



CHARTERS DANCE ANTI - BULLYING POLICY

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ANTI-BULLYING POLICY STATEMENT

Bullying is the intimidation of an individual or group by another individual or group. Bullying implies a wilful and conscious desire to hurt, threaten, or frighten someone with an intention to cause distress and can cause long-term psychological damage.

Bullying is often done for the bully's personal gain or gratification. It is often aimed at impressing others. Bullying can take place within the dance school where the Principal and teachers of the school are responsible for the welfare of all pupils.

What types of bullying are there?

- Emotional (being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, threatening behaviour)
- Verbal (name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing)
- Physical (pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence)
- Extortion (demanding money/goods with threats)
- Cyber (all areas of internet, email and internet chatroom misuse. Mobile threats by text messaging and calls.
- Misuse of associated technology ie: camera and video facilities including those on mobile phones)
- Racist, religious and cultural (taunts, graffiti, gestures)
- Sexual (unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive comments)
- Homophobic (because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality)
- Bullying related to learning difficulties, special educational needs or disabilities

Aims

At Charters Dance we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is totally unacceptable at our school.

- To assist in creating an ethos in which attending Charters Dance is a positive experience for all members of our school
- To make it clear that all forms of bullying, including cyber bullying, are unacceptable at Charters dance
- To enable everyone to feel safe while at Charters Dance and encourage pupils to report incidents of bullying, including cyber bullying

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- To deal with each incident of bullying, including cyber bullying, as effectively as possible, taking into consideration the needs of all parties and of our school and as a result to reduce the incidents of bullying
- To support and protect victims of bullying and ensure they are listened to
- To help and support pupils displaying bullying behaviour to change their attitudes and understand why it needs to change
- To liaise with parents and other appropriate members of our community

Objectives

- To maintain and develop effective listening systems for pupils
- To ensure all staff deal with incidents of bullying, including cyber bullying, effectively and promptly
- To equip all staff with the skills and information necessary to deal with incidents of bullying
- To communicate with parents effectively on the subject of bullying
- To acknowledge the key role of every staff member in dealing with incidents of bullying
- To ensure that all incidents of bullying, including cyber bullying, are recorded
- To promote emotional health and wellbeing across the whole school and for all members of our community to role-model this in all situations.

All teachers encourage pupils to disclose incidents of bullying and allegations are taken seriously and investigated. All perpetrators will incur sanctions, up to and including exclusion, relative to the seriousness of their behaviour. Sanctions will reasonably take account of any special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils may have and take into account the needs of vulnerable pupils as stated in the DfE's guidelines, "Safe to learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools". All incidents of bullying will be recorded and their frequency and type monitored. This information will be used to inform the development of the school's anti-bullying work.

Parents will be involved at an early stage when it is felt to be necessary.

Parents will help and support the victim and work with the perpetrator on changing their behaviour. A range of methods is used with offenders and to support victims.

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RECOGNISING BULLIES

Bullying includes the wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone else. To do this the bully has to have some sort of power over someone. This power is not always recognisable to the teacher.

Bullying can be hard to distinguish from 'tit-for-tat' behaviour, which is also unacceptable.

Children and young people who bully others often have the following characteristics:

- They enjoy the sense of power it gives them. There is often a wish to 'dominate'
- They tend to be assertive and aggressive (to peers, parents, teachers, and siblings) in attitude and often lack self-control.
- They tend to lack empathy and cannot imagine what the victim feels.
- They lack a sense of guilt and rationalise their actions. They convince themselves and sometimes the victim that the bullying treatment was/is 'deserved'.
- They may be victims of troubled domestic circumstances.
- They can be of any age.
- They often have an inflated sense of self-esteem.
- They may be physically strong and many act impulsively.
- Many children may have experienced bullying themselves – from parents, siblings or peers. Some children may have been abused.
- They may often feel that they are different, inadequate, have no sense of achievement or...
...may view themselves as higher beings.

RECOGNISING POTENTIAL VICTIMS

The following pupils may be particularly vulnerable to bullying:

- New pupils and younger pupils.
- Pupils who show differences in appearance, accent, background or interests.
- Pupils with poor social skills.
- Those with low self esteem who react nervously or dramatically to baiting.
- Children who are very clever/talented.
- Children who are anxious and/or insecure, sensitive and quiet.
- Pupils who are lonely and isolated but close to parents.

However, any pupils who find themselves "in the wrong place at the wrong time" could be potential targets.

