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# Safeguarding: Anti-Bullying Policy

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**Policies and Procedures**

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**bbodance 2024-25**

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# Introduction

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bbodance will take action against any and all forms of bullying and cyber bullying. This policy statement applies to anyone working for or on behalf of bbodance including senior managers the board of trustees, paid staff, contractors, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff, students and their parents / carers.

## Rationale & Purpose

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At bbodance we are completely opposed to bullying as it is contrary to the values and ethos of the organisation and the values by which we chose to conduct ourselves. All students have a right to learn in a supportive, secure and caring environment. Our organisation actively promotes positive interpersonal relationships between all students, staff, parents and the wider dance community. We recognise the significant harm that bullying can cause and the impact it can have on children and young people's health, development and wellbeing. We recognise our duty of care in preventing and addressing bullying.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Prevent bullying from occurring between children and young people who take part in any of our activities or attend any of our events
- Protect all children and young people from the experience of bullying by ensuring that if it does happen it is stopped as soon as possible, and all involved parties receive support and guidance to facilitate reparation
- Educate all who work with or for bbodance and all those who participate in our activities and classes about bullying, its impact and how to prevent it.

## Legal information

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The basis of this document is the Equality Act 2010. The Equality Act exists to protect individuals from prejudice, discrimination, and harassment and to advance equality of opportunity,

The Equality Act highlights characteristics that are to be protected against discrimination:

- Age
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Being pregnant or having a child
- Disability
- Race (including colour, nationality, ethnicity and national origin)
- Religion, belief or lack of belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Bullying is not, by definition, a criminal activity however acts associated with bullying behaviour such as harassment, intimidation, violence, assault, hate crime, threats of violence and theft are all criminal acts. It is important to note that where necessary the police should be informed. This policy relates to the experiences of children attending bbodance events and using bbodance services.

When an adult is experiencing harassment, intimidation, violence, assault, hate crime, threats of violence or theft this should be managed using the appropriate bbodance Equality and Diversity and Safeguarding Adults policies and/ or by contacting the police.

# Our Principles

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Everyone has the right to protection from harm.

Everyone has a right to learn in an environment free from intimidation and fear.

The welfare of children is of paramount importance.

Everyone at bbodance has a role to play in preventing bullying behaviour.

Students or parents reporting bullying will always be listened to and supported.

Reported incidents of bullying will be taken seriously and thoroughly investigated.

## Definitions

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There is no legally recognised definition of bullying in the UK, however some frequently used definitions are:

The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or a group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face to face or online. (Anti – bullying alliance).

Bullying is when individuals or groups seek to harm, intimidate or coerce someone who is perceived to be vulnerable (Oxford English Dictionary, 2020).

It can involve people of any age, and can happen anywhere – at home, school or using online platforms and technologies (cyberbullying). This means it can happen at any time.

Bullying encompasses a range of behaviours which may be combined and may include the behaviours and actions we have set out below.

### **Verbal abuse:**

- name-calling
- saying nasty things to or about a child or their family.

### **Physical abuse:**

- hitting
- pushing
- other physical assault.

### **Emotional abuse:**

- making threats
- undermining or belittling
- excluding a child or young person from a friendship group or activities.

### **Cyberbullying/online bullying:**

- excluding a child or young person from online games, activities or friendship groups
- sending threatening, upsetting or abusive messages
- creating and sharing embarrassing or malicious images or videos
- 'trolling' - sending menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games
- voting for or against someone in an abusive poll
- setting up hate sites or groups about an individual

- creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name.

Bullying can be a form of discrimination, particularly if it is based on a child's disability, race, religion or belief, gender identity or sexuality. (Taken from NSPCC)

Bullying can also be any other behaviour which intimidates, belittles or causes a child to feel frightened or in danger. Please see the bboodance safeguarding children and child protection policy. In certain circumstances bullying can constitute significant harm. Where this is believed to be the case the bboodance safeguarding children and child protection policy and associated referral pathways must be used.

## Indicators of bullying

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Staff and teachers will be observant for signs of bullying and alert to indicators of distress. Potential signs of bullying (as taken from the Childline insights into bullying) could be:

Signs a child may be being bullied in person:

- belongings are getting lost or damaged
- physical injuries such as unexplained bruises
- being afraid to go to school
- not doing as well at school
- being nervous, losing confidence, or becoming distressed and withdrawn
- problems with eating or sleeping
- bullying others

Signs a child may be being bullied online:

- not wanting to go to school or take part in normal activities
- getting anxious or angry if you go near their device
- feeling withdrawn, upset or angry at home
- problems sleeping or eating
- having angry outbursts that seem out of character
- spending more or less time online than normal

## Identifying bullying

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Not all issues of childhood conflict or difficulty are bullying. As adults do, children experience relational conflict and often need adult support to address this. Bullying is different to relational conflict.

