

Bullying Policy

SJ Performing Arts Plymouth have a strict no tolerance approach to bullying. Both parents and students should feel assured that if any incidence arises, it will be dealt with in the appropriate manner.

Objectives of this Policy

- That all staff, students, parents, or carers have an understanding of what constitutes bullying.
- That all staff, students, parents, and carers understand our policy and procedure of what to do if an incident took place that involved bullying and are confident in the steps they must take.
- That staff, students, parents, and carers work together to ensure our school is a safe environment for all children and adults.

Staff Procedure:

All teaching and non-teaching staff should:

- Highlight the message that we must be respectful to everyone else's feelings and be kind to each other.
- Be vigilant of large friendships groups and the imbalance of power that may have an impact on welcoming new or other children into the group.
- Following data protection procedures be aware of those children/students who may be vulnerable; those coming from troubled families, those responding to emotional problems or mental health issues which may bring about a propensity to be unkind to others, or may make them more likely to fall victim to the behaviour of others.
- Be certain the incident involving bullying happened in class time in our school before taking action.
- Initially deal with the incident, then record it in the Behaviour Log.
- Report the incident to principals Jodie and Sarah who will then decide if further action needs to be taken (including sanctions) depending on the nature and seriousness of the incident.

Parents and Students Procedure:

- If you have concerns or suspect your child, a child, adult or a peer is being bullied you should consult the class teacher who will then inform Jodie and Sarah.
- If you feel you are being bullied, targeted or threatened by a child, peer or adult consult your class teacher or another member of staff. Jodie and Sarah will be informed and will take the appropriate measures needed. We are here to listen, and to support you. You can also speak to a friend, a parent or adult you trust or contact Childline.
- If you have concerns about your child, a child or a peer bullying someone or a collective you should consult your class teacher or a member of staff who will then inform Jodie and Sarah.
- We take all reports seriously and encourage you to speak to us if you feel you have a concern. We will take the appropriate action to follow.
- Parents must not try to resolve a bullying concern themselves by speaking to a child or their parent/s. Never encourage your child/ren to bully back.

Procedure of Reported Incidents

- General incidences will be recorded in the Behaviour Log by the member of staff that witnessed it.
- Where a member of staff has had to speak to a child/ren about bullying this will be recorded.
- Where a member of staff has had to speak to a parent or guardian this will be recorded.
- Confirmed cases of bullying will be recorded.
- All staff will be informed of any incidents and the incident will be discussed with relevant children and parents to hopefully prevent further occurrences.
- Only members of staff will have access to the behaviour log.

Conclusions & Sanctions

These may include:

- Talking with the child/ren and their parents/guardians being given an official warning.
- Repeat incidents may result in being asked to leave the school with immediate effect.
- All known/reported incidences of bullying will be investigated by the class teacher or by a Principal.
- Parents of the perpetrator may also be questioned about the incident or about any concerns that they may be having.
- Request that the parents support the school with any sanctions that it takes. Wherever possible, the students will be reconciled.
- If necessary, an official warning will be given and this will be documented in the behaviour log.
- Repeated incidents may result in the being asked to leave the school with immediate effect.
- If the incident involves an adult Sarah and Jodie will put restrictions into place, this could include not entering the school building, not having contact with any pupils or resulting in the family being asked to leave the school with immediate effect.

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another or group where a relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be invisible and not everyone can be aware it is happening; it can occur face to face or online. Bullying can be in the form of verbal, physical, or psychological. It can be made in a direct or indirect form.

Bullying consists of four main elements:

- Repetitive or persistent.
- Intention to hurt
- Is hurtful
- Has an imbalance of power.

Imbalance of power

It is important that we recognise what this is, and who would be most vulnerable. People who believe they hold a power over someone, or a group, is what causes the imbalance of power. If someone says no, and someone continues, this also causes an imbalance of power.

People who could be of imbalance of power:

- Someone who is older
- Be in a large group
- Be of different stature
- Be physically stronger
- Have different beliefs

Targets can include:

- Younger people
- Someone of a different gender, race or belief
- Someone of different size and stature
- Someone with communication difficulties, disabilities or SEN.
- Young carers
- An individual
- LGBT
- A child in care or a child who receive free school meals.

Bullying can be defined in many ways:

- Emotional
- Physical
- Racial
- Sexual
- Homophobic
- Verbal
- Cyberbullying

Where could bullying take place?

It could happen face to face or online. It could happen in the performing studio, in the schools changing or toilet facilities or on the way to or from the performing arts school.

Signs and Symptoms

These signs and behaviours could also indicate social, emotional and/or mental health problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated when:

- A student may become frightened to enter a class.
- Students start missing classes.
- A student becomes withdrawn, lacks confidence and seems down or upset.
- A student starts displaying different characteristics or becomes disruptive.
- A student implies something is happening.
- A student's speech is affected by a stammer.
- A student feels ill right before their lesson or on the day of class.

- A student repetitively doesn't make as much effort in the class as normal.
- A student's possessions are damaged or belongings go missing or are stolen.
- A student personality may change at home or they start bullying other children or siblings.
- A student becomes frightened to answer questions and makes up excuses. They may avoid eye contact.
- A student becomes jumpy when receiving messages or is afraid of looking at a phone or technology.

The Impact bullying can cause on an individual:

- Social Anxiety
- Mental Health issues
- Feel unsafe
- Mental shutdown
- Downward effect on ability to learn
- Increased sadness
- Depression, self-harm, suicidal thoughts
- Eating disorders and health issues

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

- Bullying hurts.
- No one deserves to be a victim of bullying.
- Bullying has the potential to damage the mental health of a victim.
- Everybody has the right to be treated with respect.

Childline Number: 0800 1111