



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

The MVT's statement of intent

The Military Vehicle Trust (MVT) is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for everyone involved in the Trust's activities.

Bullying can be defined as repeated behaviour which results in hurting someone either emotionally or physically and is often aimed at certain people because of their race, religion, gender or sexual orientation, or any other aspect such as appearance or disability.

This statement relates to both online and face to face bullying. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable. Bullying takes many forms but ultimately it is the perception of the victim that determines whether or not they are being bullied rather than the intention of the bully. We expect that all volunteers and staff will work together to prevent and reduce bullying.

If bullying does occur, everyone should be able to speak up and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the Trust's Safeguarding Officer or a Council of Management member you feel comfortable confiding in.

The MVT has a zero-tolerance stance when it comes to bullying behaviour.

What is bullying?

Bullying is the intention of hurting another person. It can also be unintentional when an individual is unaware that their behaviour is hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Some bullies may be unaware of how their behaviour impacts on others. They may act in a way without thinking about the implications for others. Here, they may not intend to harm others, but their actions can still have negative and damaging effects. Addressing this sort of behaviour is still important both for the victims and for the bullies themselves.

Bullying can be:

- Physical bullying, hitting, slapping, kicking, pushing or any use of violence.
- Verbal - name calling, gossiping, sarcasm, spreading rumours, banter (that has gone too far) or threatening someone.
- Non-verbal abuse - hand signs or text messages
- Emotional abuse; threatening, intimidating, or humiliating someone, being unfriendly, excluding individuals deliberately, tormenting.
- Undermining - constant criticism, spreading rumours,
- Controlling or manipulating someone
- Making silent, hoax or abuse calls
- Racial, sexual, transphobic or homophobic bullying - because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality.
- Bullying someone because they have a disability.
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact, sexual comments.
- Cyber - see below.

Cyber bullying

Bullying which is carried out over all areas of the internet, such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, email, internet chat rooms. This also includes the misuse of cameras, video cameras and mobile phones.

E-bullies may publish personal contact information of their victims at websites including MVT Area websites. They may attempt to act as the victim for the purpose of publishing material in their name that would defame or ridicule them.

Cyber bullying is particularly serious due to the nature in which the abuse occurs. It can be very personal and take place in a closed private format where the victim may feel isolated, and the content will not be viewed by relatives or friends. Alternatively, it could take place in a public format. It may lead to the victim rereading any material in private perhaps leading to feelings of paranoia, depression or loneliness.

Procedures

1. Report bullying incidents to the Trust's Safeguarding Officer or a Council of Management member they feel comfortable confiding in. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be referred to a specialist solicitor for advice.
2. If necessary and appropriate, the police may be consulted.
3. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly.
4. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour.
5. Mediation and an early resolution with agreement to cease the behaviour may be possible.
6. If mediation does not work or is not appropriate, the complaint will then be investigated as a breach of the Code of Conduct and the trust will initiate termination of membership as set out in the Articles of Association.

If unintentional bullying occurs, we will support the victim and seek to make the "accidental" bully aware of the impact of their behaviour so they can moderate their actions. It is important we all remain self-aware and avoid any actions that could be impacting the well-being and happiness of others.

Reporting a bullying concern

If you wish to raise a concern, please contact the Trust's Safeguarding Officer at **report@mvt.org.uk**, or any Council of Management member. Alternatively, you can contact us by calling the General Secretary on our telephone helpline, which is open Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm. Use **0333 321 8977** and select **Option 3**.

All reports will be treated confidentially.

Other contacts

KIDSCAPE – a voluntary organisation committed to help prevent bullying. www.kidscape.org.uk

ANTI-BULLYING ALLIANCE – an organisation aiming to reduce bullying and create safer environments in which children and young people can live, grow, play and learn - www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

NSPCC - 0808 800 5000 - <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/bullying-and-cyberbullying/>

NATIONAL BULLYING HELPLINE - <https://www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk/help-guides.html>

Date approved 30/1/24