

Anti-Bullying Policy

Introduction

Dynamic School of Performing Arts Ltd creates an atmosphere in which every student has a sense of involvement and in which they can develop as a young person of integrity, social conscience and courage.

Anti-Bullying Policy Statement.

The aim of Dynamic School of Performing Arts Ltd Anti-Bullying Policy is to prevent bullying of any sort and to ensure that everyone can operate in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. All members of the community, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is and be familiar with our policy on bullying, therefore the aim of the policy is to help members of the community to deal with bullying when it occurs and, even more importantly, to prevent it. Bullying is an anti-social behaviour which affects everyone; it is unacceptable and it will not be tolerated. Everyone has a responsibility to report any incident of bullying that comes to their attention and these reports will always be taken seriously.

What is bullying?

Bullying may be defined as any deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time and intentionally hurts another pupil or group physically or emotionally, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves, and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, or because a child is adopted or is a carer- it may occur through cyber-technology.

Examples of unacceptable behaviour include:

- Physical (including sexual) assault.
- Verbal abuse, by name calling, teasing or making offensive remarks.
- Cyber-bullying, which is defined as the use of ICT by an individual or group in a way that is intended to upset others. Examples include using social websites, mobile phones, text messaging, photographs, video and e-mail.
- Indirect emotional tormenting by excluding from social groups or spreading malicious rumours.

Bullying may involve complicity that falls short of direct participation by, for instance, manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It may be overt and intimidatory but is often hidden and subtle. It includes actions or comments that are racist, religious or cultural, homophobic, transphobic, sexist, sexual or which focus on disabilities or other physical attributes (such as hair colour or body shape) or any reference to Special Educational Needs. Bullying is any persistent behaviour which hurts, injures, threatens

or frightens. It takes many forms but includes:

- Picking on somebody
- Physical violence; punching, hitting and pushing
- Mocking, ridiculing or tormenting somebody
- Offensive, racist name calling or using any obviously hurtful names.
- Sexist remarks
- Gossiping and spreading rumours
- Exclusion, deliberately ignoring someone and encouraging others to do the same.
- Insulting someone
- Threatening behaviour
- Taking and damaging property
- Offensive telephone calls, emails and text messages to others.
- Inappropriate use of social networking and messaging websites where harm is intended to others.

Bullying is the abuse of power, uninvited aggression and behaviour which offends. The seriousness of bullying cannot be emphasised enough.

Bullying is among the top concerns that parents have about their children's safety and well-being.

Bullying is also a top concern of children and young people themselves.

Bullying makes the lives of its victims a misery: it undermines their confidence and self-esteem; and destroys their sense of security and can be psychologically damaging.

Bullying impacts on its victims' attendance and attainment at school, marginalises those groups who may be particular targets for bullies and can have a life-long negative impact on some young people's lives. It can cause psychological damage and at worst, bullying has been a factor in pupil suicide.

It is acknowledged that bullies may have complex reasons for their behaviour and may well need help. It should also be recognised that the consequences of being allowed to 'get away with it' can be detrimental to them as well as to their victim. There are criminal laws that apply to harassment, assault and threatening behaviour.

What to look for

People who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting.

All members of staff must be alert to the signs of bullying; legal responsibilities are known and community members should act promptly and firmly against it, in accordance with our policy.

What to do

The way to stamp out bullying is for people to be aware of the issues involved, and to be clear in their own minds what action to take should cases arise:

If you are the victim

1. If you feel able to, confront the bully by verbally making him aware that you think that what he is doing is wrong.
2. Share your feelings with someone else:
 - If possible talk to a member of Staff, your parents/guardians about the incident
 - If you would rather not go straight to a member of staff, talk to your friends; or any trusted adult. They may well be able to advise on an appropriate course of action, or will be able to involve other people who can.

Who can you turn to if you are bullied?

- Your parents
- Member of staff
- Your close friends

What can you yourself do if you are bullied?

- Tell the bully to stop. Make it clear that the behaviour is unwelcome and hurtful
- Seek help. Talk to someone you trust
- Report it. Dynamic School of Performing Arts Ltd do not tolerate bullying.

What should you do if you know someone else is being bullied?

- Care enough to take action, whether you are personally involved or not.
- Intervene at an early stage so that the problem is dealt with before it gets out of hand.
- Have the courage to report it.

Procedure if someone should witnesses bullying behaviour

1. Support the victim by offering your friendship and make it clear that in your opinion what is happening to them is wrong.
2. Encourage them to speak out on their own behalf by confronting the bully, or with their permission, confront the bully yourself.
3. Accompany the victim to a trusted adult, or suggest that you speak to a member of staff on their behalf.

What can you do to prevent bullying?

- Respect yourself and others
- Try to create a relaxed atmosphere for everybody.
- Do not follow friends when you disagree with what they are doing.
- Learn to be tolerant and broad minded and to rejoice in individual differences.
- Be aware of our anti bullying policy and give it your full support.
- Sometimes bullies exclude people. If you are popular and have a positive peer group, include the victim in your activities.

How can parents help?

- Show a real interest in your child's social life and in school events.
- Encourage your child to have friends round, to join clubs and to be tolerant and broad minded towards others.
- Build up your child's self-esteem by emphasising positive features and accepting individual characteristics.
- Discuss our anti-bullying policy with your child and suggest positive strategies if his rights are abused.
- Do not tell your child that bullying is part of growing up or imply that it is in any way acceptable.
- Encourage your child to take action on bullying, but do not tell him to retaliate either physically or with name calling.
- Show an example by being firm but positive and not aggressive in your approach to discipline.
- If your child is being bullied, please report it; the school can then take action.

Signs that a student is being bullied for parents

- Unwillingness to want to attend.
- Frequent illnesses such as headaches and sore throats.
- Loss of confidence and sudden, unexpected mood swings.
- Sudden, prolonged periods of quietness.
- Anonymous telephone calls
- Nightmares
- Unwillingness to socialise, tendency to want to be alone.

What is Cyber-bullying?

Cyberbullying is "the use of information and communications technology, particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else"

The particular forms of cyber-bullying can include any of the following:

- Harassment or cyber-stalking
- Defamation or vilification
- Impersonation
- Unauthorised publication of private images
- Manipulation
- Peer rejection

Technology allows the user to bully anonymously or from an unknown location, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Cyber-bullying leaves no physical scars so it is less evident to a parent or teacher, but it is nevertheless highly intrusive and the hurt it causes can be very severe.

There are many different methods by which cyber-bullying takes place. While the development of information and communications technology is so rapid new styles of cyber-bullying are emerging constantly. Moreover, young people are particularly adept at adapting to new technology.