

Norfolk Institute of Performing Arts

Anti-Bullying Policy

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In formulating this policy, which is reviewed annually, Norfolk Institute of Performing Arts has regard to:

- DfE guidance Preventing and Tackling Bullying July 2017
- Educational (Independent School Standard) (England) regulations 2010 (revised 2019)
- Equality Act 2010
- Children Act 1989
- Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff DfE November 2014)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020
- Prevent duty guidance 2015
- Sexting in schools and colleges: responding to incidents and safeguarding young people (UKCCIS 2016).

Policy Statement

We want our pupils to look forward to coming to school and to be able to learn and develop to their full potential in a safe and supportive environment. We take pride in being a caring community. Good behaviour is expected from all and pupils are expected to treat staff and each other with courtesy and co-operation so that they can learn in a relaxed but orderly atmosphere.

We will not tolerate bullying in any form. We strive to treat all of our pupils and their parents fairly and with consideration; we expect them to reciprocate this towards each other, the staff and the school. Bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination are the antitheses of the school's core values and will not be tolerated.

Everyone in our community - teaching and non-teaching staff, parents, guardians and all pupils - is expected to support this policy, to understand what bullying is and what they should do if bullying arises.

Policy Aims

The aim of this policy is:

- to maintain and encourage a positive and supportive culture amongst all pupils and staff in the school.
- to deter bullying behaviour, detect it when it occurs, and deal with it on a case by case basis through mediation, guidance, education, counselling and/or disciplinary sanctions up to and including, if necessary, expulsion.

Scope

It is everyone's responsibility to help ensure that, whatever the circumstances, no one becomes the target of bullying.

This policy applies to all pupils and staff at the school irrespective of their age and whether or not a pupil is in the care of the school when/if bullying behaviour occurs.

Staff have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises. The school's disciplinary powers can be used to address pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control of staff if it would be reasonable for the school to regulate pupils' behaviour in those circumstances. This may include bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, in town or via social media.

While this policy focusses mainly on the bullying of pupils by other pupils, it is recognised that other forms of bullying may occur and this is addressed.

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.

Bullying may occur directly or through cyber-technologies such as social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs, video and email.

It is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups e.g. because of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disability, or because a child is adopted or is a carer. It can result from any perceived or actual differences between children.

It is important to remember the seriousness of bullying, which is not just physical but can also be emotional, and can cause psychological damage.

Bullying on the basis of protected characteristics is taken particularly seriously. Incidents of bullying that are based on protected characteristics will be distinguished in the school's anti-bullying log to better enable the school to identify any issues, trends or patterns. This will help the school to instil the values of tolerance and respect across the community and actively promote the wellbeing of pupils.

There are many forms of bullying but it may be:

- Verbal: name-calling, unfriendly teasing, sarcastic praise, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments, demanding money, spreading hurtful rumours or manipulating others to do so. It includes discriminatory and derogatory language, such as racist, homophobic, disability and mental health intolerant language.
- Exclusionary Behaviour: excluding from groups, intimidating, isolating, tormenting (hiding books, threatening gestures).
- General unkindness: sending nasty notes/emails/text messages, sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet.
- Physical: hitting, kicking, slapping, pushing.
- Cyberbullying: using electronic media, text messages, mobile phone photos/video clips, mobile phone calls, email, chat rooms, instant messaging and websites (blogs), personal websites, social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, AskFM, Twitter, Tumblr, Formspring, YouTube, Rate my Teacher, etc) to deliberately upset someone.
- Upskirting: this typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence.

Bullying may also be:

- racist or relating to someone's religion, belief or culture.
☐ sexist: related to a person's gender or gender reassignment.
- sexual: talking to or touching someone in a sexually inappropriate way (please see the Safeguarding policy for further details)
- homophobic: relating to a person's sexual orientation.
- prejudice-based: any type of direct physical or verbally bullying, indirect bullying or cyberbullying based on a 'protected characteristic' as set out in the Equality Act 2010, namely; age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. Focussing in a hurtful way on someone's disability, special educational needs, physical attributes (such as hair colour or body shape), health conditions or home circumstances such as being adopted or a carer.

A one-off incident of unpleasantness or an isolated thoughtless comment is not necessarily deliberately intended to hurt. However, we all have a responsibility to guard against this kind of behaviour and correct it. To that end, the school will still take appropriate action in response to a single incident and make an appropriate record of the incident.

Some individuals may see their hurtful conduct as “banter”, “teasing”, “a game” or “for the good of” the other person. Bullying is often hidden and subtle; it can also be overt and obvious. All these forms of bullying are equally unacceptable. Bullying can involve complicity (silently accepting) which falls short of direct participation.

