



POLICY ON THE PREVENTION OF BULLYING

Aim:

The ultimate aim of The Royal Ballet School's anti-bullying policy is to:

- a) prevent bullying of any sort
- b) make it clear to all students and staff that bullying is always unacceptable
- c) ensure that everyone can operate in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied.

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 at and on the way to and from School. 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. 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. At worst, bullying has been a factor in student suicide.

All members of the community, including Governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, volunteers, students, parents guardians and carers should have an understanding of what bullying is and be familiar with the School policy on bullying. Bullying is an antisocial behaviour, which affects everyone; it is unacceptable and it will not be tolerated. Everyone in the community has a responsibility to help create an atmosphere in which students report any incident of bullying that comes to their attention and these reports will always be taken seriously. This policy is written with reference to DFE guidance 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for Head Teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies'. This policy is applicable to all students at The Royal Ballet School, whether boarders or day.

The School acknowledges that bullies may have complex reasons for their behaviour and may well need help. However, the School also recognises that the consequences of being allowed to 'get away with it' can be detrimental to them as well as to their victim. All students deserve the opportunity to be helped to understand what acceptable behaviour is. Students who are being bullied will be supported, and students who may bully others will also be given suitable help and guidance.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's policies for:

- a) Safeguarding
- b) Child Protection
- c) Behaviour
- d) ICT Acceptable Use
- e) Health & Safety

These policies are available on the School website; hard copies may be obtained upon request.

Definition:

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, appearance or health conditions, home conditions, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived

differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a School's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and Schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case.

Bullying can take place between students, between students and staff, or between staff; by individuals or groups; face-to-face, indirectly or using a range of cyber-bullying methods.

Examples of unacceptable behaviour include:

- a) Physical (including sexual) assault, for example, hitting, kicking, spitting, removing belongings, damaging property.
- b) Verbal abuse, by name calling, teasing, insulting, writing notes or making offensive remarks.
- c) Cyber-bullying, which is defined as the use of ICT by an individual or group to support deliberate, repeated and hostile behaviour intended to harm others. Examples include using social websites (such as Facebook or Twitter), mobile 'phones, text messaging, photographs, video and e-mail
- d) Indirect emotional tormenting by excluding from social groups or spreading malicious rumours.
- e) Initiation ceremonies intended to cause pain, anxiety or humiliation.

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.

What to look for:

Students 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 from School.

All members of the community must be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it, in accordance with School policy. Surveys have shown that in the vast majority of bullying incidents, most people knew that what was going on was wrong. Sometimes people, either through lethargy, peer group pressure, or tacit support for what is going on, fail to take action.

What to do:

The best way to stamp out bullying is for people to be aware of the issues involved, to be involved in prevention and to be clear in their own minds what action to take should cases arise. In the procedures that follow, the word 'bullying' is used to cover all forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying.

Prevention:

The most effective way to combat bullying is by creating a community based on respect, with an ethos celebrating success and promoting good behaviour. Awareness and discussion of questions to do with bullying are also vital to prevention. The School will take the following approaches:

- a) Staff and student awareness will be raised through training, taking action to reduce the risk of bullying at the times and places where it is most likely to occur
- b) The key points from this policy will be prominently displayed on School notice boards
- c) Anti-bullying will feature as a discussion point for the School Council
- d) Anti-bullying will be discussed during PSHCE sessions to all years and reinforced in other areas of the curriculum as the opportunities present themselves e.g. drama, physical education
- e) Opportunities will also be sought to allow parents to contribute to the School's actions to prevent bullying
- f) Student surveys will be used to facilitate an understanding of the level and type of bullying that students might have experienced
- g) The Academic and Pastoral Head and the Head of Lower School will regularly review the record of bullying offences to identify patterns and check that the policy is effective.

Prevention of Cyber-bullying:

In addition to the preventative measures described above, the School:

- a) Expects all students to adhere to its ICT Acceptable Use policy which they sign on joining the School
- b) Blocks access to certain sites by a filtering system
- c) Monitors students' use of the internet
- d) May impose sanctions for the misuse or attempted misuse of the internet or email
- e) Cyber-safety is covered in PSHE sessions
- f) The use of cameras (including those on mobile 'phones) is not allowed in the School or at any event associated with the School

If a student is the victim:

If they feel able to, the bullied student should confront the bully by verbally making him/her aware that the bullied student thinks that what he/she is doing is wrong. The bullied student should share their feelings with someone else. If possible they should talk to any member of Staff with whom they feel comfortable. Posters detailing those to whom students might speak are displayed throughout the School. If the bullied student would rather not go straight to a member of staff, they should talk to friends, older students, the School Counsellor, Nurse 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. Any boarder or day student has the right to inform an outside agency of their concerns. Contact details for these are given at the end of this document.

