

Sylvia Young Theatre School



Anti Bullying Policy

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Reviewed	Annually

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

This school policy is in accordance with guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) as outlined in the following documents which can be downloaded from the DfE website www.gov.uk:

- Preventing and Tackling Bullying, Advice for Headteachers, staff and Governing Bodies (July 2017) [Preventing and Tackling Bullying, Advice for Headteachers, Staff and Governing Bodies \(July 2017\)](#)
- Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff (2014) [Cyberbullying: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff \(2014\)](#)
- Anti-Bullying Alliance [Anti-Bullying Alliance Advice and Support](#)

This policy should be read alongside the SYTS Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; the Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions Policy, and the Exclusions Policy.

Principle

At the Sylvia Young Theatre School we believe that all students have the right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without the fear of being bullied.

All institutions, both large and small, can contain students with the potential for bullying behaviour. If a school is well disciplined and organised, it can minimise the occurrence of bullying.

Bullying affects everyone, not just the bullies and the victims. It also affects those other children who watch, and students can be drawn in by group pressure. Bullying is not an inevitable part of school life or a necessary part of growing up, and it rarely sorts itself out. It is clear that certain jokes, insults, intimidating/threatening behaviour, written abuse and violence are to be found in our society. No one person or group, whether staff or student, should have to accept this type of behaviour. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed, will a child best be able to benefit from the opportunities available at the School.

It is important therefore that the School has a clear written policy to promote this belief, where both students and parents/carers are fully aware that any bullying complaints will be dealt with firmly, fairly and promptly. Bullying is wrong and will not be tolerated at Sylvia Young Theatre School.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour towards another student or group. This can be repeated over a period of time or a one-off incident. It can be difficult for victims to defend themselves against it. A **Bully** is defined as 'a person who habitually seeks to harm or intimidate those whom they perceive as vulnerable'.

It is important to make the distinction between bullying and friends falling out with each other. Falling out can be an inevitable part of a student's life and the school will support students to learn to cope and build resilience with this to prepare for adulthood. Bullying, however, is neither inevitable nor acceptable.

The focus of bullying can be anything that distinguishes and represents a deviation for a presumed 'norm' - for example:

- size, body shape, hair colour, skin, eye-sight, dress, language or mannerisms

- gender or gender reassignment
- physical or mental disability or special educational needs or learning difficulty
- prowess, or lack of it, in learning, sport or other activity
- personal backgrounds, including parents/carers, adoption or foster status, jobs, houses and lifestyles
- sexual attractiveness, or lack of it, health or appearance
- sexuality, based on homophobia or misogyny
- race, nationality, culture or religion or a mixture of these
- pregnancy, maternity or role as a carer

Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour. It can be:-

- Physical
A student can be physically punched, kicked, hit, spat at, etc.
- Verbal
Verbal abuse can take the form of name calling.
- Exclusion
A student can be bullied simply by being excluded from discussions/activities, with those they believe to be their friends. This can also include 'blanking' people, laughing at them or poking fun or putting people down.
- Emotional
A student may try to get what they want by making others feel angry or afraid. Emotional bullying can often be more damaging than physical bullying.
- Damage to Property or Theft.
Students may have their property damaged or stolen. Physical threats may be used by the bully in order that the student hands over property to them.
- Cyberbullying
This can involve misuse of all areas of internet use such as email, social networking sites, internet chat rooms, mobile phones - calls, text messages, camera and video facilities.

Although traditionally bullying is defined as behaviour 'repeated over time'. This does not afford the schools grounds not to take action in response to a single incident and to make an appropriate record. This will assist the school to spot patterns and to ensure the single incident does not become the first of a series.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARRASSMENT

Sexual violence is rape, assault by penetration or intentionally touching another person in a sexual way, without consent. (Consent is having the freedom and capacity to choose. The age of consent is 16; a child under 13 can never consent to any sexual activity.)

Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature. It is likely to violate dignity and/or make the victim feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated. It can also create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. It includes sexual comments, jokes or taunting, sexual exploitation, coercion or threats, sexualised bullying online or offline, sharing of sexual images and videos, physical behaviour such as deliberately brushing against someone.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between children of any age and any gender although girls are significantly more likely to be victims rather than perpetrators.

