

Anti-Bullying Policy

Statement of Intent

Up-Stage Theatre is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of its members so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere in line with the Equalities Act 2010. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Up-Stage. If bullying does occur, all young people/ children and adults/staff/parent/carers/teachers should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

What is bullying?

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be focused around issues, such as:

Racism racial taunts, graffiti, gestures

Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments

Homophobia taunting because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality

Body insulting a person physically

Bullying can be acted out in a variety of ways, such as:

Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, threatening, teasing, sexual comments

Social spreading rumours, leaving people out, embarrassing people

Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence

Cyber Bullying

Can take place in all areas of internet, such as email, Facebook & internet chatroom abuse

Mobile threats via Facebook, text messaging & calls misuse of

associated technology i.e. camera & video facilities

Why is it Important to respond to bullying?

Bullying hurts.

No one deserves to be a victim of bullying.

Everybody has the right to be treated with respect.

Young people and adults who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

Up-Stage theatre has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying

Objectives of this Policy

All Staff, young people and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is and what our policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.

All young people and parent/carers should know what our policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.

As an organisation, we take bullying seriously. Young people and parent/carers should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

Bullying will not be tolerated.

Signs and Symptoms

A young person may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

is frightened of walking to or from Up-Stage
becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
starts stammering
attempts self-harm, or threatens suicide or runs away
cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
feels ill in the morning
begins to do poorly in school
comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
has unexplained cuts or bruises
comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
is bullying other young people or siblings
stops eating
is frightened to say what's wrong
gives improbable excuses for any of the above
is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Help everyone understand bullying

Up-Stage has a responsibility to educate all young people about what bullying is so that they can better identify it.

Keep the lines of communication open – ensure that young people feel safe to talk to staff and volunteers about what is happening for them, both in and out of Up-Stage.

GUIDELINES/PROCEDURES

Stop bullying on the spot

The bullying behaviour must be stopped quickly

Staff will model respectful behaviour – intervene, separate people and make sure everyone is safe

Find out what happened

If you are not sure of, or need to clarify the situation, get the facts – keep all participants involved separate. Listen without blaming or labelling bullying until you are sure.

Determine if it's bullying – what is the history/is there a power imbalance/ has it happened before, or are you worried it will happen again?

Support young people who are bullied

Listen and focus on the young person or child, show you want to help and that it is not their fault. They may find it difficult to talk about, and may need extra support e.g. Counselling

Give advice about what to do – think through what to do if it happens again, other sources of advice or support – assertiveness skills/building confidence and self esteem

AVOID: telling young person/child to ignore it, say they provoked it, advise physical fighting back or suggesting to parents that they should contact other parent – provisions should mediate.

Support children who bully and address bullying behaviour

When Up-Stage staff/ practitioners identify problem behaviour, this will be addressed in appropriate settings

Up-Stage staff/ practitioners will avoid strategies that have negative consequences – e.g. exclusions, threats.

Support bystanders who witness bullying

Even if young people are not bullied or bullying others, they can be affected by bullying. Many times, when they see bullying, they may not know what to do to stop it. They may not feel safe stepping in the moment, but there are many other steps they can take.

Up-Stage will:

Recognise its duty of care and responsibility to safeguard all children and young people from harm.

Promote and implement this Anti-Bullying Policy in addition to our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Require all colleagues and drama practitioners to read and endorse this Policy

Take action to investigate and respond to any reports of bullying from children, young people or staff members

Encourage and facilitate children, young people and staff members to play an active part in developing and adopting a code of conduct for behaviour

Ensure that all drama practitioners and staff members working with children and young people are given access to information, guidance and training on bullying

Drama Practitioners, Staff Members and Volunteers will:

Encourage individuals to speak out about any bullying behaviour

Respect every child's/young person's or staff's need for and right to an environment where safety, security, praise and recognition are available

Respect the feelings and views of others

Recognise that everyone is important and equal and that our differences make each of us special and worthy of being valued

Show appreciation of others by acknowledging individual qualities, contributions and progress

Ensure safety by having rules and practices carefully explained at the beginning of drama workshops a

Report incidents of bullying behaviour

Supporting Children, Young People and Staff Members

We will endeavour to create an 'open door' ethos in our workshops where children and young people feel confident to talk to an adult about bullying behaviour or any other issue that affects them and will do the same for staff members

Potential barriers to communication, such as those associated with a child's disability or impairment, will be acknowledged and addressed at the outset to enable children and young people to speak out

We will ensure children and young people are aware of helplines or other services to support them if they feel bullied or harassed

We will listen carefully to anyone who reports an incident of bullying behaviour and those reports will be taken seriously

We will investigate any reported experience of bullying behaviour, carefully listening to all those involved

Policy adopted 1st January 2023

Review date 1st January 2024

Children, young people and staff members who experience bullying behaviour will be supported in their right to live in a safe environment

Those who display bullying behaviour will be supported and encouraged to develop better relationships

Support to the Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians will be advised about Up-Stage's Anti-Bullying Policy

Any experience of bullying behaviour will be discussed with the appropriate adult or staff member
The appropriate adult will be consulted on action to be taken (for both victim and bully) and we will agree on these terms together

Information and advice on coping with bullying will be made available

Support will be offered to the appropriate adult or staff member, including information from other agencies or support lines

HELP ORGANISATIONS:

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) 020 7354 8321

Children's Legal Centre 0845 345 4345

KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline (Mon-Fri, 10-4) 0845 1 205 204 / www.kidscape.org.uk

Parentline Plus 0808 800 2222

Youth Access 020 8772 9900

Bullying Online www.bullying.co.uk

NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000

Childline 0800 111/www.childline.org.uk

Anti-Bullying Alliance www.antibullying.org