

## Unacceptable Behaviour Policy



### **Policy Statement**

It is the policy of Speak Up London (SUL) to protect its staff, students, visitors, agents, host families arranged by SUL and any other occupants in the home stay against unacceptable behaviour that may compromise their safety, health and welfare. Therefore any form of violence, harassment, bullying and abuse, including verbal abuse, against or coming from any individuals is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Violence, harassment, bullying and abuse are a crime, and SUL will work with the Police to prevent it.

This policy will cover:

- Unacceptable behaviour
- Violence & Aggression
- Harassment
- Disruptive Behaviour
- Physical Assault
- Non-physical Assault

### **Definitions**

**Unacceptable behaviour** is a general term which includes but is not limited to the following:

- **Violence & Aggression** is any incident, in which a person is verbally abused, threatened or assaulted.)
- **Harassment** is the persistent and unwanted attention of one person(s) to another (Please refer to the Bullying & Harassment Policy)
- **Disruptive Behaviour** (Any action by one or more persons that, whilst not constituting violence, aggression or harassment has a significant adverse impact on the immediate well-being of staff and students, visitors and agents, host families arranged by SUL and any other occupants in the home stay or on the functioning of the school.)
- **Physical Assault** (The definition of physical assault is "The intentional application of force against the person of another without lawful justification, resulting in physical injury or personal discomfort".)
- **Non-physical Assault** (The definition of non-physical assault is "the use of inappropriate words or behaviour causing distress and/or constituting harassment".)

## **Scope**

This policy applies to violence, harassment, aggression, abuse and unacceptable/threatening behaviour towards any staff, students, visitors, agents, host families arranged by SUL and any other occupants in the homestay from staff, students, visitors, agents and SUL accommodation providers anywhere where the above mentioned individuals are undertaking the school's business.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to provide the framework for protecting anybody who is directly or indirectly involved with SUL against violence, harassment, aggression, abuse and unacceptable/threatening behaviour displayed by the individuals covered in the scope of this policy.

## **Responsibilities**

### Managerial responsibility

Managers have the responsibility to ensure that this policy and the related procedures are available to, and understood by staff for which they have a direct responsibility.

### Employee responsibility

All employees shall comply with this policy;

All employees shall immediately report any acts of violence, harassment, aggression, abuse and unacceptable/threatening behaviour to their manager whether committed by staff, students, visitors, agents or SUL accommodation providers.

All staff are responsible for upholding the code of conduct and bringing it to the attention of all students. Responsibilities of all staff include treating complaints of bullying/harassment seriously, being sensitive to personal feelings and perceptions and ensuring complainants are not victimised as a result of making a complaint.

### Students, visitors and agents, host family responsibility

All of the above-named shall comply with this policy; and shall immediately report any acts of violence, aggression and harassment to the school whether committed by staff, students, visitors, agents or SUL accommodation providers

**The following are examples of unacceptable behaviour (list is non-exhaustive):**

- Wilful damage to property
- Threatening or abusive language involving excessive swearing or offensive remarks
- Unwanted remarks of a racial, sexist or other discriminatory nature considered offensive by the recipient or by a colleague
- Malicious allegations relating to staff, students, visitors and agents, host families arranged by SUL and any other occupants in the home stay
- Refusal to be served or taught by an individual member of staff through personal prejudices
- Theft
- Excessive noise, e.g. loud or intrusive conversation or shouting.
- Bullying
- Repeated lateness
- Disobeying curfew times

It is important to remember that such behaviour can be either in person, by telephone, letter or e-mail or other form of communication such as graffiti.

The appropriate and proportionate response to incidents will depend on the individual circumstances of each incident. It is also important that staff, students, visitors, agents and SUL accommodation providers are aware of reporting procedures for non-physical assaults, encouraged to report incidents and that they are fully supported to do so.

## **Procedures**

The aim of this section is to give practical advice on both a generic and specific range of measures that can be taken depending on the severity of the non-physical assault and aggravating factors.

## **Verbal Warnings**

Verbal Warnings are a method of addressing unacceptable behaviour with a view to achieving realistic and workable solutions. They are not a method of appeasing 'difficult' staff, students, visitors, or others in an attempt to modify their behaviour, or to punish them, but instead to determine the cause of the behaviour so that the problem can be addressed or the risk of it reoccurring minimised.

It is important that individuals are dealt with in a demonstrably fair and objective manner. However, whilst staff have a duty of care, this does not include accepting abusive behaviour. Every attempt should be made to de-escalate a situation that could potentially become abusive. Where de-escalation fails, the individual should be warned of the consequences of future unacceptable behaviour.

When faced with inappropriate behaviour SUL staff should as soon as possible attempt to de-escalate the situation and ask the individual to refrain from the behaviour shown as it is considered inappropriate by SUL.

Verbal Warnings will not always be appropriate and should only be attempted when it is safe to do so with relevant and appropriate staff present. Where the process has no effect, or if inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour continues, alternative action must be considered.

Where there is actual immediate or anticipated physical danger to anybody protected by the unacceptable behaviour policy, any member of staff should call '999' straight away.

Where it is deemed appropriate to approach an individual in respect of their behaviour, this should (where practicable) be done informally, privately and at time when all parties involved are composed. The aim of the verbal warning process is twofold:

- to ascertain the reason for the behaviour as to prevent further incidents or reduce the risk of them reoccurring.
- ensure that the person breaking the policy is aware of the consequences of further unacceptable behaviour.
- A meeting should be arranged and conducted in a fair and objective manner. A formal record should be made and maintained.

### **Final written warning**

Where, despite an initial verbal warning, an individual has repeated their unacceptable behaviour, a final written warning is given. The final written warning should:

- Explain the reasons why further sanctions are being considered (Including relevant information, dates and times of incidents).
- Explain that the behaviour demonstrated is unacceptable. Explain the appropriate sanctions which will apply.
- Give details of the mechanism for seeking a review of the issue.

### **Expulsion**

Complying with the school's rules and regulations is a requirement for students attending the school. Repeated unacceptable behaviour will result in expulsion from the college and any accommodation that SUL has arranged for the students, with no refund paid whatsoever.

Depending on the nature of the behaviour the matter may be reported to the Police with a view SUL supporting a criminal prosecution by the Crown Prosecution Service. Consideration will be given to obtaining a civil injunction.

**Unacceptable behaviour committed by staff will result in disciplinary procedure.**

Policy review date: February 2026

Next review date: February 2027