Bullying can often be corrected quickly with advice and without disciplinary sanctions. However, bullying is a form of peer on peer abuse and can be very serious in nature. For this reason, it is important that this policy is read in conjunction with the School’s Safeguarding and Child Protection policy, which sets out the school’s procedures for dealing with peer on peer abuse.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using technology, particularly using mobile telephones, social media sites or gaming sites, deliberately to upset someone else.

Cyberbullying is a form of bullying that can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience and more accessories as people forward on content or ‘like’ a post with a click. Staff can be victims of cyberbullying as well as pupils.

It is important that all members of the school community, staff, parents and pupils, use social media responsibly. The school considers online safety as part of both safeguarding and antibullying arrangements, and this policy should also be read in conjunction with the Online Safety IT and Acceptable Use policy.

Examples of cyberbullying include:

- setting up website pages and inviting others to post derogatory comments about a pupil;
- filming fights or assaults (also known as ‘happy slapping’) and circulating them via mobile phones;
- sending insulting and vicious text messages;
- posting fake or obscene photographs of the target on a social networking site;
- hacking into social networking sites and removing and circulating material which may be embarrassing or personal.
- upskirting using electronic devices.

Cyberbullying is very threatening as there is no safe haven for the victim. Cyberbullying can follow people into their private space and at all hours.

Cyberbullies can communicate their messages to a wide audience with remarkable speed and can often remain unidentifiable and unseen. Once a message is on the internet, it is very difficult to erase it totally; cyberbullying therefore threatens for life the target's reputation.

If you are bullied online, do not respond or retaliate to the cyberbullying incidents. Do not delete evidence of the abuse but switch off your device and report it to a member of staff.

The wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 give teachers stronger powers to tackle cyberbullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images or files on electronic devices.

The school reserves the right to confiscate a mobile phone or other electronic device if it is suspected that it has been used in a cyberbullying or other harmful incident. There is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's device where there is good reason to do so.

Any communications of a bullying nature made from outside school will be treated in the same way as those made inside school. Cyberbullying may lead to disciplinary or legal action. All pupils must abide by the terms laid out in the Online Safety IT and Acceptable Use policy.

Sexting

Sexting is difficult to define because it is a broad term that means different things to different people. To most professionals, sexting is the sending or posting of sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs, via mobile phones or over the internet. However, many young people interpret sexting as the writing and sharing of explicit messages with people they know.

Sharing photos and videos online is part of daily life for many people, enabling them to share experiences, connect with friends and record their lives. However, creating and sharing sexual photos and videos of under-18s is illegal. Furthermore, these images can then be passed on by the recipients to others who were not originally intended to see the images. The originators of the photos can become victims of bullying as a result.

In 2016, The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) published 'Sexting in schools and colleges: responding to incidents and safeguarding young people' and the school has regard to this advice in formulating its procedures for dealing with any incidents of sexting.

Child pornography laws cover both the possession and distribution of sexual images of children. If the school is made aware that inappropriate images of a pupil might exist on an electronic device, the DSL must be informed at once and procedures will be followed as outlined in the school's Safeguarding policy.

Signs and Symptoms Of Bullying

A pupil may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being targeted or bullied. It is important to be aware that these signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and may need to be investigated.

Possible signs include if a pupil:

- changes his or her usual routine.
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, isolated or lacking in confidence; stops communicating with others, or does not listen to the problems of others.
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone, is nervous and jumpy when a cyber-message is received, or becomes upset after using electronic devices.
- does not join in fun.
- avoids being alone.
- puts himself or herself down.
- produces uncharacteristically poor school work.
- is frequently absent or displays erratic attendance.
- has damaged books/has possessions which are damaged or " go missing".
- has unexplained cuts or bruises.
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable; has a change of character.
- stops eating or comfort eats.
- is frightened to say what's wrong to staff or friends.
- rushes everywhere with a frightened, nervous look.
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above, acts weirdly, covers up, starts lying.
- is desperate to be friends with the bully.
- shows tension between close friends.

Procedures

The School treats bullying, including allegations of bullying, very seriously. Bullying conflicts sharply with the school's policy on equal opportunities and with its social and moral principles.

Bullying can be so serious that it causes psychological damage, eating disorders, self-harm and even suicide and, whilst bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour.

If at any stage it is thought that a pupil might be at risk of harm as a result of bullying, the school's child protection procedures must be followed as set out in the Safeguarding policy.

The corrosive effects of bullying can harm a young person's self-esteem. As part of the school's Prevent duty, we recognise that this can make someone at greater risk of radicalisation. The school has a duty to guard against this. If a member of staff has any concerns that a young person might be at risk of radicalisation, procedures must be followed as described in the school's Safeguarding policy.

