

# Catchlights Performing Arts Anti-Bullying Policy

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this anti-bullying policy is to promote a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment within Catchlights Performing Arts Club. This document outlines our commitment to preventing and addressing all forms of bullying among our members.

### 1.2 Scope

This policy applies to all members, staff, volunteers, and participants of Catchlights Performing Arts Club. It covers all activities, events, and interactions associated with the Club, whether on-site or off-site.

## 2. Definition of Bullying

Bullying is defined as any deliberate, hurtful behaviour repeated over time that causes physical or emotional harm to another person. Bullying can take various forms, including but not limited to:

- Verbal Bullying (e.g. teasing, name-calling, spreading rumours)
- Physical Bullying (e.g. hitting, kicking, pushing)
- Social Bullying (e.g. excluding, gossiping, cyberbullying)
- Emotional Bullying (e.g. threatening, intimidating, manipulating)

## 3. Prevention Strategies

### 3.1 Promotion of Positive Behaviour

We will actively promote positive behaviour and values such as kindness, empathy, and respect. Positive behaviour will be recognised and celebrated within the Club, fostering a culture of inclusivity and mutual respect.

## 3.2 Clear Expectations

Clear expectations regarding behaviour and conduct will be established and communicated to all members. These expectations will emphasise the Club's zero-tolerance policy towards bullying and the consequences of engaging in such behaviour.

# 4. Reporting Procedures

## 4.1 Reporting Bullying Incidents

Any member who experiences or witnesses bullying behaviour should report it immediately using the following steps:

1. **Speak Up:** Encourage the individual experiencing bullying to report the incident to a trusted adult or Club official.
2. **Complete Incident Report:** Complete an incident report form, providing details of the bullying incident, including dates, times, and witnesses.
3. **Report to the DSO:** Submit the incident report to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) or another senior Club official.
4. **Confidentiality:** Maintain confidentiality throughout the reporting process, ensuring the privacy of the individuals involved.

## 4.2 Support for Victims

Victims of bullying will receive immediate support and assistance. Club officials will ensure that victims feel safe and supported throughout the resolution process.

## 4.3 Investigation Process

Where appropriate, reported incidents of bullying will be investigated by the DSO or another designated official. The investigation may include interviewing witnesses, gathering evidence, and documenting findings.

## 4.4 Disciplinary Action

If bullying behaviour is substantiated following the investigation, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against the perpetrator(s). Disciplinary measures may include warnings, suspension, or expulsion from the Club, depending on the severity and frequency of the bullying.

## **5. Powers of Staff to Address Bullying**

### **5.1 Intervention**

Staff members have the authority to intervene immediately when witnessing or becoming aware of bullying behaviour. This may include:

- Directly addressing the perpetrator(s) and instructing them to cease the bullying behaviour.
- Separating the individuals involved to prevent further escalation.
- Implementing temporary measures to ensure the safety and well-being of the victim.

### **5.2 Imposition of Consequences**

Staff members have the authority to impose immediate consequences for bullying behaviour, including:

- Removing privileges or access to Club activities.
- Issuing verbal warnings and documenting the incident.
- Involving parents/guardians in addressing the behaviour and implementing corrective actions.

### **5.3 Referral to Disciplinary Action**

In cases where bullying behaviour persists or escalates despite interventions, staff members have the authority to refer the matter to the DSO or another senior Club official for disciplinary action. This may result in formal disciplinary measures as outlined in the Club's policies.

## **6. Involvement of Parents/Guardians**

### **6.1 Notification**

Parents/guardians will be notified promptly in the event that their child is involved in a reported bullying incident. Notification may occur in person, via phone call, email, or written communication, depending on the severity of the incident and the preference of the parents/guardians.

## **6.2 Collaboration**

Club officials will collaborate with parents/guardians in addressing bullying incidents involving their child. This may include:

- Providing information about the incident and the actions taken by the Club to address it.
- Seeking input from parents/guardians on strategies for supporting their child and preventing future incidents.

## **7. Code of Conduct**

### **7.1 Behaviour and Boundaries**

All members of Catchlights Performing Arts Club are expected to adhere to the following code of conduct:

- Treat others with respect, kindness, and empathy at all times.
- Refrain from engaging in any form of bullying behaviour, including teasing, name-calling, physical aggression, exclusion, or online harassment.
- Speak up if witnessing bullying behaviour and report it to a Club official immediately.
- Cooperate fully with any investigations into reported incidents of bullying and abide by the decisions made regarding disciplinary action.

### **7.2 Prohibition of Retaliation**

Retaliation against individuals who report bullying incidents or participate in investigations is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

## **8. Communication and Review**

### **8.1 Communication**

This anti-bullying policy will be communicated to all members, staff, volunteers, and parents/guardians. It will be made available on the Club's website and included in registration materials.

## 8.2 Regular Review

The anti-bullying policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. Feedback from members, staff, and parents/guardians will be taken into account during the review process.

## 9. Contact Information

- **Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO):** [safeguarding@catchlights.co.uk](mailto:safeguarding@catchlights.co.uk)
- **Shropshire Council Child Protection Contact:** 0345 678 9021
- **Local Police:** 101 (non-emergency) | 999 (emergency)

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By implementing this anti-bullying policy and providing clear powers for staff to address bullying, Catchlights Performing Arts is committed to fostering a safe and inclusive environment where all members can participate and thrive without fear of bullying or harassment.