wish to enable young people to manage and cope with difficult situations they may be presented with, including issues related to bullying.

British Exploring Society will;

- Develop and uphold an anti-bullying culture where the bullying of adults, children and young people is not tolerated in any form.
- Challenge all types of bullying, including prejudice-based bullying and language to make sure it is stopped and those involved receive the support they need.
- Encourage diversity and creating a culture where difference is celebrated and respected.

British Exploring Society requires all its staff and volunteers to be receptive to the needs of children and vulnerable adults, to be vigilant to potential bullying issues and committed to upholding this policy in their interactions with all stakeholders.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff, young people, volunteers and trustees during their involvement in the activities of British Exploring Society. It is the responsibility of everyone to work together to prevent and tackle bullying.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the *Recognising and Responding to Safeguarding Concerns SOP*, the *Shared Code SOP* and our *Employee Handbook* where relevant.

Definition of bullying

Bullying is offensive, hostile or oppressive behaviour. It can happen to anyone and anywhere and can include online as well as offline behaviour.

Bullying can be defined as “behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally” (DfE “Preventing and Tackling Bullying”, 2017)

Bullying behaviour can include:

- physical bullying: hitting, slapping, pushing or kicking someone
- verbal bullying: name calling, gossiping or saying nasty things to or about the subject, spreading hurtful or untruthful rumours
- non-verbal abuse: hand signs or text messages
- emotional: making threats, undermining someone, excluding someone from a friendship group or activity
- racial, homophobic, transphobic or sexist comments, taunts or gestures
- bullying someone because they have a disability

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place online. Cyberbullying behaviour can include:

- sending offensive, upsetting or inappropriate messages by phone, text, instant messenger, social media sites and apps
- trolling – the sending of menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games
- excluding the subject from online games, activities or friendship groups

The Consequences of Bullying

British Exploring Society recognises that bullying causes real distress and damage. It can affect a person’s health, confidence, morale and development and the performance of staff, where relevant. At the extreme, it can cause significant harm. Everyone regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, has the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.

Bullying is not condoned or permitted. For employees it may be treated as misconduct which may ultimately warrant dismissal. For expedition members it is an infraction of the Shared Code and may be met with disciplinary action including, in some cases, removal from an expedition.

Preventing and responding to bullying

British Exploring Society will seek to prevent and respond to bullying by:

- Ensuring that all staff, volunteers and trustees see and understand this policy
- Ensuring all expedition members see and agree to conduct themselves according to the Shared Code
- Providing support and training for staff and volunteers on recognising and dealing with bullying, including racist, sexist, homophobic and sexual bullying. Being aware of and alert to unacceptable behaviour and taking appropriate action to stop it
- Ensuring that any complaints in connection with this policy are dealt with promptly, seriously and confidentially
- Ensuring that our response to incidents of bullying considers:

- the needs of the person being bullied
- the needs of the person displaying bullying behaviour
- needs of other participants, volunteers, staff or participating adults
- Monitoring incidents of bullying and reviewing the effectiveness of this policy annually including with our Safeguarding Trustee as part of our commitment to Safeguarding at Board level
- Including discussions and training about bullying and how to prevent it as part of all programme delivery with children and young adults. Sessions will include:
 - group members' responsibilities to look after one another and uphold the Shared Code
 - practising skills such as listening to each other, respecting individual space and working together as a group
 - respecting the fact that we are all different
 - dealing with problems in a positive, constructive way
 - openly discussing our differences and celebrating our diversity

All staff, volunteers and trustees will seek to prevent and respond to bullying by:

- Being alert to signs of distress which may indicate someone has been or is being bullied
- Working to create a culture where everyone, including children and young people, feel confident and safe to speak out about any incidents of bullying and to provide appropriate support and guidance to those involved
- Escalating concerns about bullying that have been brought to you or concerns that you have been made aware of to the appropriate authority:
 - Where it takes place on an expedition, this would be the expedition Chief Leader
 - Where it takes place in another work environment this would be the CEO unless the CEO is the suggested cause of the bullying in which case the Chairman.
 - Where it relates to cyber bullying you should escalate to the authority most available to you at the time that the issue is raised which may be either the Chief Leader or a member of the office team as appropriate.

Where bullying occurs on an expedition staff, volunteers and trustees will seek to prevent and respond to bullying by:

- Speaking to and listening to the person being bullied to gain the clearest possible picture of the situation.
- Speaking with the person displaying the bullying behaviour, telling them that the behaviour will not be tolerated and encouraging them to understand the impact of their behaviour on others.
- Responding to bullying incidents in accordance with procedures set out in the SOP Recognising and Responding to Safeguarding Concerns if there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child or young adult is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of being the target of bullying.
- Adhering to the Shared Code which sets out how everyone involved in programme delivery is expected to behave and interact with others.