If a student witnesses bullying behaviour:

They should support the victim by offering friendship and making it clear that in their opinion what is happening to them is wrong. They should encourage them to speak out on their own behalf by confronting the bully, or with their permission, confront the bully themselves. They should accompany the victim to a trusted adult, or suggest that they see their tutor or a member of the House staff or the Academic and Pastoral Head on their behalf.

If a member of Staff witnesses an incident of bullying or it is reported to them:

They must reassure and support the students involved; advise them that you are required to pass details on to the relevant member of the pastoral team; and ask them to write down their allegation. The same procedures must be followed as for a Child Protection case; the member of staff must:

- a) Choose a place to talk where the talk will not be interrupted but also where the member of staff is safe from allegation.
- b) Listen carefully and patiently to the student, no matter how difficult the member of staff finds what they are saying
- c) Show the student they believe in him/her and takes his/her disclosure seriously
- d) Stay calm and reassuring, and maintains neutral body language
- e) Not promise to keep the conversation secret, no matter how insistent the student may be. The staff member must explain that they are ready to listen but that when they have heard the account there may be parts that they have to tell somebody else in order to get the help required.
- f) Not press for information, cross-examine or lead the student, as well-intentioned questions could prejudice further investigations. It is particularly important not to use leading questions or to put words into the student's mouth. If the member of staff needs to respond verbally, they should feed back to the student what they have said.
- g) Ensure the students' immediate safety
- h) Make careful notes immediately after the conversation, giving an accurate and full account of what was said. These notes should include all relevant information regarding the setting and circumstances of the communication, including the time and the persons present.
- i) Inform the Academic and Pastoral Head and the Head of Lower School or the Deputy Head of Lower School immediately of the disclosure, allegations or suspicion, give them a copy of the

written notes and ensure that they are aware of any immediate medical needs. They will coordinate an immediate investigation into the circumstances of the complaint.

- j) Take no further action, including discussing their suspicions with the parent or anyone else involved in the care of the child, until the decision has been taken how to proceed.

In Lower School the tutors of any students concerned will be informed and asked to accompany their tutees, whilst they are questioned. Where this is not possible, another member of staff, acceptable to the student, will be asked to stand in for the tutor.

The victim will have the process for dealing with bullying clearly explained to them. The victim will also be given the opportunity to discuss his/her own reactions and behaviour towards the bully. The victim is given support and advice and counselling is suggested if deemed appropriate.

Once the Academic and Pastoral Head and the Deputy Head of Lower School is clear that a bullying offence has been committed, the bully and any others involved will be interviewed individually and written notes will be kept of the accounts of events. The process for dealing with bullying will be explained clearly to them. If the complaint regards a group, every effort will be made to prevent collusion during the investigation.

The Deputy Head of Lower School and the Academic and Pastoral Head decide whether to involve parents in the next stages.

It is the School's intention to try, in the first case, to resolve such issues by getting all the parties together, to discuss the events and their causes and to seek reconciliation. If the events are such that this is not considered appropriate, or where bullying has been repeated after previous attempts at reconciliation, sanctions may be considered appropriate, as outlined in the Behaviour policy.

Details of any sanctions applied will be sent to parents in a letter informing them of the circumstances of the bullying incident and warning them of the consequences which might follow any further similar incidents. Details of the incident will be recorded on all the students' files. Should the sanctions involve exclusion they will be dealt with in accordance with the School's published Policy on Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions. It is the policy of the School to attempt to resolve such issues internally using our own disciplinary sanctions, unless the matter is of such gravity that a criminal prosecution is likely. The Chair of the Academic and Pastoral Sub-Committee of the Governors will be informed of any major bullying issues. If the bullying amounts to abuse, the CPC will contact Social Services or the Police within 24 hours, as for all Child Protection cases.

Criminal Law

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986. If School staff feel that an offence may have been committed they should seek assistance from the police. For example, under the Malicious Communication Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety or to send an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.

Bullying Outside School Premises

Head teachers have a specific statutory power to discipline students for poor behaviour outside of the School premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives head teachers the power to regulate students' conduct when they are not on School premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of School staff. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the School premises, such as on School or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town centre.

Where bullying outside School is reported to School staff, it should be reported to the Academic and Pastoral Head or the Head of Lower School, who will investigate and act on the report. They will

consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator in their local authority of the actions taken against a student. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed.

Child Protection

Under 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 School staff should report their concerns to their local authority children's social care. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, Schools may need to draw on a range of external services to support the student who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child doing the bullying.

Further Sources of Information

DfE resources:

DfE Behaviour and Discipline in Schools Guidance:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/Schools/studentssupport/behaviour/f0076803/advice-forheadteachers-and-School-staff-on-behaviour-and-discipline>

Make Them Go Away (SEND DVD)

Let's Fight it Together (Cyberbullying DVD)

Advice

If a student, parent or member of staff is unsure about a situation or events, several organisations will speak in confidence to advise what would be the best thing to do:

NSPCC: 0808 800 5000

Childline: 0800 1111

Kidscape: 08451 295

The Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA): Founded in 2002 by NSPCC and National Children's Bureau, the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) brings together over 100 organisations into one network to develop and share good practice across the whole range of bullying issues.

