

Anti-Bullying Policy

Policy Statement

Berkshire Dance Academy is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment where all children, young people, staff, and volunteers are treated with dignity and respect. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

This policy works alongside our Safeguarding Policy and reflects our commitment to promoting positive behaviour, emotional wellbeing, and equality.

We believe that:

- Every child and young person has the right to feel safe, valued, and respected.
- Bullying can cause serious and lasting harm to emotional and mental wellbeing.
- All incidents of bullying must be taken seriously and addressed promptly and effectively.
- A culture of openness and respect helps prevent bullying.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All students attending classes, rehearsals, performances, and events
- All staff, teachers, assistants, and volunteers

- Parents, carers, and guardians while on academy premises or representing the academy
- Online behaviour linked to the academy, including social media and messaging platforms

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is behaviour that is:

- **Repeated**
- **Intentional**
- **Intended to hurt, intimidate, or humiliate**

Bullying can take many forms, including:

Types of Bullying

- **Physical:** hitting, pushing, kicking, damaging belongings
- **Verbal:** name-calling, teasing, insults, threats
- **Emotional/Psychological:** exclusion, spreading rumours, manipulation
- **Cyberbullying:** abusive messages, online harassment, social media posts

- **Discriminatory bullying:** based on disability, religion, appearance, sexuality, or family circumstances

Signs and Indicators of Bullying

Staff should be alert to possible signs of bullying, which may include:

- Changes in behaviour or mood
- Withdrawal from classes or activities
- Loss of confidence or self-esteem
- Unexplained injuries or damaged belongings
- Reluctance to attend classes
- Emotional distress, anxiety, or tearfulness

Reporting Bullying

Bullying can be reported by:

- The child or young person affected
- Another student
- A parent or carer

- A member of staff or volunteer

All concerns should be reported as soon as possible to:

- A class teacher **or**
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Reports can be made verbally or in writing. All reports will be taken seriously and handled sensitively.

Response to Bullying Incidents

When bullying is reported, the academy will:

1. Listen carefully to all parties involved
2. Record the incident accurately and factually
3. Investigate the concern promptly and fairly
4. Take appropriate action to stop the behaviour
5. Support the child or young person affected
6. Work with parents/carers where appropriate
7. Monitor the situation to prevent recurrence

Actions may include:

- Verbal warnings
- Behaviour agreements
- Supervised separation
- Temporary suspension from activities
- Referral to safeguarding procedures if necessary

Serious or persistent bullying may result in further disciplinary action.

Support for Those Involved

We are committed to supporting:

- Victims of bullying by offering reassurance, emotional support, and practical strategies
- Those displaying bullying behaviour by addressing underlying issues and promoting positive behaviour change

Bullying behaviour may indicate safeguarding concerns and will be managed in line with safeguarding procedures where appropriate.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying will be treated as serious

bullying. This includes:

- Social media posts
- Group chats
- Messages or images shared online

Where online behaviour impacts the wellbeing of students or the reputation of the academy, action will be taken even if it occurs outside class time.

Responsibilities of Staff and Volunteers

All staff and volunteers must:

- Promote positive behaviour and inclusion
- Challenge bullying behaviour immediately
- Report concerns in line with this policy
- Act as positive role models at all times

Record Keeping

- All bullying incidents will be recorded
- Records will be kept confidential and shared only on a need-to-know basis
- Records may be shared with safeguarding partners if required

Training and Awareness

- Staff will receive guidance on recognising and responding to bullying
- Students will be encouraged to speak out and support one another
- Anti-bullying expectations will be reinforced regularly

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or following any significant bullying incident.

Date of Issue: January 2026

Date of Next Review: January 2027