



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

MIDLANDS ACADEMY OF DANCE AND DRAMA

VERSION 1.0

Anti-Bullying Policy

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Version Control

VERSION	REVIEWER NAME	DATE	NEXT REVIEW	COMMENTS
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Introduction

Midlands Academy of Dance & Drama (MADD) was founded in 1967 by the Principal, Frances Clayton and is based in Nottingham. MADD offers diplomas in Professional Dance, Musical Theatre, classes to 3-18-year-olds, and qualifications in Teacher Training in Dance with the International Dance Teachers Association (IDTA).

Making MADD a safe and comfortable environment in which our stakeholder's dignity is respected and which is free from harassment, bullying, and peer abuse is a priority.

We are committed to eliminating poor and unlawful behaviour in any form and will take proactive and reactive steps to ensure that no stakeholder is subject to discrimination, marginalisation, or bullying by virtue of their protected characteristics, backgrounds, lifestyles, life choices, appearance, or for any other reason.

To attain this, MADD will ensure that the expectations around behaviour are understood by all and that positive behaviours will be reinforced via supportive staff.

This policy sets out how MADD intends to meet our aims and includes the procedure for reporting and managing incidents related to breaches of this policy and the law.

Scope

This policy applies to all stakeholders of MADD, including but not limited to our students, staff, visitors, and business partners.

Definitions

Bullying is defined as:

"Behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can be in many forms".

Bullying behaviour can take the following forms:

- **Physical** - for example, hitting, kicking, pushing, and theft.
- **Verbal** - for example, threats, name-calling, racist or homophobic remarks.

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- **Emotional** - for example, isolating an individual from activities/games and the social acceptance of their peer group.
- **Cyberbullying** - is bullying that takes place using technology. Whether on social media sites, through a mobile phone, or on gaming sites, the effects can be devastating for the young person involved.
- **Racist** – for example, racial taunts, graffiti, and gestures.
- **Sexual** - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments and harassment.
- **Homophobic or gender identity** - because of or focusing on the issue of sexuality.

Bullying often starts with apparently trivial events such as teasing and name-calling and is a type of behaviour which needs to be defined by the impact on the victim rather than by the intention of the perpetrator.

Please note: the definitions above may also constitute harassment if they relate to the protected characteristics and may also be criminal offences in some cases.

Peer abuse can include, but is not limited to, bullying (including cyberbullying), gender-based violence/sexual assaults and sexting ([Keeping Children Safe in Education \(DfE\)](#)).

Harassment is defined as unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of people in the workplace or of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment and includes unwanted physical contact when the abuse is related to a protected characteristic.

Sexual harassment and sexual violence exist on a continuum and may overlap. Where the latter occurs, there is the possibility that a criminal offence is committed.

Roles and Responsibilities

Staff

Every MADD staff member shares responsibility for challenging bullying and for creating a culture which positively encourages acceptable behaviour and reduces or prevents the likelihood of bullying.

Where possible, staff should work together with parents or guardians as they both have a responsibility to manage unacceptable behaviour and ensure that harm is prevented.

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Students and Other Stakeholders

All stakeholders of MADD are responsible for abiding by our relevant codes of conduct and this policy. In addition, we expect every individual involved with us to take a stand against bullying, harassment, and peer abuse by reporting breaches.

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Vulnerable Students

Bullying can happen to anyone, and it can seriously affect their social, mental, and emotional health.

There is evidence to suggest that students that are badly bullied in educational establishments are also more likely to be bullied outside of them, for instance, through cyberbullying.

Some students are more likely to be the target of bullying because of the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves. For example, those of different races or religions, those with special educational needs or disabilities, those who are adopted, those who are suffering from a health problem or those with caring responsibilities may be more likely to experience bullying because of differences.

Difficulties Reporting Bullying

It is recognised that victims of bullying may find it difficult to report the incidents because:

- They are frightened of reprisal from the bully
- They fear being labelled as a 'tell-tale'
- They are ashamed or embarrassed
- They fear that reporting it will cause worry to their parents/guardians
- They fear that they may lose friends or become further isolated.

It is, therefore, crucial that all stakeholders recognise the signs of bullying, support the victim to report it, and, where they fear for the victim's safety, report it on their behalf.

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Staff Training

MADD teaching and tutoring staff receive training on bullying, harassment, and peer abuse. In addition, staff are trained in safeguarding children, allowing them to understand when this behaviour places a child or children at risk of harm or in need.

Descriptions of the most common forms of bullying, harassment, and peer abuse are covered in Appendix A.

Stakeholder Engagement

MADD will engage with all stakeholders at the start of any relationship and, where appropriate, at regular intervals on the following:

- Our zero-tolerance approach to bullying, harassment, peer abuse, and
- Our stance and message on such behaviours; and
- Information and guidance on what bullying, harassment, and peer abuse are; and
- What is and is not acceptable and the responsibilities of every staff member and stakeholder; and
- How such behaviour affects the recipient; and
- How to report such behaviour; and
- The sanctions/repercussions of such behaviours.

