



FIGHTING WORDS

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POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR POLICY Including ICT USAGE

It is the primary aim of Fighting Words that every person, including participants (both children and adults), volunteer writing tutors, staff, teachers and parents, is respected and is treated fairly and well. This applies to all Fighting Words programmes at all locations, including online programmes.

Our guiding principle is **respect for everyone's creativity in a safe and protected environment.**

The Fighting Words Positive Behaviour Policy is therefore designed to support this aim.

1. At Fighting Words, our aim is to ensure that the individuality of each participant is accommodated while acknowledging the right of each participant to take part in our programmes in a disruption-free environment based on mutual respect.
2. Every effort will be made by all members of staff to adopt a positive approach to the question of behaviour at our programmes. Our policies offer a framework within which positive techniques of motivation and encouragement are used by the volunteers and staff.
3. Fighting Words recognises the variety of differences that exist between participants and the need to accommodate these differences.
4. It is agreed that a high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community and a high level of co-operation between

volunteer tutors, staff, participants (both adults and children), teachers and parents.

5. The rules are kept to a minimum and are positively stated in terms of what behaviour is most conducive to maintaining the creative and respectful culture at Fighting Words.
6. All efforts will be made to match the programmes and activities to the abilities, aptitudes and interests of each participant. Fighting Words requests that management are advised of the special needs requirements of any participant attending a Fighting Words programme prior to arrival.
7. The overall responsibility for managing behaviour within Fighting Words rests with the Board of Directors. Staff members have responsibility for the maintenance of discipline for particular sessions, including online programmes, while sharing a common responsibility for good order within the Fighting Words premises.
8. The following strategies may be used to show disapproval of serious misbehaviour:
 - Reasoning with the participant
 - Exclusion from the Fighting Words location/online programme
9. Staff members will keep a written record of all instances of serious misbehaviour, which is defined but not limited to consistent unhelpful disruption to the session, showing deliberate disrespect to others and/or repeated failure to adhere to agreed methods of working that requires the intervention of a staff member and/or other in a position of responsibility.
 - The report should describe:
 - The programme running at the time
 - What happened
 - Who was involved
 - Where and when it happened
 - What was said, if significant
 - Any injury to person or property
 - How the situation was resolved

- o **In the case of participants under the age of 18 years**, before resorting to serious sanctions, e.g. suspension, the normal channels of communication between the staff, school (if applicable) and parents will be used. For courses where participants book directly with Fighting Words, rather than attending as part of a school class, parents will be involved at an early stage, rather than as a last resort.
- o **For those over the age of 18**, staff members will speak privately with the individual concerned to stop the disruptive behaviour and ensure the continuation of the atmosphere of creativity, encouragement and respect.

10. For gross misbehaviour, or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, regardless of age, a participant will be excluded from Fighting Words.

- For the purposes of this policy, gross misbehaviour is defined as, but not limited to, aggressive and threatening behaviour not only actual physical violence against others but also threatened physical violence, verbal abuse of others, and the deliberate destruction of the Fighting Words premises, including equipment and furniture.

11. Positive Behaviour at Fighting Words Online Workshops

The same guidelines of mutual respect apply to online programmes as for in-person programmes but there are additional measures to consider specifically relating to the online format and the use of ICT facilities.

12. Personal Safety at Online Workshops

Fighting Words will ensure that participants and their parents are aware of good practice in relation to personal safety while online including the following:

- If participants see a message, comment, image, or anything else in an online workshop that makes them concerned for their own personal safety they should bring it to the immediate attention of:
 - o A Fighting Words staff member if at a Fighting Words centre
 - o A parent/ guardian if at home (if under the age of 18)

- If a participant sees a message, comment, image, or anything else that makes them concerned for their own personal safety, health or wellbeing of another member of the Fighting Words community, they should bring it to the immediate attention of a member of staff or their parent/guardian (if under 18 years).

13. **Cyber-Bullying** *(this section should be read in conjunction with all other Fighting Words policies)*

Harassing, impersonating, outing, tricking, excluding, and cyber-stalking are some examples of cyber-bullying. This list is not exhaustive.

14. Cyber-bullying will not be tolerated at Fighting Words. In many cases cyber-bullying is a crime.

15. Participants should not be part of a social media group that references Fighting Words and shares comments and posts that could be construed as bullying. If participants view such content, they should remove themselves immediately from the group and report the content.

16. Fighting Words will support participants, teachers and parents in dealing with cyber-bullying in line with our Volunteer Policy, our Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and all relevant laws and guidelines for best practice.

17. A copy of this code will be available to all participants, volunteer writing tutors, parents and schools.

18. The code will be reviewed at agreed intervals to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of everyone involved with Fighting Words.

ICT USAGE AT FIGHTING WORDS

Fighting Words recognises that access to Information and Communication technology (ICT) gives our participants enhanced opportunities to learn, engage, communicate and develop their

creative skills.

To that end, Fighting Words provides access to ICT for participants' use, particularly at summer programmes at Fighting Words centres. There is a Technology Code of Behaviour in place for Fighting Words staff and volunteer mentors included in the Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy.

The *ICT Usage Policy* outlines the guidelines and behaviours that participants are expected to follow when using Fighting Words technologies or when using personally owned devices at Fighting Words locations or at activities organised by Fighting Words.

Technologies Covered

Fighting Words may provide participants with internet access, desktop computers, digital imaging technologies, laptop or tablet devices, video conferencing capabilities, virtual learning environments, online collaboration capabilities, online discussion forums, email and more.

As new technologies emerge, Fighting Words may provide access to them also.

This policy is intended to cover all online technologies used at Fighting Words and not just those specifically mentioned.

Fighting Words ICT Network

The Fighting Words computer network is intended for educational purposes and the needs of the Fighting Words staff in relation to Fighting Words' activities.

All activity over the network may be monitored and retained.

Participants are expected to respect that the web filter in place is a safety precaution and should not try to circumvent it when browsing the internet. If a site is blocked and a participant believes it shouldn't be, the participant should speak to a member of the Fighting Words staff.

Participants are expected to follow the same rules for good behaviour and respectful conduct online as offline.

- Misuse of Fighting Words resources may result in disciplinary action outlined above.
- We make a reasonable effort to ensure participants' safety and security online but will not be held accountable for any harm or damages that result from misuse of Fighting Words technologies.
- Participants are expected to alert a member of staff immediately of any concerns for safety or security.