

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

The following policy was revised in September 2024 and is in line with the current Government Guidance, Preventing and Tackling Bullying (2014).

STATEMENT OF INTENT

Everyone has the right to feel safe and secure in a learning environment.

We aim to encourage everyone to respect and value one another.

All Students are entitled to receive their Performing Arts Education free from humiliation, intimidation, oppression and abuse. It is the responsibility of all Staff Members to ensure that Teaching takes place in an atmosphere that is caring and protective.

Aims of this Policy

This Policy has been produced to co-exist with The Education and Inspections Act 2006, The Equality Act 2010, and our Safeguarding Policy, and Code of Conduct.

The aim of this Policy is to produce a safe and secure environment where all Students can flourish, an environment where bullying is unacceptable and measures are in place to reduce its likelihood.

Studio One (DCPA) Ltd & the Dorset Foundation College for Performing Arts, expects a high standard of good behaviour and value is placed on the qualities of self-discipline, independence, initiative and mutual respect;

Our aim is to have firm but fair discipline in a relaxed, caring and friendly atmosphere.

Students are expected to consider other people and their feelings. They should treat others as they would expect to be treated themselves.

BULLYING, OF ANY KIND, VIOLATES THESE STATEMENTS AND, THEREFORE, WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.

Objectives of this policy

1. To provide a happy, friendly environment where bullying is not tolerated
2. To involve all Staff, Parents, Members and Students in combating bullying and making it unacceptable
3. To encourage Students who are being bullied or who observe bullying to inform Staff.
4. Above all, to try and prevent bullying happening in the first place.

What is bullying?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally (Dept for Education – Preventing and Tackling Bullying, October 2014).

Areas of potential bullying include racial, religious, cultural, sexual/sexist, homophobic, biphobic transphobic, disability, intimidation, and attack. It can occur directly or through cyber-technology (social, websites, mobile phones, text messages, email and photographs)

Bullying can be:

Persistent; • Intimidating, Fearsome, stressful; • Pre-meditated; • Demoralising; • Physical; • Psychological; • Humiliating, Demeaning, Threatening

The use of a superior position of strength to intimidate

A process designed to lower self-esteem; Carried out by individuals or by groups.

Bullying includes:

Name calling or mocking; Physical violence – Hitting, Kicking, Punching, Damaging property, Demands for money or possessions; Hiding someone's possessions; Pressurising others to do something they do not want to do, Threatening behaviour; Initiating and spreading nasty or false rumours; Deliberately leaving people out or not talking to them; Teasing and tormenting a person about their social class, race, gender, personal appearance, achievement or performance, possessions, disabilities or other personal traits; Sending unpleasant notes or making someone the subject of graffiti; Touching another person against their will; Sexual harassment; and Using technology such as email, the Internet, texts and the like, to insult, provoke, threaten, demean or otherwise intimidate and upset the victim.

A bullying incident will be addressed as a *child protection concern* when there is reason to suspect that a Student is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm.

See our Child protection Policy.

The consequences of bullying and recognising it is taking place

Those who are bullied can suffer great psychological stress that has even resulted in suicide.

There are a number of well-known symptoms, especially if they are the victim of persistent bullying.

Behaviour to be aware of is:

Regularly feeling sick or unwell in the mornings.

Reluctance to talk openly about friends

Reluctance to make the journey to and from their classes.

Money or possessions going missing; Clothes or school bag torn.

Wanting extra pocket money for no particular reason.

Unexplained cuts and bruises; Self-harm.

Becoming withdrawn, suffering from loss of self-esteem and negative self-image

Unexplained behavioural changes, e.g. moody, bad tempered, tearful

Depression and impaired concentration.

Not wanting to leave the house or disinclination to attend classes;

THE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF Studio One (DCPA) Ltd & The Dorset Foundation College for Performing Arts

We will work to promote the anti-bullying message

What staff will do:-

Staff members should report any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). See Safeguarding Policy

All staff will praise and encourage cooperative, caring behaviour.

All staff will promote positive relationships by demonstrating, through their own behaviour, that it is better for everyone to respect and care for each other.

Staff will provide an environment where children feel accepted and valued and are able to speak freely.

All staff must be aware of areas of the building where bullying might take place and be sensitive to the times and situations where it is more likely to happen (for example, in changing rooms, at break times).

Bullying can take place discreetly in classroom situations; teachers should be observant and act firmly and swiftly if they suspect or find evidence of bullying.

Staff will treat all allegations of bullying seriously and will investigate each incident.

Students may see failure to respond to incidents or allegations as evidence that bullying is tolerated.

Staff will watch for signs of distress in Students - This might present as deterioration of work, late arrival for lessons, hanging back when the lesson is over, regular 'illnesses', isolation, and wanting to be with adults rather than peers.

Staff will challenge any prejudice-based language from pupils.

Staff will refer bullying incidents to the Directors if there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm (see our Safeguarding Policy); and Staff will be alert to Students who may be vulnerable and at risk of bullying, e.g. SEN and LGBT Students.

Working with Parents

Bullying is a highly emotive issue, and the parents of victims can rightly become very distressed on behalf of their child and can feel helpless. The Parents of bullies often do not know and feel very vulnerable and defensive when they find out.

Not every single case of bullying will necessarily be reported to Parents, but the expectation is that most will be. It will depend on the circumstances and severity.

Staff should make clear to Parents the actions we are taking, why we are taking them and what they can do to underpin & support action taken by Studio One (DCPA) Ltd or The Dorset Foundation College for Performing Arts.

We urge parents to contact us immediately if they have any suspicion of bullying; we are sometimes unaware of the problem