Children with SEND are three times more likely to be abused than their peers and children who are LGBT or perceived to be LGBT are targeted more frequently.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment is not an inevitable part of growing up, it is not banter and it is not part of having a laugh. It is criminal activity.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can be driven by wider societal factors such as sexist stereotypes and sexist language.

CHILD ON CHILD ABUSE

Children can abuse other children. This can involve:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying)
- Physical abuse
- Sexual violence and assault
- Sexual harassment
- Sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery)
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals
- Upskirting (this involves taking a picture under someone of any gender's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or to cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm)

POSSIBLE EVIDENCE OF BULLYING

- a previously extrovert student becoming withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- a student becomes isolated and disengaged from the class, or is unwilling, for example, to participate in group work
- a student frequently complains of headaches or nausea
- a student displays unusual patterns of non-attendance
- a reluctance to remain in school outside lesson times
- a student bears cuts, bruises and torn or dishevelled clothing at the beginning or in the middle of the day
- noticeable damage to books or other property
- an unaccountable and possibly repeated loss of bags, books, equipment or money
- a deterioration in academic performance
- disruptive or aggressive behaviour
- acts of theft (to pay bully)
- self-harm or suicide attempts

These signs and behaviours could indicate problems other than bullying but, where they are observed, bullying should be considered as a possible cause. This list is not exhaustive.

THE SCHOOL AIMS

- a) To organise the community in order to minimise opportunities for bullying.
- b) To ensure that all staff are fully aware of the existence and contents of this policy, as part of their induction to the school and through regular formal and informal discussion, and that they take any action necessary to help minimise opportunity for bullying and to raise awareness amongst students of how seriously the school views any type of bullying.
- c) To use any opportunity to discuss aspects of bullying and the appropriate way to behave towards each other, e.g. Form Time, PSHE, Assemblies and as an integral part of the curriculum.

- d) To promote and support National Initiatives such as the annual National Anti-Bullying Week and World Mental Health Day/Week.
- e) To deal quickly, firmly and fairly with any complaints, involving parents/carers where necessary.
- f) To review the School Policy and its degree of success on an annual basis.
- g) To ensure the school staff will continue to have a firm but fair discipline structure. The rules are few, simple and easy to understand.
- h) Not to use teaching materials or equipment which give a bad or negative view of any group because of their ethnic origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, disability, because they are adopted, because they are a carer etc.
- i) To encourage students to discuss how they get on with other people and to form positive attitudes towards other people.
- j) To encourage students to treat everyone with respect.
- k) To educate students about the dangers of the use of the internet and social media.
- l) To ensure that school ICT facilities are fitted with appropriate filters and security tools.
- m) To treat bullying as a serious offence (remember that bullying can cause psychological damage in, in extreme cases, even lead to suicide) and take every possible action to eradicate it from the Sylvia Young Theatre School.
- n) To make it clear that our stance on bullying applies to students when both in and out of school.
- o) To investigate incidents of bullying outside school that are reported to us and take appropriate action according to school policies.
- p) Where the bullying may involve an allegation of crime (assault, theft, harassment) a referral should be made to the police at the earliest opportunity.
- q) To recognise that Bullying can include emotional and / or physical harm to such a degree that it constitutes significant harm (see 'Safeguarding Policy, Child on Child Abuse' for further details). Significant harm is defined as a situation where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, a degree of physical, sexual and / or emotional harm (through abuse or neglect), which is so harmful that there needs to be compulsory intervention by child protection agencies into the life of the child and their family. In the most serious cases, referrals for assessment to MASH children's social care would be made for the child victim and for the child abuser.
- r) To record details of incidents of bullying in and out of school to assist in identifying repeat offenders. All records of bullying incidents are recorded by, or records are seen by, the Headteacher and Assistant Headteachers to enable any overall trends to be identified.
- s) To ensure that there is at least one member of staff who has specialised skills in order to understand the needs of its students, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who identify as LGBT.
- t) To provide regular education to all students about bullying, prejudice, relationships, language and empathy. The school currently does this through PSHE lessons, assemblies, visiting speakers, group work and curriculum.

ADVICE TO STUDENTS

What you do if you are being bullied

Remember that your silence is the bully's greatest weapon.

