

Urban Young Actors Anti-Bullying Policy

Statement of intent

Urban Young Actors (UYA) works with young people aged 8-21 as part of its activities. We run weekly acting classes for our members, teaching acting technique for stage and screen. UYA is committed to providing a caring, friendly and secure atmosphere for all of its members, enabling them to learn in a relaxed and safe environment. We recognise that bullying can cause severe and adverse effects on children and young people's emotional development and bullying of any kind is unacceptable at UYA.

We believe that children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind, and we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and operate in a way that protects them.

The purpose of this policy statement is:

- to prevent bullying from happening between children and young people who attend UYA
- to ensure that bullying of any kind of not tolerated and is stopped as soon as possible if it does happen and that those involved receive the support they need
- to provide information to all staff, members and their families about what we should all do to prevent and deal with bullying

This policy statement applies to anyone working on behalf of Urban Young Actors, including the artistic director, director, paid acting tutors and members, and is based on guidance from the NSPCC, February 2022.

What is bullying?

Bullying can be defined as “behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally”. (Dept. of Education, “Preventing and Tackling Bullying”, July 2017)

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.

Bullying includes a range of abusive behaviour that is:

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally.
- Bullying can include name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments; kicking; hitting; taking belongings; producing offensive graffiti/drawings; gossiping; excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours
- This also includes the same unacceptable behaviours expressed online (online or cyberbullying). This can include: sending offensive, upsetting and inappropriate messages by phone, text, instant messenger, through gaming, websites, social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading photos or videos.

Responding to Bullying

We recognise that bullying causes real distress and affects a person’s health and development. In some instances, bullying can cause significant harm. All children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse and everyone has a role to play in preventing all forms of bullying (including online) and putting a stop to bullying.

We will ensure that our response to incidents of bullying takes into account the following:

- the needs of the person being bullied

- the needs of the person displaying bullying behaviour
- needs of any bystanders
- UYA as a whole

The following steps may be taken when dealing with all incidents of bullying:

- If bullying is seen, suspected or reported, the incident will be stopped and dealt with immediately by the UYA member of staff who has been approached or witnessed the concern
- We will provide support for the person being bullied, making sure they are not at risk of immediate harm, and will involve them in any decision making as appropriate
- UYA will ensure parents/carers are kept informed about the concern and action taken, as appropriate and in line with our Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved, such as the police, if a criminal offence has been committed
- A clear and precise account of bullying incidents will be recorded, including details regarding decisions and action taken
- Members who have come forwards to a member of staff about being bullied will be offered an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence of the member(s) will be prioritised and members will be encouraged to never feel afraid to speak up as they will always be heard
- Members will be praised for coming forwards

If necessary, disciplinary steps can be taken and membership can be cancelled with immediate effect

Contacts and information

NSPCC Helpline - 0808 800 5000

Urban Young Actors Safeguarding Policy – [link]

Child Protection System in the UK -
<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system>