



ANTI BULLYING POLICY

GUITAR Circus recognise that:

- We have a duty of care and responsibility to safeguard all participants from harm and will implement an anti-bullying policy in addition to our child protection policy and procedures.
- Bullying is never acceptable and must always be challenged. GUITAR Circus has a zero-tolerance policy towards bullying and will implement the necessary disciplinary procedures to deal with bullying.

BULLYING

Bullying is an abusive behaviour which intentionally hurts another individual or group and can be; emotional, physical, sexual or racist. Bullying can take many forms but usually includes the following:

- Physical or Sexual assault – hitting, kicking, pinching, punching, scratching, spitting or any other form of physical attack. (all sexual incidents and all but very minor physical incidents constitute abuse and will be dealt with in accordance with the child protection policy procedures)
- Damage to or taking someone else's belongings may also constitute physical bullying.
- Verbal – offensive name calling, insults, racist remarks, sexist or homophobic jokes, teasing, threats, using sexually suggestive or abusive language.
- Non-verbal - includes ignoring someone or leaving them out, and making offensive gestures or facial expressions.
- Indirect – spreading nasty stories/rumours about someone, intimidation, exclusion from social groups.

CYBERBULLYING

This is a form of bullying which uses technology to deliberately harm or upset others. It can happen in many ways, using mobile phones or the internet and could include:

- Sending hurtful messages or using images
- Leaving malicious voicemails
- A series of silent calls
- Creating a website about other people to humiliate them
- Exclude them from chat/messaging rooms/areas
- 'Happy slapping'- sending video/images of people being bullied, so others can see

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is:

- To prevent bullying from happening in our organisation, as much as possible;
- when bullying does happen, to make sure it is stopped as soon as possible and that those involved receive the support they need.
- To provide information to all staff, volunteers young people and their families about what GUITAR Circus is doing to prevent and deal with bullying.



This policy covers:

- Young people bullying other young people.
- Adults bullying young people.
- Young people bullying adults.

The broad outline of the policy is as follows:

- All young people and adults who participate in activities run by GUITAR Circus have a responsibility to treat other young people and adults with dignity and respect and refrain from bullying behaviour.
- There will be adequate supervision by the support team at all activities/events to help prevent bullying.
- If a member of staff/volunteer witnesses bullying or suspects that bullying is taking place they should inform the DSL immediately.
- If a young person has been bullied, witnessed a bullying incident or is concerned about another member they should report their concern to the DSL or a member of the GUITAR Circus support team.

WHAT TO DO WHEN A YOUNG PERSON TELLS YOU ABOUT A BULLYING INCIDENT:

- Re-assure them that they have done the right thing by telling you.
- Explain that the best chance of ending bullying is by telling someone as people that bully rely on their behaviour remaining a secret.
- Tell them that you cannot promise complete confidentiality and that you will only share the information with those who need to know.
- Explain to them what will happen next.
- Make a record about what has been said using the GUITAR Circus bullying report form and contact the DSL immediately.

Where the bullying is so serious that it could be a criminal offence you should report it to the police or, as a possible child protection case, to children's social services. If you are not sure what to do you can contact the NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000 for advice.

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING A BULLYING COMPLAINT:

- All reports of bullying will be recorded, investigated and reported to DSL.
- All staff/volunteers that deal with a complaint will need to complete the GUITAR Circus bullying report form and contact the DSL immediately.
- The DSL will discuss the complaint in a meeting with the person who initially dealt with it. The DSL will then speak separately to all involved in order to get all sides of the story. They will also speak to others who may have witnessed the incident/s, if appropriate.
- If the victim of the alleged bullying is a young person their parent/guardian will be informed of the complaint and the outcome of the investigation.

If it is found that bullying has not occurred:

- The complainant, alleged victim and alleged perpetrator/s will be informed of the outcome of the investigation and the reasons why it was concluded that bullying did not take place.
- Support will be given to the complainant, alleged victim and alleged perpetrator/s if necessary.
- A meeting will be arranged between the alleged victim and alleged perpetrator to discuss the issues involved if both are agreeable and it is deemed appropriate.



If it is concluded that Bullying has taken place:

- The complainant, alleged victim and alleged perpetrator/s will be informed of the outcome of the investigation.
- Support will be given to the victim.
- If deemed appropriate and the alleged victim and alleged perpetrator agree, a joint meeting to discuss the issues involved will be arranged.
- The parent/guardian of both parties will be informed of the action taken.

Disciplinary action:

- A serious incident can result in the member being dismissed from the course and future GUITAR Circus events.
- For incidents that are considered less serious the perpetrator will need to apologise to the victim, agree to not engage in further bullying behaviour and will be closely monitored.
- For incidents involving a member of staff the GUITAR Circus child protection procedures will be implemented.

DESIGNATED PERSONS FOR SAFEGUARDING:

Designated Safeguarding Leads DSL:

Georgina Bashford - Email: georgina.bashford@guitarcircus.org.uk

Sandra Dukes - Email: sandra.dukes@guitarcircus.org.uk

Nominated Guitar Circus Trustee

Charlie Fraser - Email: charlie.fraser@guitarcircus.org.uk

USEFUL HELPLINES:

Child Line: 0800 1111 (24hrs a day)

Kidscape: Anti-Bullying helpline: 08451 205 204 (9.00 – 4.00pm Monday – Thursday)