Criminal Acts

Sexual assaults are clear examples of criminal acts. Additionally, creating or sharing explicit images of a child is illegal, even if the person doing it is a child. A young person is breaking the law if they:

- Take an explicit photo or video of themselves or a friend, or
- Share an explicit image or video of a child, even if it is shared between children of the same age, or

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- Possess, download, or store an explicit image or video of a child, even if the child gave their permission for it to be created.

However, if a young person is found creating or sharing images, the police can choose to record that a crime has been committed but that taking formal action is not in the public interest.

With effect from 29 June 2021, section 69 Domestic Abuse Act 2021 expanded so-called 'revenge porn' to include threats to disclose private sexual photographs and films with intent to cause distress.

Physical assault of any kind will not be tolerated, and MADD takes a zero-tolerance approach to such behaviours.

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of **harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications** – could be a criminal offence, for example, under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986.

MADD will report to the authorities any criminal acts and also make a safeguarding referral where appropriate.

Procedure

Student and Visitor Complaints

Students and visitors may speak to any staff member to get advice on how to report harassment, bullying, and peer abuse.

Complaints or reports can be made in person, by telephone or in writing; however, we request that the complainant inform us of their name, contact details and the nature of the complaint (what happened, who was involved, etc.).

A member of staff will offer the complainant support where required but must allow the complainant to outline the complaint in their own words.

All such reports/complaints will be immediately reported to the Senior Leadership Team and recorded in a confidential file.

The complainants' identities will remain confidential wherever possible, and MADD will do its utmost to ensure that no victimisation occurs.

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Staff Complaints

When a member of staff is subject to bullying and/or harassment should immediately raise the matter with their line manager or directly with the Principal in serious cases.

Actions on Receipt of a Report/Complaint

MADD will:

- Assess the nature of the incident:
 - How personal it was
 - The ability of the bully to understand the impact of their actions
 - Whether it was provoked or unprovoked
 - Whether it was planned
 - How the victim was harmed
 - Whether a crime was committed.
- Investigate the incident(s) and gather evidence where required. This may include interviewing onlookers.
- Determine which, if any, outside agencies to notify (Police, Safeguarding, etc.)
- Appoint an Investigator if required.
- Determine what sanctions should be imposed on the perpetrator(s).

Immediate Action: Serious Incidents

Serious incidents constituting a crime or safeguarding concern will be escalated to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Principal immediately and reported to the Police and/or relevant Safeguarding Team.

If the bullying involves a physical assault, as well as seeking medical attention where necessary, consideration should be given to whether there are any child protection or safeguarding issues to consider.

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Investigation and Information Gathering

If bullying, harassment, or peer abuse is suspected or reported, the first step is to gather evidence.

Evidence collected should comprise incident dates, times, and actions along with any written, video, or other digital assets.

The investigator must:

- Run through the events with the victim to get a clear picture of the circumstances.
- Gather evidence without bias.
- Assess whether it is appropriate to assist the victim in approaching their bully or harasser to solve the matter informally.
- Assess whether formal action is required and if the situation should be reported to the authorities.
- Assess whether individuals are at risk of harm and, if so, plan to reduce or remove or reduce the risk.

Sanctions

When applying sanctions:

- The focus should be on the bullying behaviour rather than the individual, and, where possible, the reasons for the behaviour should be explored and dealt with.
- A clear explanation of the extent of the upset the bullying has caused should be given to the perpetrator.
- In certain circumstances, a restorative approach and subsequent mediation between those involved in addition to or instead of sanctions can provide an opportunity to meet the needs of all concerned.
- Where bullying exists in the context of gang behaviour, there should be an institutional, as well as an individual, response to this and sanctions should be applied widely.

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- The sanctions should reflect the seriousness of the incident so that others see that bullying is unacceptable.
- The parent/guardian should be informed of the sanctions and the reason for imposing them.

MADD, however, must at all times ensure that disciplinary sanctions are applied fairly, consistently, and reasonably taking into account any special educational needs or disabilities that the individual may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable students.

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Support for the victim (s)

Where a stakeholder is thought to be exposed to bullying, action should be taken to assess their individual needs and provide the most appropriate support services at MADD's disposal.

Support should be offered to victims for whom English is not their first language to communicate needs and concerns.

Below is a list of professional and/or charitable external information/support services:

Specialist Organisations:

- [The Anti-Bullying Alliance \(ABA\)](#): Founded in 2002 by NSPCC and National Children's Bureau, the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) brings together over 100 organisations into one network to develop and share good practices across the whole range of bullying issues.
- [Kidscape](#): Charity established to prevent bullying and promote child protection, providing advice for young people, professionals and parents about different types of bullying and how to tackle it. They also offer specialist training and support for school staff and assertiveness training for young people.
- [The Diana Award](#): Anti-Bullying Ambassadors programme to empower young people to take responsibility for changing the attitudes and behaviour of their peers towards bullying. It will achieve this by identifying, training and supporting school anti-bullying ambassadors.
- [The BIG Award](#): The Bullying Intervention Group (BIG) offer a national scheme and award for schools to tackle bullying effectively.

