

# Policy on Preventing and Responding to Bullying



**Rationale** GirlGuiding NZ seeks to take all reasonable steps to develop high standards of behaviour in order to fulfil the expectations of the GirlGuiding NZ Promise and Law.

**Purpose** The GirlGuiding New Zealand seeks to foster and develop a safe, positive physical and emotional Guiding environment that creates a climate of trust. All members, parents and staff share the responsibility for making GirlGuiding NZ a respectful and inclusive environment.

It is expected that all members of our Guiding community – girls and their parents, National Board, adult members, volunteers, supporters and staff - have an understanding of what bullying is and know what to do when bullying occurs, in compliance with health and safety legislation.

## **Guidelines** *Definition*

Our Guiding community agrees that:

- bullying is defined as unreasonable behaviour towards a person or group of any age that creates a health and safety risk
- a single incident is not considered bullying but can escalate if ignored
- bullying is deliberate – there is the intention to cause physical and /or psychological pain or discomfort to another person
- bullying involves a power imbalance – there is an actual or perceived unequal relationship between the target and the initiator that may be based on physical size, gender, social status or digital capability or access
- bullying has an element of repetition- with the threat of further incidents leading to fear and anxiety
- bullying behaviour covers actions which a reasonable person wouldn't do in similar circumstances, including victimising, humiliating, intimidating or threatening a person
- bullying behaviours can be physical, verbal or social and take place in the physical or virtual world
- bullying involves up to three parties: initiators (those doing the bullying), targets (those being bullied) and often bystanders (those who witness the bullying).

## *Bullying Prevention*

GirlGuiding NZ recognises that real change happens when all members of our Guiding community – girls and their parents, National Board, adult members, volunteers, supporters and staff - share the responsibility for making Guiding a respectful and inclusive environment.

We will prevent and respond to bullying in our environment by:

- promoting our expectations in the prevention of bullying
- establishing respect for the diversity of human values and character strengths
- including training in the recognition and prevention of bullying in our leadership development programme, to encourage positive leadership styles and the skill and expertise to deal with bullying reports
- promoting a range of activities and initiatives in section programmes that raise awareness of and reinforce appropriate and respectful interactions
- creating a safe and positive environment that girls feel is pleasant, fair and rewarding and positively challenges them to develop their ability to relate well to each other
- directing attention towards behaviour rather than towards people, with the aim of promoting harmonious relationships across the Organisation
- promoting digital citizenship and safe use of technology
- supporting girl- led girl initiatives

### *Bullying Response, for when bullying occurs*

GirlGuiding NZ recognises the importance of consistently responding to all incidents of bullying that have been reported and ensuring that planned interventions are used to respond to these incidents and support all involved. We will support anyone who has been affected by, engaged in or witnessed bullying behaviour by:

- taking seriously all reported incidents of bullying and investigating them promptly and impartially
- ensuring that neither the complainant nor the alleged bully are victimised
- supporting all parties involved
- finding appropriate remedies and consequences for confirmed bullying as well as for confirmed false reports
- communicating the response process and its outcome
- ensuring confidentiality
- using the principles of natural justice i.e. no bias and a fair hearing
- keeping good documentation
- having specialist external advisors available to help if required.

### *Raising Awareness*

GirlGuiding NZ recognises the importance of raising awareness of our approach to bullying and celebrating our positive Guiding culture, including through unit based activities, displays and good communication with parents.

Our interaction with our wider community will include information about our policy on the GirlGuiding NZ website.

### **Conclusion**

As part of GirlGuiding NZ's commitment to ensuring that our Guiding environment is free from bullying behaviours this policy will be reviewed on a regular basis and as other related GirlGuiding policies or external legislation changes.

*Date developed January 2017*

*Last reviewed October 2017*

*Ratified April 2017*