



Anti-Bullying Policy

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Policy Statement

Skylight Circus Arts is committed to providing an inclusive, supportive and safe environment where children, young people and adults at risk can participate in our activities and thrive.

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Skylight Circus Arts and will be responded to in line with our Safeguarding Policy, Behaviour Policy and Code of Conduct.

Everyone taking part in our activities should feel able to tell a trusted person if they are experiencing bullying, or are concerned that someone else may be being bullied, and know that their concerns will be taken seriously.

This policy applies to children, young people and adults at risk taking part in Skylight Circus Arts activities, including our classes, workshops, projects, performances and outreach activities.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- help prevent bullying within Skylight's activities
- ensure bullying is identified and responded to appropriately
- ensure those affected receive appropriate support

This policy should be followed by everyone working on behalf of Skylight Circus Arts, including trustees, staff, freelance workers and volunteers. It applies to concerns about bullying involving children, young people and adults at risk who take part in Skylight's activities.

What is bullying?

Bullying includes a range of abusive behaviour that is:

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally.

Bullying is when individuals or groups seek to harm, intimidate or coerce someone who is perceived to be vulnerable. 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 listed below:

Verbal abuse:

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

Physical abuse:

- hitting
- pushing
- physical assault.

Emotional abuse:

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

Cyberbullying/online bullying:

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

Bullying and cyberbullying can be a form of discrimination, particularly if it is based on a person's disability, race, religion or belief, gender identity or sexuality.

Impact of bullying and cyberbullying

Bullying hurts people, both physically and or emotionally.

The emotional effects of being bullied include:

- sadness, depression and anxiety
- low self-esteem
- social isolation
- Self-harm

Recognising bullying

Any child, young person or adult at risk can be bullied or cyberbullied. People who might be seen by others as 'different' in some way may be more likely to be targeted.

This might be because of their difference in their physical appearance, race, faith or culture, gender identity, sexuality, disability or additional needs.

Sometimes there may not be obvious signs that someone is being bullied, this is why it is important to share any concerns even if you are not sure to prevent further harm.

Possible indicators that someone is being bullied or experiencing harm:

- being reluctant to attend a session or workshop or other activity
- being distressed or anxious
- losing confidence and becoming withdrawn
- having problems eating and/or sleeping
- having unexplained injuries
- changes in appearance
- changes in performance and/or behaviour

Changes in behaviour can take many forms. Someone experiencing bullying may become withdrawn, angry, disruptive or may begin displaying bullying behaviour towards others.

You may notice that a child, young person or adult at risk isn't spending time with their usual group of friends, has become isolated or that others' behaviour towards the individual has changed.

Why someone may display bullying behaviour

There can be many reasons why someone displays bullying behaviour. These may include:

- peer pressure or wanting the approval of others
- wanting to feel powerful or in control
- experiencing bullying themselves
- being worried, unhappy or upset
- difficulties with social skills or understanding the impact of their behaviour on others.

Bullying behaviour must still be addressed, but it is important to consider what may be contributing to the behaviour and whether the person displaying it also needs support.

Diversity and inclusion

We recognise that bullying is closely related to how we respect and recognise the value of diversity.

We will be proactive about:

- seeking opportunities to learn about and celebrate difference
- increasing diversity within our staff, volunteers, children, young people and adults at risk
- welcoming new participants to our organisation.

Reporting bullying

We will make sure our response to incidents of bullying takes into account:

- the needs of the person being bullied
- the needs of the person displaying bullying behaviour
- needs of any bystanders
- our organisation as a whole

All reports of bullying will be taken seriously, listened to and appropriately recorded. Incidents will be responded to in line with Skylight's Behaviour Policy and where there are safeguarding concerns, our Safeguarding Policies. The response will depend on the nature, severity and circumstances of the incident.

If you think a child, young person or adult at risk is in immediate danger, call 999 immediately. If you are concerned that a child, young person or adult at risk may be at risk of harm but they are not in immediate danger, you should follow Skylight's safeguarding policy. You do not need to be certain that harm is taking place before raising a concern.

Contact Details

Designated Safeguarding Lead
Martine Bradford
martine.b@skylightcircusarts.com
01706 650676

Deputy Safeguarding Lead
Charma Force
charma.f@skylightcircusarts.com
07809203454

Board of Trustee Safeguarding Representative
Martin James Lee
martin.l@skylightcircusarts.com

Address

Skylight Circus Arts
St Chads Fold
Sparrow Hill
Rochdale
OL16 1QT

Related policies

- Child Safeguarding Policy
- Adult at Risk Safeguarding Policy
- Youth Code of Conduct
- Online Safeguarding & Communications Policy
- Equality & Diversity Policy