

## 1. Statement of Intent

- 1.1. We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our members so they can perform in a relaxed and secure atmosphere.
- 1.2. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Good Companions. If bullying does occur, all members should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.
- 1.3. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the committee.

## 2. Objectives of this Policy

- 2.1. All members and patrons understand what bullying is.
- 2.2. All members and patrons should know what the policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- 2.3. All members should know what the policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- 2.4. GCSS take bullying seriously. Members should be assured that they will be supported if bullying is reported.
- 2.5. Bullying will not be tolerated.

## 3. What is Bullying?

- 3.1. Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person.
- 3.2. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.
- 3.3. Bullying can be:
  - 3.3.1. **Emotional** – being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting
  - 3.3.2. **Physical** – pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
  - 3.3.3. **Racist** – racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
  - 3.3.4. **Sexual** – unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
  - 3.3.5. **Verbal** – name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
  - 3.3.6. **Cyber** – all areas of internet, such as email and internet chat room misuse
  - 3.3.7. **Mobile** – threats by text messaging and calls
  - 3.3.8. **Misuse of** – associated technology (e.g. camera and video facilities)

## 4. Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

- 4.1. Bullying hurts.
- 4.2. No-one deserves to be a victim of bullying.
- 4.3. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect.
- 4.4. Members who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

GCSS has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

## 5. Signs and Symptoms

5.1. A Member may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a member:

- 5.1.1. Changes their usual routine
- 5.1.2. Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- 5.1.3. Starts stammering
- 5.1.4. Has possessions which are damaged or “go missing”
- 5.1.5. Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- 5.1.6. Is bullying other members
- 5.1.7. Is apprehensive to say what is wrong
- 5.1.8. Gives improbable excuses for any of the above

5.2. These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

## 6. Procedures

- 6.1. Report bullying incidents to committee
- 6.2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by committee
- 6.3. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted
- 6.4. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
- 6.5. An attempt will be made to help the bully or bullies change their behaviour.

## 7. Outcomes

- 7.1. The bully or bullies may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place
- 7.2. In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion from the society will be considered
- 7.3. If possible, the members will be reconciled
- 7.4. After the incident/incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.