We will not deal with bullying by a bullying approach; our aim is to use a non-aggressive, positive manner that will achieve outcomes that are constructive for both parties.

Where possible, it is the School's aim to respond to bullying before it starts. Discussions take place with pupils about issues of difference in lessons, projects, and performances. Staff look for intelligence about issues between pupils which might provoke conflict and develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place.

All staff who have contact with children have a responsibility to pass on any issues that they pick up. This information is shared with the directors and pastoral staff as appropriate, and passed on to the school's Anti-Bullying Coordinator, Natalie Armstrong.

Any investigating member of staff must invest sufficient time to listen to both sides of the argument and to avoid rushed responses. At the same time, pupils and parents must not be left at risk or with the impression that nothing is being done.

The School endeavours to provide support and understanding for the victim; it is important to avoid the 'natural victim' syndrome and the idea that the victim is somehow to blame. Investigations must include witness statements from other pupils as appropriate and the involvement of key staff to ensure that a complete picture is obtained.

The victim and parents must be notified of any action taken with sensitivity to issues of confidentiality and the needs of all pupils involved. We also aim to ensure that the bully understands that he or she must take responsibility for his or her own actions; that he or she knows the seriousness of the offence and that any repetition will result in further action.

Full records must be kept of incidents, investigations and final outcomes by staff involved in dealing with the situations, and copies given to the Anti-Bullying Coordinator. A log of bullying incidents is kept by the school and regularly reviewed and discussed in order to try to identify any possible patterns in bullying behaviour. The log will distinguish any incidents of bullying that are based on protected characteristics to assist with the promotion of toleration, respect and pupil wellbeing.

Reporting Bullying

Pupils

The best way to stop bullying is by involving pupils so that all pupils understand the school's approach and are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders.

We actively encourage pupils who feel they are being bullied, or who are worried another pupil is being bullied, to report this immediately in any of the following ways:

- inform parents.
- speak to their tutor, the Anti-Bullying Coordinator, or any member of staff with whom he or she feels comfortable.
- leave a note for the Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator or other staff.
- use Confide, the online reporting tool.

contact Childline (0800 1111) or Kidscape (08451 205 204).

Reporting Bullying

Parents

We want to involve parents to ensure that they are clear that the school does not tolerate bullying and are aware of the procedures they should follow if they believe that their child is being bullied. We will take any complaint about bullying seriously and work to resolve the issue in a way that protects the pupil.

We ask that parents work with us by reinforcing the value of good behaviour at home. Engage with your children and take an active interest in their social life. Chat about friends and activities both in and out of school. You may well learn of disagreements or difficulties as children do fall out from time to time and this is a normal part of exploring how to handle relationships. It is not always the best thing to react to every disagreement.

However, do watch for signs of real distress in your children. There may be:

- an unwillingness to attend school.
- recurrent headaches, stomach aches, etc.
- personal items or equipment going missing.
- requests for extra pocket money.

Parents who are concerned that their child is being bullied should inform the Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator without delay. You can be sure that the school will treat the issue seriously and will investigate thoroughly.

Reporting Bullying

Parents

You will be kept apprised of developments, but please be aware that cases of bullying need to be handled sensitively and can take time to investigate thoroughly. Equally, we would ask you to keep us informed of your child's demeanour and behaviour outside of school to help us judge the success of our actions.

It is also important that the child is aware that the same policy towards the situation is being implemented both at school and at home. It is our aim to resolve the situation so that the bullying stops. Should you have continuing concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us. We do not intend to tolerate bullying of any kind.

Reporting Bullying

Staff

This policy focusses mainly on the bullying of pupils by pupils although it is recognised that a staff member could be a target and on occasion may be perceived to be guilty of bullying.

Staff members who are concerned about being bullied or harassed should raise this for discussion with the DSL, and refer to the Inclusivity policy.

Pupils and parents who feel that a member of staff is bullying should report this to the DSL. Complaints against teachers will be dealt with in accordance with staff disciplinary procedures.

Responding to a Report of Bullying

It is important that a pupil who raises a bullying concern is reassured and feels safe to ask for help. It is important not to assign blame but focus on keeping the pupil feeling safe and acting so that the behaviour of the bullies can be changed. The climate should be right for the target to ask for help.

The member of staff to whom bullying is reported, or who first discovers the situation, must act without delay and reassure and support the pupils involved, as well as informing the Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator.

If at any stage a member of staff thinks that a pupil may be at risk of harm, the school's safeguarding procedures will be implemented as detailed in the Safeguarding policy and the appropriate external agencies (such as police/children's social care) will be contacted. If there is a child protection concern, the member of staff must inform the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead, in accordance with the School's Safeguarding policy.