In relational conflict we may see:

- A balance of power
- A desire for reputation and resolution where relationships have broken down
- Behaviour that is only occasional
- Attempts at respect even when things have gone wrong

In bullying we may see:

- Deliberate or intentional acts

- Repeated behaviours
- Lack of remorse
- Power imbalances
- Hurtful behaviours

## Responsibilities regarding bullying

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### At bbodance we will:

- Ensure bullying and approaches to addressing bullying are discussed on training and at staff meetings
- Ensure that we foster a culture of diversity and inclusion
- Ensure that our responses to bullying meet the needs of the person being bullied, the person displaying the bullying behaviour and any other assistants, defenders or onlookers involved
- Ensure that everyone effected by the bullying behaviour identified is also supported
- Ensure our approached to bullying are aligned with our policies on safeguarding children and E-safety
- Ensure our Equality policy reflects the ethos of bbodance and this anti bullying policy
- Ensure that signage and communication at our events lets student know who they should speak to if they have a worry, do not feel safe or experience bullying behaviour
- Provide training for bbodance teachers on issues such as diversity, inclusion, safeguarding, communication and approaches to addressing bullying.
- Foster self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others in our students
- Demonstrate the high standards of social behaviour we expect.
- Discuss bullying with students and discuss the importance of disclosing bullying when it happens
- Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying
- Listen to children who have been bullied, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them
- Follow up any complaint by a parent about bullying, and report back promptly and fully on the action which has been taken
- Deal with observed instances of bullying promptly and effectively
- Act in accordance with our safeguarding children and child protection policy

### **We ask parents and carers to support their children and bbodance by:**

- Watching for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children, which might be evidence of bullying
- Advising their children to report any bullying to a trusted adult or to act on their behalf and contact Fiona Knower at bbodance
- Advising their children not to retaliate violently to any forms of bullying
- Informing bbodance of any suspected bullying, even if their children are not involved
- Co-operating with bbodance and if their children are accused of bullying, try to ascertain the truth
- Pointing out the implications of bullying, both for the children who are bullied and for the bullies themselves

## Procedures for dealing with bullying behaviour

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Bullying is predominantly a behaviour that involves a wider group of individuals, not just one victim and one perpetrator. Children and young people may be aware but not involved. They may be defenders of a child who is being targeted or assistants or reinforcers (intentionally or unintentionally) of the person leading the bullying. As part of an effective anti-bullying strategy we will work with all children and young people, as necessary, to develop strategies to alter group dynamics and safeguard and support all students.

Steps will be taken to support and respond to the needs of both bullied and bullying pupils. We will listen to everyone and act to best support them.

Records will be kept of all reports of or witnessed incidents of bullying.

The designated safeguarding lead for bbodance, Fiona Knowler, will be informed in all instances of bullying.

## Action to take when bullying occurs.

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Children should be reminded to refrain from becoming involved in any type of bullying or retaliation.

All students should report to an adult any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying,

Anyone who becomes the target of bullies should ask for help from a trusted adult.

Report the bullying or ask an adult to report the bullying to bbodance staff or the event organiser / teacher as appropriate who will report on to the designated safeguarding lead, Fiona Knowler.

If a child feels unable to talk with a trusted adult about bullying but adults around them have concerns students can receive direct support from Child line 08001111 or [Contacting Childline | Childline](#)

## Action that may be taken to address bullying

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Contact parents/carers of all pupils concerned in the bullying incident, unless to do so would be unsafe.

Speak to all children involved about what happened and what they would like to happen next.

Act to prevent further instance of bullying.

If needed, create a bullying protection plan addressing times and location 'hot spots', places of vulnerability, group structure, location of trusted adults and other sources of support.

Ensure all children are appropriately supported following their experiences of being bullied, witnessing bullying or carrying out bullying behaviour.

Sanctions may be imposed on the child who has carried out the bullying behaviour, but these must be fair, appropriate and proportionate, for example being asked to apologise or receive a formal warning. In extreme circumstances a child may be asked to leave an event.

Education must always be provided following an instance of bullying.

Ongoing monitoring of the situation to ensure it has been successfully resolved.

Contact relevant professionals; in serious incidents we may act to seek advice from other services or may feel the need to refer incidents as stated in our safeguarding policy.

### **When responding to bullying that does not happen at bbodance events:**

Sometimes children will make us aware of bullying that has happened in other aspects of their lives. Where this happens in addition to the points raised above information will be shared with the bbodance safeguarding lead who will information share with the child's parents/ carers and other organisations the child attends as appropriate.

### **When the bullying takes place online:**

- Make sure children know not to retaliate or reply
- Talk with children about online safety for example privacy settings, how much information they chose to share, how to block individuals from their accounts, how to report issues on social media platforms

- Check that bullying behaviour has not been further shared or circulated by that child or anyone else and make every attempt to prevent further circulation by asking students to remove that material and contacting social media providers to ask them to remove the content.

Please also see the bbodance safeguarding children and child protection policy and the bbodance E-safety Policy for further guidance.

## Additional supporting information

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Bullying is often based in discrimination, stereotype and prejudice. A strong approach to inclusive practice and good quality information on safeguarding can help reduce and address instances of bullying. The links provided give additional information to guide staff when working with instances of bullying or discrimination.

[Safeguarding children from Black, Asian and minoritised ethnic communities | NSPCC Learning](#)

[Safeguarding d/Deaf and disabled children | NSPCC Learning](#)

[Safeguarding LGBTQ+ children and young people | NSPCC Learning](#)

[Children with special educational needs and disabilities \(SEND\) | NSPCC Learning](#)

This policy will be reviewed annually in August.