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PREVENTION OF BULLYING

Charters Dance will advertise this anti bullying policy through posters in each studio and by reminding children in class that it is not acceptable. This will allow the victims of bullying to know that their allegations will be taken seriously by ALL members of staff.

SUPERVISION

There must be adequate supervision of potential 'danger areas'. It is very likely that an amount of bullying occurs before and after class takes place also while the teacher is teaching an individual and the class are practicing on their own.

Charters Dance teachers will remain vigilant at all times. Teachers will be alerted should any particular area of the school be identified by a member of staff or students as a potential "bullying zone". If a student experiences or witnesses bullying, he/she should report it to a responsible adult e.g. a teacher or parent. All suspicious incidents WILL be reported.

CLASSROOM STRATEGIES

Charters Dance teachers will be alert to the possibility of covert/sly bullying in the dance studio. Changes in behaviour will be noted as will any deterioration in a student's classroom/studio performance which may be attributable to bullying.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ENCOUNTER BULLYING

- Remain calm. An emotional response may add to the bully's enjoyment of the situation and add to his/her sense of control.
- Take the allegations seriously.
- Use verbal commands to stop the bullying behaviour in its tracks. Commands such as 'That behavior is unacceptable' show that a line has been crossed and that you have zero tolerance for it
- Report the incident to Rachel as soon as possible.
- The incident should be reported to all teachers the next day so that everyone can be on the alert for a repetition or reprisals.

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WHAT NOT TO DO IF BULLYING IS ENCOUNTERED

- DO NOT be over protective. Encourage the “victim” to talk about what has happened and how he/she feels about it.
- DO NOT assume that the “bully” is bad through and through. Try to look objectively at the behaviour of/with the alleged bully.
- DO NOT try to hide the incident from the parents of the victim or bully.

STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH BULLYING

Firstly, any incident will be thoroughly investigated to decide how serious the incident is, i.e. how persistent the behaviour has been, how ‘nasty’, whether it is ‘tit- for-tat’ behaviour that has gone too far etc.

The identified ‘bully’ will receive a verbal warning about concerns for his/her behaviour. Any incident will be noted and dated and recorded.

- Ways may be devised to reward non-violent/bullying behaviour for a period set by the school and immediately afterwards.
- Parents of both the bully and victim will be notified as soon as possible.
- Counselling may be required for all the parties involved in a serious or long-term form of bullying.

PERSISTENT BULLYING OR INCIDENTS OF AN EXTREMELY VIOLENT NATURE

Following two verbal warnings and at least one written communication to his/her parents, a persistent bully will be suspended from the school.

Re-admission following suspension will be subject to a contract, drawn up in a consultative manner in such a way as to encourage a change in the behaviour of the bully as well as defining clearly what will happen if the bullying occurs again.

SUPPORT FOR THE VICTIM

1. Communication to all teachers so that the situation can be monitored in a comprehensive way.
2. Follow-up monitoring even after the situation seems to have been resolved.

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3. Encourage supportive attitudes from pupils towards those who have been bullied.

4. One-to-one discussion with the teacher or a discussion with parents.

WORKING WITH PARENTS/GUARDIANS

A good working partnership between Charters Dance and parents/guardians will be facilitated if parents/guardians would inform the school:

If their child reports being bullied.

Of any family circumstances e.g. home pressures, separation, bereavement etc that may adversely affect the behaviour of their child.

Bullying recorded and monitored

Charters Dance teachers have the freedom to discuss with Rachel and other teachers regarding the issue of bullying. All discussions will be noted on a shared file.

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EXAMPLES OF BULLYING AND HOW WE MIGHT DEAL WITH IT

Example A

Student A (speaking with a friend before ballet and teacher is not around to hear the conversation)

Student A: Why do you have a big belly in your leotard?

Student B comes to the teacher to say what has just happened.

Teacher should straight away tell the student that everyone is different and that there is no one way we should look in our leotards. Everyone is totally different in body and personality. Teacher should ask Student B what she feels the teacher should do? Would Student B like teacher to discuss it with the other student?

Report the situation to Rachel. Discuss how to proceed.

In all situations, the teacher must speak directly to Student B at the following class to check that there have been no further issues.

Example B

Teacher sees two students whispering.

Teacher: If anyone wants to say anything, you may say it to the whole class. I don't like whispering because I feel that you may be talking about me and that hurts my feelings.

If the whispering ceases then the teacher may choose to discuss again with students in question or leave it alone.

Teacher must remain vigilant regarding the students in question and if it happens again may decide to notify parents.