

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

**Last updated: November 2023**

### **The purpose and scope of this policy statement**

Prima Dance Academies work with children and families as part of its activities. The purpose of this policy statement is to set out our commitment:

- to prevent bullying from happening between children and young people who are a part of our organisation or take part in our activities
- to make sure bullying is stopped as soon as possible if it does happen and that those involved receive the support they need
- to provide information to all staff, volunteers, children and their families about what we should all do to prevent and deal with bullying.

This policy statement applies to anyone working on behalf of Prima Dance Academies, including senior managers, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff and students. This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in the UK.

### **What is bullying?**

We believe that children and young people should never experience abuse or bullying of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and operate in a way that protects them.

Bullying is the intimidation of an individual or group by another individual or group. Bullying can take place in a dance education setting in a variety of ways, such as:

- emotional (through undermining, unfriendly, exclusionary or threatening behaviour)
- verbal (through name-calling, rumour-spreading or teasing)
- physical (through any use of physical force with malicious intent)
- misuse of technology (through capturing footage without consent)
- discrimination (through racist language or culturally derogatory comments)
- sexual (through unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments)
- discrimination of ability (through attacking a person's special educational needs or disabilities)

This is not an exhaustive list, but aims to demonstrate the types of bullying that may occur in this setting.

We recognise that bullying causes real distress and affects a person's health and development, and in some instances, bullying can cause significant harm. All children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse. Everyone has a role to play in preventing all forms of bullying (including online) and putting a stop to bullying.

### **Diversity and inclusion**

We recognise that bullying is closely related to how we respect and recognise the value of diversity. We will be proactive about seeking opportunities to learn about and celebrate difference, increasing diversity within our staff, volunteers, children and young people, and welcoming new members to our organisation.

### **Bullying prevention**

At Prima Dance Academies we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils and staff, so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is totally unacceptable at our schools. We will seek to prevent bullying by:

- developing an ethos around how everyone involved in our organisation is expected to behave, in face-to-face contact and online, and within all our activities
- holding regular discussions with staff, volunteers, children, young people and families who use our organisation about bullying and how to prevent it. These conversations will include:
  - our joint responsibility to look after one another
  - practising skills such as listening to each other
  - dealing with problems in a positive way
  - ensuring that all staff and students feel supported and encouraged
- providing support for all staff and volunteers on dealing with all forms of bullying, including racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic and sexual bullying

### **Encouraging Agency and Voice**

A key factor in preventing bullying and in creating a caring, friendly and safe environment is by promoting agency and voice. Staff and volunteers can model this by encouraging pupils to be open about their concerns, by explaining how concerns can be raised safely and confidentially, and by raising awareness about bullying. Emphasizing voice and agency can be achieved in the way lessons are taught, not just through directly talking about bullying.

### **Responding to bullying**

Sadly, despite taking careful measures, bullying can still occur. It is possible to become aware of it through a range of different ways:

- Observing behaviour that concerns you
- Noticing that an individual or group are showing signs of distress (e.g. they might become quiet or withdrawn)
- An individual might open up about being bullied
- An individual might refer to someone else that is being bullied.

When this happens it is important for staff and volunteers to remain calm and reassure anyone who is telling them information about bullying that they have done the right thing and that they are going to treat what they have been told sensitively.

In responding to incidents of bullying, we will make sure that:

- the needs of the person being bullied are met
- the needs of the person displaying bullying behaviour are considered
- needs of others who have witnessed the behaviour are met
- our organisation as a whole reflects on how to learn from what has occurred

All teachers should encourage pupils to disclose incidents of bullying. Teachers should also disclose incidents to the rest of the staff team. In general, decisions about how to respond to incidents of bullying should be taken between the teacher and the rest of the staff team. In some cases, where an immediate response is required, a staff member should take a decision that prioritises deescalating the situation and inform the student and their parent or guardian that the incident will be followed up.

All allegations of bullying will be taken seriously and investigated. All concerns and incidents should be recorded in writing, including frequency and type of incident. This enables ongoing monitoring over time. Parents/guardians will be involved if the staff team deem it necessary, with the hope that they will work with staff either to support those who have been bullied or to change perpetrator behaviour.

If necessary, sanctions may need to be implemented where bullying behaviour continues. This will be decided by the staff team and discussed with parents/guardians.

We will review the plan we have developed to address any incidents of bullying at regular intervals, in order to ensure that the problem has been resolved in the long term.

### **Contact details**

For any advice in relation to this policy, in the event that you are concerned about bullying occurring, or if you have any doubt or uncertainties, do not hesitate to contact us at [info@prima.dance](mailto:info@prima.dance).

This policy should be read alongside our Safeguarding Policy and our Appropriate Physical Touch Policy

We are committed to reviewing our policy regularly. This policy was last reviewed in November 2023.

### **Signposting**

A useful range of guidance and further information on bullying can be found below:

- [NSPCC anti-bullying resources](#)
- [Anti-bullying alliance support](#)
- [Kidscape resources](#)
- [Royal Academy of Dance resources for boys in dance](#)