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**Registered Charity No: 1123523**

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**Anti-Bullying Policy**

**Centenary Drama Group and CD Kids Anti-Bullying Policy**

**Statement of Intent**

Centenary Drama Group are committed to providing a warm, caring and safe environment for all our children to learn and enjoy musical theatre. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in our society. We take all incidents of bullying seriously. Bullying hurts. No-one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect and children who are bullying others need to learn different ways of behaving. At Centenary Drama Group, we acknowledge that bullying does happen from time to time - indeed, it wou1a-unrealistic to claim that it does not. When bullying does occur, everyone should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively in accordance with our anti-bullying policy. We are a TELLING society. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the volunteers and members of the committee.

**Aims and Objectives of this Policy**

The aim of this policy is to try and prevent and deal with any behaviour deemed as bullying. The implementation of this policy will create an ethos where bullying is regarded as unacceptable so that a safe and secure environment is created for everyone to work in. All members of the group have a responsibility to recognise bullying when it occurs and take appropriate action in accordance with the society's policy. This will happen in the following ways:

The group will work closely with other professional agencies to ensure that children stay safe

All trustees, committee members, volunteers and parents/guardians will have an understanding of what bullying is.

All trustees, committee members, volunteers and parents/guardians will know what the policy is on bullying and will consistently and swiftly follow it when bullying is reported.

All trustees, committee members, volunteers and parents/guardians will be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

A positive, caring ethos will be created within the drama group where everyone can work, play and express themselves, free from the fear of being bullied.

**What Is Bullying?**

Bullying is any deliberate, hurtful, upsetting, frightening or threatening behaviour by an individual or a group towards other people. It is repeated over a period of time and it is very difficult for the victims to defend themselves. Bullying is mean and results in worry, fear, pain and distress to the victims.

Bullying can be:

* **Emotional** being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures), ridicule, humiliation
* **Verbal** name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, making rude remarks, making fun of someone
* **Physical** pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, throwing stones, biting, spitting, punching or any other forms of violence, taking or hiding someone's things
* **Racist** racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, making fun of culture and religion
* **Sexual** unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive or sexist comments
* **Homophobic** because of/or focussing on the issue of sexuality
* **Online/cyber** setting up 'hate websites', sending offensive text messages, emails and abusing the victims via their mobile phones or technological device using any form of social media platforms.
* **Discriminatory** making unfavourable or negative comments, gestures or actions relating to someone's disability or special educational needs.

Bullying is not:

It is important to understand that bullying is not the odd occasion of falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional trick or joke is played on someone. It is bullying if it is done several times on purpose. Children sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise it is not classed as bullying. It is an important part of children's development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns, the odd name calling or childish prank. We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships.

**Signs and Symptom s**

A child may indicate, by different signs or behaviour, that he or she is being bullied. The following signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be taken seriously and investigated as soon as possible.

Adults should be aware of these possible signs, particularly if they are on-going and investigate further if a child:

* is frightened of walking to or from rehearsals or performances
* begs to be driven to rehearsal/performances
* changes their usual routine/route
* begins truanting
* becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
* starts stammering
* attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
* cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
* feels ill in the morning
* comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
* has possessions go "missing"
* asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the bully)
* has unexplained cuts or bruises
* becomes aggressive, disruptive, or unreasonable
* starts swearing or using aggressive language for no apparent reason
* is bullying other children or siblings
* stops eating
* is frightened to say what's wrong
* gives improbable excuses for any of the above

**What can children do if they are being bullied?**

Our children have the right to feel safe. It is our policy to give children advice on what to do if they feel they are being bullied. Here are some strategies that can help children:

* Tell someone you can trust
* Try to ignore them.
* Be assertive - stand up to them, look at them directly in the eye, tell them to stop and mean it.
* Try not to let the bully know that he/she is making them feel upset.
* Stay in a group, bullies usually pick on individuals.
* Getaway as quickly as you can.
* If you are scared, ask a friend to go with you when you tell someone.
* When you tell an adult about the bullying give them as many facts as you can (What? Who? Where? When? Why? How?).
* Keep a diary of what's been happening and refer to it when you tell someone
* Keep on speaking out until someone listens and helps you.
* Never be afraid to do something about it and quick.
* Don't suffer in silence and don't blame yourself for what is happening.

**What can you do if you see someone else being bullied?** *(The role of the bystander)*

Ignoring bullying is cowardly and unfair to the victim. Staying silent means the bully has won and gives them more power. There are ways you can help without putting yourself in danger. Here are some of the strategies you can use:

* Tell someone you trust
* Let the victim(s) know that you are going to get help.
* Don't smile or laugh at the situation.
* Don't rush over and take the bully on yourself.
* Don't be made to join in.
* If safe to do so, encourage the bully to stop bullying.
* If you can, let the bully know you do not like his or her behaviour.
* Shout for help.
* Try and befriend the person being bullied.
* Encourage the person to talk to someone and get help.
* Ask someone you trust about what to do.
* Call a helpline for some advice.

**Procedures for reporting and responding to bullying incidents**

Committee members will respond calmly and consistently to all allegations and incidents of bullying. They will be taken seriously and dealt with impartially and promptly. All those involved will have the opportunity to be heard. The committee will protect and support all children involved whilst allegations and incidents are investigated and resolved.

The following step-by-step procedure will be used for reporting and responding to bullying allegations or incidents:

* Report all bullying allegations and incidents
* The committee will make sure the victim(s) is and feels safe.
* Appropriate advice will be given to help the victim(s).
* The committee will listen and speak to all children involved about the incident separately.
* The problem will be identified, and possible solutions suggested.
* The committee will attempt to adopt a problem-solving approach which will move children on from them having to justify their behaviour.
* Appropriate action will be taken quickly to end the bullying behaviour or threats of bullying.
* The committee will reinforce to the bully that their behaviour is unacceptable.
* The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place and appropriate sanctions applied
* An attempt will be made, and support given, to help the bully (bullies) understand and change his/her/their behaviour.
* In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by members of the committee
* In serious cases parents will be informed and will be invited to come into a meeting to discuss the problem.
* After the incident has been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.
* Bullying incidents will be discussed regularly at committee meetings.
* If necessary and appropriate, the Child Protection Officer in school, Social Services or police will be consulted.

**The following sanctions must be used:**

Fixed term exclusion

Permanent exclusion

**Monitoring and evaluation of the policy**

To ensure this policy is effective, it will be regularly monitored and evaluated by the committee. Following an annual review any amendments will be made to the policy and everyone informed.

**Sources of further information, support and help**

There is a vast amount of information and guidance available about bullying that can provide a wide range of support and help. The following list is just a small selection of the support available that teachers, parents and children have found useful.

* Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) 0207 704 3370 [www.ace-ed.org.uk](http://www.ace-ed.org.uk/)
* Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) 0207 843 1901 [www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/)
* Anti-bullying Network 0131 651 6103 [www.antibullying.net](http://www.antibullying.net/)
* Bully Free Zone 01204 454 958 [www.bullyfreezone.co.uk](http://www.bullyfreezone.co.uk/)
* Bullying Online 020 7378 1446 [www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk/)
* Childline 0800 1111 (helpline for children) [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk/)
* Kidscape 020 7730 3300 (general enquiry number) 08451 205 204 (helpline for adults only) [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk/)
* [www.beyondbullying.com](http://www.beyondbullying.com/)
* NSPCC 0207 825 2500 [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/)
* Parentline Plus 0808 800 2222 [www.parentlineplus.org.uk](http://www.parentlineplus.org.uk/)

**Policy updated and approved by Committee – August 2021**