BrosnaCan Academy of Irish Dance
ANTI-BULLYING AND CYBER-BULLYING POLICY
May 2020

Introduction

Aim
The aim of BrosnaCan Academy's Anti-Bullying Policy is to:
a) Prevent bullying of any sort including cyber-bullying.
b) Make it clear to all students and staff that bullying is always unacceptable.
c) Ensure that everyone can operate in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied.
d) Create an ethos of good behaviour within the school where students treat each other and the school staff with respect.

The seriousness of bullying cannot be emphasised enough. Bullying is among the top concerns that parents have about their children's safety and well-being at, and on the way to and from School. Bullying is also a top concern of children and young people themselves. Bullying makes the lives of its victims a misery: it undermines their confidence and self-esteem, and destroys their sense of security. Bullying can have a life-long negative impact on some young people's lives. At worst, bullying has been a factor in young people's suicide. Bullying is unacceptable and it will not be tolerated.

All members of the community, including teaching staff and volunteers, students, parents, guardians and carers should have an understanding of what bullying is and be familiar with the policy on anti-bullying; and all have a responsibility to help create an atmosphere in which students can report any incident of bullying knowing that these reports will always be taken seriously.

This policy is applicable to all students at BrosnaCan Academy. All students deserve the opportunity tobe helped to understand what acceptable behaviour is. Students who are being bullied will be supported, and students who may bully others will also be given suitable help and guidance.

This policy is guided by the principles laid out in Preventing and tackling bullying (DfE July 2017), Behaviour and discipline in schools: A guide for head teachers and school staff (DfE October 2014),

It should be read in conjunction with the Academy's policies for:
i) Safeguarding
ii) Child Protection
iii) Behaviour
iiii) ICT Acceptable Use
iiiii) Health & Safety

Definition

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance,cyberbullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, sexual orientation, homophobia, special educational needs or disabilities, appearance or health conditions, home conditions, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a School's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and Schools have to make their own judgments about each specific case.

Bullying often involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological, derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person through teasing, name calling, the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

Cyber-bullying
The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience and more accessories as people forward on content at a click. All types of bullying can take place between students, between students and teachers or between teachers; by individuals or groups; face-to-face or indirectly.

Examples of unacceptable behaviour include:
i) Physical (including sexual) assault, for example, hitting, kicking, spitting, removing belongings, damaging property
ii)) Verbal abuse, by name-calling, teasing, 'banter', insulting, writing notes or making offensive remarks
iii) Cyber-bullying, which is defined as the use of ICT by an individual or group to support deliberate, repeated and hostile behaviour intended to harm others. Examples include using social websites (such as Facebook or Twitter), mobile 'phones, text messaging, photographs, video and e-mail
iiii) Indirect emotional tormenting by excluding from social groups or spreading malicious rumours
iiiii) Initiation ceremonies that cause, or are intended to cause pain, anxiety or humiliation.
Bullying may involve complicity that falls short of direct participation by, for instance, manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It may be overt and intimidating but is often hidden and subtle.

What to look for

Students who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous,feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. All members of the community must be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it, in accordance with the policy. Surveys have shown that in the vast majority of bullying incidents, most people knew that what was going on was wrong. Sometimes people, either through lethargy, peer group pressure, or tacit support for what is going on, failed to take action.

Teachers should be aware that all students can be the victim of bullying but some students may be more likely to be the target of bullying because of the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves. For example those with special educational needs or disabilities, those who are adopted, those who are suffering from a health problem or those with caring responsibilities may be more likely to experience bullying because of difference. These young people may also need additional support to deal with the impact of bullying. Staff must remember that students with special educational needs or disabilities can often lack the social or communication skills to report such incidents so it is important that staff are alert to the potential bullying this group faces.

What to do

The best way to stamp out bullying is for people to be aware of the issues involved, to be involved in prevention and to be clear in their own minds what action to take should cases arise. In the procedures that follow, the word 'bullying' is used to cover all forms of bullying, including cyberbullying.

Prevention

The most effective way to combat bullying is by creating a community based on respect, with an ethos celebrating success and promoting good behaviour. Awareness and discussion of questions to do with bullying are also vital to prevention.

If a student is the victim

If they feel able to, the bullied student should confront the bully by verbally making him/her aware that the bullied student thinks that what she/he is doing is wrong. The bullied student should share their feelings with someone else. If possible they should talk to a teacher. with whom they feel comfortable. Should bullying occur outside of dance class, e.g. then students are advised to report it as soon as possible to someone that they feel able to trust.

If a student witnesses bullying behaviour

They should support the victim by offering friendship and making it clear that in their opinion what is happening to them is wrong. They should encourage them to speak out on their own behalf by confronting the bully, or with their permission, confront the bully themselves. They should accompany the victim to a trusted adult.

Further Sources of Information

The DfE guidance and advice can be found at
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying
Preventing & Tackling Bullying, July 2017

Behaviour and Discipline in School's Guidance, October 2014

Supporting Children and Young people who are bullied: advice for schools, March 2014

Cyber-bullying: Advice for Headteachers and school staff, November 2014

Advice for parents and carers on cyber-bullying, November 2014

Advice

If a student, parent or teacher is unsure about a situation or events, several organisations will speak in confidence to advise what would be the best thing to do:

NSPCC: 0808 800 5000 (for adults concerned about a child)

Childline: 0800 1111 (for children)

Kidscape: 0207 730 3300 (for parents, children and Academy staff)

Bullying UK 0808 800 2222

The Diana Award 0207 628 7499

CEOP: Advice on how to operate safely on the web, in particular the 'think u know' pages:
https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/