Beatbullying: A bullying prevention charity with an emphasis on working directly with children and young people. In addition to lesson plans and resources for parents, Beatbullying have developed the Cybermentors peer support programme for young people affected by cyberbullying.

Kidscape: A charity established to prevent bullying and promote child protection. Advice for young people, professionals and parents about different types of bullying and how to tackle it. They also offer specialist training and support for School staff, and assertiveness training for young people.

Restorative Justice Council: Includes best practice guidance for practitioners 2011.

Cyberbullying:

ChildNet International: Specialist resources for young people to raise awareness of online safety and how to protect themselves.

Contact details of agencies outside the School

Emergency

If someone is in immediate danger always phone **999** and report the matter to the Police.

Lower School

Contacts for Richmond-Upon-Thames Social Services

If anyone is concerned that a child is being abused they can phone Social Services Single Point of Access Team on 020 8891 7969 (outside of office hours phone the Emergency Duty team on 020 8744 2442).

The local Police has a specialist team who deal with Child Protection: 020 8247 6331. In an emergency dial 999 and report the matter to the Police.

The LADO is:

Richmond	Keiran Travers	k.travers@richmond.gov.uk	020 8891 7961
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The Richmond-Upon-Thames Local Safeguarding Children Board is at:

42 York Street, Twickenham TW13BW (tel: 0208 891 1411)

LSCB Independent Chair: Tony Eccleston: tony.eccleston@btinternet.com

Head of Safeguarding and Quality Performance: Karen.Neill@richmond.gov.uk

Child Protection Manager: Kieran Travers: k.travers@richmond.gov.uk

Child Protection and Planning Manager: Lovona Brown: Lovona.Brown@richmond.gov.uk

Upper School

Contacts for Hammersmith and Fulham Social Services (Wolf House)

If anyone is concerned that a child is being abused they can phone Social Services Contact & Assessment Team on 020 8753 5392 (outside of office hours phone the Emergency Duty team on 020 8748 8588).

The local Police has a specialist team who deal with Child Protection: 020 8246 0830. In an emergency dial 999 and report the matter to the Police.

The LADOs are:

Hammersmith and Fulham	Barbara Beese	barbara.beese@lbhf.gov.uk	020 8753 3535
Hammersmith and Fulham	Tim Deacon	tim.deacon@lbhf.gov.uk	020 8753 5140

The Hammersmith and Fulham Local Safeguarding Children Board is at:

Children Services South, Barclay House, Effie Road, London, SW6 1EN (tel: 020 8753 3358)

LSCB Independent Chair: Russell Wate: russell.wate@cambs.pnn.police.uk

LSCB Development Officer: Sherry Fedee: sherry.fedee@lbhf.gov.uk

Contacts for Westminster Social Services (Floral Street and Jepsen House)

If anyone is concerned that a child is being abused they can phone Social Services Duty & Assessment Team on 020 7641 7560 (outside of office hours phone the Emergency Duty team on 020 7461 6000).

The local Police has a specialist team who deal with Child Protection: 020 8246 0830. In an emergency dial 999 and report the matter to the Police.

Others who may be approached include:

Head of Safeguarding and Quality : 0207 641 7665
Child protection advisers: 0207 641 7675 and 7673
The Westminster Safeguarding Children Board: 020 7641 2311

The LADO is:

Westminster	Carla Acket	cacket@westminster.gov.uk	020 7641 7665
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The Westminster Safeguarding Children Board is at:

1st Floor, 215 Lisson Grove, London, NW8 8LW (tel: 020 7641 2311)

LSCB Independent Chair: Terry Bamford: TerryBamford@aol.com
LSCB Manager: Jo Bevan-Taylor:
jbevantaylor@westminster.gov.ukmailto:lpearson@westminster.gov.uk
LSCB Training Officer: Ros King: rking@westminster.gov.uk

Inspectorates

From January 2012, the Independent Schools' Inspectorate (ISI) will oversee independent school boarding in the UK and may be contacted by anyone with any concerns.

ISI,
CAP House, 9 - 12 Long Lane,
London EC1A 9HA
Telephone: 0207 600 0100
Fax: 0207 776 8849

Until January 2012 Ofsted (the Office for Standards in Education) oversees boarding in the UK and may be contacted by anyone with any concerns.

Ofsted,
Royal Exchange Buildings, St Ann's Square,
Manchester M2 7LA
Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk
Helpline: 0300123 4234

Ofsted hosts the office of the Children's Rights Director for England, which may be contacted with any query or concern at any time, even after January 2012.

Roger Morgan,
Office of the Children's Rights Director,
Ofsted, Aviation House, 125 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE
Website: www.rights4me.org
Free Phone: 0800 528 0731