**Bullying and unacceptable behaviour**

Bullying can include:

* physical pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching or any other unwanted physical contact
* name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing and emotional torment :through ridicule, humiliation and the continual ignoring or exclusion of individuals
* racial, sectarian or homophobic taunts, comments, graffiti and gestures
* sexual comments and /or suggestions
* threatening or unpleasant emails, text messages or posts on social networking sites

Bullying will not be accepted or condoned. All forms of bullying will be addressed.

We acknowledge that children and young people from ethnic minorities, disabled children, young people who are gay or lesbian, or those with learning difficulties can be more vulnerable to this form of abuse and may well be targeted.

Anyone who reports an incident of bullying will be listened to carefully and told what will be done with the information

Young people will be told what is being recorded, in what context and why

Young people being bullied will be supported and assistance given to uphold their right to a safe youth club environment which allows their healthy development

Those who bully will be supported and encouraged to stop bullying

**Procedures**

1. Any reported incidents or suspicions of bullying should be reported to QCHA Youth Work Co-ordinator
2. The Youth Work Coordinator will investigate the complaint objectively and will listen carefully to all those involved. Where possible, the parties will be brought together to see if the issue can be resolved with a (genuine) apology.
3. If appropriate, parents of those involved will be informed and asked to meet with Youth Work Co-ordinator to discuss the situation.
4. If the issue is not resolved the youth club manager will speak with staff and meet with the parties both together and separately to try and resolve the issue.
5. If a satisfactory solution cannot be reached, the staff team will decide on the most appropriate course of action to be taken.

Everybody has the responsibility to implement these guidelines and to work together to stop bullying - young people, parents and youth workers.