Under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is "reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm". Where this is the case, the DSL will report the incident to the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP). Even where safeguarding is not an issue, the school may need to draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child engaging in bullying.

Although bullying or cyberbullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, some types of harassing or threatening behaviour, or communications, could be a criminal offence under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003 and the Public Order Act 1986. If staff feel that an offence may have been committed they should seek assistance from the police.

When Bullying Has Been Reported

The first stage is Assessment:

The Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator will see the target and any witnesses without delay and form an initial view of the allegation.

The assessment will consider:

- the nature of the incident(s): physical, verbal, exclusionary, etc.
- is it a "one-off" incident involving an individual or a group?
- is it part of a pattern of behaviour by an individual or a group?
- has physical injury been caused?
- who else should be informed: directors? tutors? parents? LSCP? police?
- can the alleged bully/bully group be seen on a 'no-names' basis?
- what is the likely outcome if the complaint proves to be correct?

If there has been serious bullying behaviour, the directors and relevant staff will be informed and they will co-ordinate the action to be taken.

We reserve the right to investigate incidents involving our pupils which take place outside school hours and outside the school grounds.

Range of Actions

Each situation is treated separately and the feelings and views of the target will be respected and carefully considered; the right solution for that particular problem will be sought with a range of possible approaches discussed with the target (please see below). Wherever possible, the school will adopt an approach with which the target feels most comfortable.

Group mediation:

The school may operate an approach which does not assign blame, understanding that there will often be a bully group, probably with one person leading it. The target's feelings are at the heart of this process and the member of staff will begin by discussing with the target his or her feelings.

A group of pupils, not including the target but including the bully/bully group and some 'rescuers', meet and hear through the target's own words about how hurt the target has been and how the member of staff would value the pupils' help.

Each of the group undertakes a positive step to help. Having made the bully/bully group aware of the target's feelings, the focus is on the solution and moving forward rather than dwelling on the past. There are individual follow up meetings with the target, the bully/bully group and the 'rescuers'. The experience should be a positive one for all concerned.

Support for the target:

We shall make every effort to ensure that the target will receive sensitive support and understanding so that we may deal with the problem appropriately.

This support may include:

- advice on self-protection e.g. blocking messages from a particular source or ‘buddy lists’.
- advice on preserving evidence in the form of text or email messages, images and other material.
- if it is necessary to inform someone else, the target’s agreement will usually be sought and it will be explained who needs to be told and why.
- positive efforts towards enabling full re-integration of both bully and target.
- keeping the target informed of, and strive to ensure he or she is in agreement with, any steps undertaken to deal with the situation.
- follow up meetings with the target to check on progress and adjust the procedures if not working successfully.

Others involved:

Those involved, directly or indirectly as observers, including others in the year group, dormitory or class (as appropriate) may be interviewed individually as independent witnesses, with their permission. Each person involved will be asked to consider how he or she could improve the situation.

Action taken with the bully/bully group:

If a pupil or group of pupils is involved in bullying and then responds positively to guidance, they will receive follow up support, encouragement and further guidance on modifying their behaviour. If they bully a second time, or the initial bullying is sufficiently severe, they may receive a disciplinary sanction in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy.

Bullying is usually treated as a serious breach of discipline. Disciplinary measures will be applied fairly, consistently and reasonably taking into account any special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable pupils. The motivations behind bullying behaviour will also be considered and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator. Where this is the case, the child engaging in bullying may also need support.

Possible sanctions for bullying, depending on the nature of the bullying, include being asked to sign a behaviour agreement contract, meeting with the directors or suspension. In a very serious case or a case of persistent bullying, a pupil may, after a fair hearing, be required to leave the school permanently.

Meeting with target and bully:

It may also be suitable, with the target's consent, to bring the target and bully together, each with a friend (optional), in a safe environment, for understanding and reconciliation.

Recording and Monitoring

A written record will always be made of any bullying concerns together with the type of bullying and what action has been taken. The Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator monitors the bullying logbook at the end of each term in order to enable patterns to be identified, both in relation to individual pupils and across the institute as a whole. Any patterns are then discussed with the directors.

Key people may be informed as appropriate, and with the knowledge of the target. If there is sustained unhappiness, parents of those closely involved will almost certainly be kept up to date regarding the action being taken. We welcome feedback from parents and guardians about the effectiveness of our preventative measures.

Preventative Measures

Norfolk Institute of Performing Arts places great value on creating an ethos of good behaviour and an environment that nurtures trust, encouragement and mutual respect in our daily interactions. The school strives to proactively gather information about issues between pupils which might provoke conflict and develop strategies to try to prevent bullying from happening in the first place.