- a) Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied and that it is wrong.
- b) Be proud of who you are. It is good to be an individual.
- c) Try not to show that you are upset. It is hard but a bully thrives on someone's fear.
- d) Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
- e) Be assertive - shout "No!" Walk confidently away. Go straight to a teacher or member of staff.
- f) Fighting back may make things worse. Rather than fight back, talk to a teacher or parent/carers.
- g) Generally, it is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. You will get immediate support.
Teachers will take you seriously and will deal with bullies in a way which will end the bullying

and will not make things worse for you.

- h) If you do not feel able to talk to an adult then tell another student. They will help if they can or get an adult to help if they cannot.
- i) You can also get support from Helplines and websites such as ChildLine, Kidscape, Anti-Bullying Alliance and Anti-bullying Pro from The Diana Award. Phone numbers and web addresses are listed at the end of the school anti-bullying policy.

If you know someone is being bullied

- a) If you are a bystander, take action. Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own.
- b) If you feel you cannot get involved, tell an adult. Teachers have ways of dealing with the bully without getting you into trouble.
- c) Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully.

ADVICE TO PARENTS/CARERS

- a) Look for unusual behaviour in your children. For example, they may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to their normal standard.
- b) Always take an active role in your child's education. Enquire how their day has gone, who they have spent their time with, how lunch time was spent etc.
- c) If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the school. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- d) It is important that you advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse!
- e) Tell your own son or daughter there is nothing wrong with him or her. It is not his or her fault that they are being bullied.
- f) Make sure your child is fully aware of the School policy concerning bullying, and they will not be afraid to ask for help.
- g) Parents and carers can also get information and support from websites such as ChildLine, Kidscape, the Anti-Bullying Alliance and the Diana Award Anti Bullying Campaign.

If you know, suspect or see someone is being bullied, or you are a bystander:

- b) If you are a bystander, take action. Doing nothing sends a message of not caring and as adults in a position of responsibility and authority, it is our duty to intervene. If not, it makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own they may feel that we agree with the bully's behaviour.
- d) If you feel able to, tell the bully to stop what they are doing and remove the victim from the situation.
- e) Report the incident to the school immediately and the authorities if necessary.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN / DISCIPLINARY STEPS
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If bullying is suspected we talk to the suspected victim, the suspected bully and any witnesses. If any degree of bullying is identified, the following action will be taken:-

Help and support will be given as is appropriate to both the victims and the bullies:

We support the victims in any or all of the following ways:-

- By offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with a member of the Senior Leadership Team e.g. Headteacher, Assistant Headteachers, or another teacher if they choose.
- By enlisting the help of friends / other students to help support the victim and prevent further bullying.
- Informing the victims' parents/carers.

- By offering continuing support when they feel they need it.
- By taking one or more of the disciplinary steps described below to prevent further bullying.
- Take statements of any witnesses to the bullying

We also discipline, yet try to help, the bullies in any or all of the following ways:-

- By talking about what happened, to discover why they became involved.
- Informing the bullies' parents/carers.
- In accordance with '*Preventing and Tackling Bullying*' and under the *Children Act 1989*, if there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm then a bullying incident will be addressed as a child protection concern

Disciplinary Steps see sanctions relating to inequality in the Behaviour Policy.

A one off incident of bullying and/or bullying over time could result in a student being permanently excluded.

The school will take into account the special educational needs and/or disabilities of both the bully and the victim as it investigates any incident and will provide appropriate support in bringing about a resolution or modification to unwanted behaviours.

Useful Numbers and websites providing support and useful information:

Child Line – 0800 1111	www.childline.org.uk
NSPCC – 0808 800 5000	www.nspcc.org.uk
Kidscape - 0207 730 3300	www.kidscape.org.uk
Anti-Bullying Alliance	www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
Bullying UK	www.bullying.co.uk
Samaritans 08457 909090	www.samaritans.org
Young Minds	www.youngminds.org.uk
The Diana Award's Anti-Bullying Campaign	www.antibullyingpro.com
Kooth	www.kooth.com

Staff must report all bullying, or suspected bullying, which has been communicated to them, either to the Headteacher or Assistant Headteachers, so that an overview can be gained, and the necessary action is taken.