

Genuine Futures CIC – Anti-Bullying Policy

PREVENTION OVER
PUNISHMENT:
BUILDING SAFER FUTURES
TOGETHER

Version: 1.0 Approved by Board: 01 Nov 2025 Next Review: 01 Nov 2026

1. Policy Statement

Genuine Futures CIC is committed to creating a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for all staff, volunteers, trustees, and participants. We operate a zero-tolerance approach to bullying, harassment, or discrimination in any form. Everyone associated with the organisation has the right to be treated with dignity and respect and to work or participate free from intimidation, victimisation, or abuse.

2. Legislative Framework

This policy is informed by the following legislation and statutory guidance: • Equality Act 2010 • Protection from Harassment Act 1997 • Children Act 1989 and 2004 • Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025 • Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) • DfE Preventing and Tackling Bullying Guidance (2017, updated 2024) • Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR

3. Scope and Purpose

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, trustees, contractors, and participants engaged in activities under the Genuine Futures CIC name. It applies to all environments — in-person, online, and digital spaces. The purpose is to ensure a consistent and effective approach to preventing, identifying, and responding to bullying or harassment.

4. Definition of Bullying

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group that intentionally hurts another person, physically or emotionally. It can be repetitive or one-off incidents, and can include: • Physical abuse – hitting, pushing, or damaging property. • Verbal abuse – name-calling, teasing, or threats. • Social exclusion – spreading rumours, isolating, or humiliating others. • Discriminatory bullying – based on protected characteristics (age, disability, race, sex, religion, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, or other status). • Cyberbullying – sending, posting, or sharing harmful or false content online via social media, email, messaging, or other digital means.

5. Aims and Objectives

The aims of this policy are to: • Prevent all forms of bullying and harassment through education, awareness, and clear communication. • Promote an organisational culture that values respect, inclusion, and kindness. • Ensure all concerns and incidents are reported and dealt with swiftly, fairly, and confidentially. • Support all individuals involved, including those affected by and responsible for bullying behaviour. • Comply with statutory safeguarding and equality duties.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

- Board of Directors: Holds overall accountability for ensuring this policy is implemented and monitored.
- Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Coordinates responses to bullying and cyberbullying concerns involving children or adults at risk.
- Managers and Supervisors: Promote a positive culture, address early signs of bullying, and record incidents appropriately.
- Staff and Volunteers: Model respectful behaviour, report any concerns, and

support affected individuals. • Participants and Service Users: Are expected to treat others with respect and follow organisational behaviour guidelines.

7. Prevention Strategies

Genuine Futures CIC promotes prevention through: • Clear communication of expected standards of behaviour. • Induction and ongoing training for staff and volunteers on equality, safeguarding, and online safety. • Encouraging open dialogue and early reporting of issues. • Promoting digital literacy and responsible online conduct. • Implementing restorative approaches and mediation where appropriate.

8. Procedures for Reporting and Responding

Any individual who experiences or witnesses bullying should report it immediately to a manager, supervisor, or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Reports will be handled sensitively and confidentially. The following steps will be taken: 1. Listen carefully and record the concern accurately. 2. Assess the level of risk and take immediate protective action if necessary. 3. Investigate the incident impartially and promptly. 4. Provide support to all parties involved. 5. Take disciplinary or restorative action in line with organisational procedures. 6. Review and monitor outcomes to prevent recurrence.

9. Support for Victims and Perpetrators

Support will be offered to anyone affected by bullying, including access to counselling, mediation, or other appropriate interventions. Those who engage in bullying behaviour will be encouraged to reflect and change their behaviour through restorative practices. Persistent or severe cases may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, volunteer placement, or participation.

10. Recording and Monitoring

All bullying reports and actions taken will be recorded securely and reviewed periodically to identify patterns or areas for improvement. Anonymised data will be presented to the Board for oversight as part of regular safeguarding and equality reviews.

11. Linked Policies

• Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy • Online Safety Policy • Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy • Data Protection & Privacy Policy • Volunteer Policy • Health & Safety Policy

Appendix: Recognising Bullying and Cyberbullying – Key Indicators

The following may indicate that an individual is experiencing bullying or cyberbullying. Staff and volunteers should remain alert to these signs and take action promptly where concerns arise: Possible Indicators: • Unexplained injuries or damaged belongings. • Sudden changes in behaviour, mood, or engagement. • Withdrawal from social situations or activities. • Avoidance of particular people or locations. • Reluctance to attend work, school, or sessions. • Decline in performance or confidence. • Excessive time online, distress after using digital devices, or secrecy about online activity. • Reports of exclusion, name-calling, or harmful online comments. • Noticeable changes in relationships or peer groups. Any of the above may warrant further discussion and reporting to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**. Mike Alleyne Email: mike@genuinefutures.co.uk