Cyber Bullying:

- [ChildNet International](#): Specialist resources for young people to raise awareness of online safety and how to protect themselves.
- [Internet Watch Foundation](#): (for reporting illegal images and content).
- [Think U Know](#): Resources provided by Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) for children and young people, parents, carers and teachers.
- [Digizen](#): Provide online safety information for educators, parents, carers and young people.

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- [Advice on Child Internet Safety 1.0](#): The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) has produced universal guidelines for providers on keeping children safe online.

LGBT:

- [EACH](#): A training agency for employers and organisations seeking to tackle discrimination on the grounds of gender and sexual orientation.
- [Schools Out](#): Offers practical advice, resources (including lesson plans) and training to schools on LGBT equality in education.
- [Stonewall](#): An LGBT equality organisation with considerable expertise in LGBT bullying in schools, a dedicated youth site, resources for schools, and specialist training for teachers.

SEND:

- [Mencap](#): Represents people with learning disabilities with specific advice and information for people who work with children and young people.
- [Changing Faces](#): Provide online resources and training to schools on bullying because of physical differences.
- [Online bullying and SEN/Disability](#): Advice provided by the Anti-Bullying Alliance on developing effective anti-bullying practices.

Racism:

- [Show Racism the Red Card](#): Provide resources and workshops for schools to educate young people, often using the high profile of football, about racism.
- [Kick it Out](#): Uses the appeal of football to educate young people about racism and provide education packs for schools.
- [Anne Frank Trust](#): Runs a school's project to teach young people about Anne Frank and the Holocaust, the consequences of unchecked prejudice and discrimination, and cultural diversity.

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Monitoring and Reviewing

Monitoring may include:

- Reviewing the number and type of bullying complaints
- Reviewing the sanctions implemented to determine if they were a successful deterrent
- Reviewing the actions taken by MADD to determine if they were appropriate
- Collecting stakeholder feedback on bullying and using it to form action plans.

This policy should be reviewed periodically to ensure that it remains compliant with current legislation, meets best practices, and is not discriminatory.

Where we identify the need for modification of policy or if there are legal changes, they will be implemented, and additional controls will be put in place and reflected in an updated version of this policy document.

Appendix A

Further Guidance on Bullying, Harassment, and Victimisation

Bullying

Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, abuse, or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient, which leaves the recipient feeling hurt, upset, vulnerable or helpless.

The following are examples of bullying:

- Physical bullying: hitting, slapping or pushing someone.
- Verbal bullying: name-calling, gossiping or threatening someone.
- Non-verbal abuse: hand signs, vandalism, written abuse or text messages.
- Emotional abuse: threatening, intimidating or humiliating someone.
- Exclusion: ignoring or isolating someone.
- Undermining, constant criticism or spreading rumours.
- Controlling or manipulating someone.
- Making silent, hoax or abusive calls.

While some forms of bullying and peer abuse are apparent as they will leave evidence, others are more subtle and are not always obvious.

Bullying is often done in private, and bullies may go to great lengths to hide their behaviour or may threaten the victim to ensure that their behaviour goes unreported.

For this reason, staff must be vigilant to the signs of bullying in addition to relying on reports of bullying.

No single sign will indicate for certain that someone is being bullied, but signs may include:

- Belongings getting 'lost' or damaged.
- Physical injuries, such as unexplained bruises.

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- Being afraid to go to school, being mysteriously 'ill' each morning, or skipping school/college.
- Not doing as well at school/college.
- Asking for or stealing money (to give to whoever is bullying them).
- Being nervous, losing confidence, or becoming distressed and withdrawn.
- Problems with eating or sleeping.
- Bullying others.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using technology. Whether on social media sites, through a mobile phone, or through gaming sites, the effects can be devastating for the young person involved. Cyberbullying can provide anonymity to the perpetrators and can easily spiral out of control if not identified.

Unfortunately, due to the rise in access to modern technology and the internet, many young people have been victims of cyberbullying. Victims are often too embarrassed or ashamed to admit that they are victims and where private message apps or social media accounts are used, the bullying is not accessible by others, therefore going unnoticed.

Possible signs of Cyberbullying:

- Being upset after using the internet or their mobile phone.
- Unwilling to talk or being secretive about their online activities and mobile phone use.
- Spending much more or much less time texting, gaming or using social media.
- Many new phone numbers, texts or e-mail addresses show up on their mobile phone, laptop or tablet.
- After texting or being online, they may seem withdrawn, upset or outraged.
- Difficulty sleeping.
- Low self-esteem.

Harassment

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Harassment is defined as unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

Protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010 are:

- Age.
- Disability (physical or mental).
- Gender reassignment.
- Race (including ethnic and national origins, colour and nationality).
- Religion or belief (including lack of belief).
- Sex (including sexual harassment).
- Sexual orientation.
- Pregnancy and maternity.
- Marriage and civil partnership.

Harassment also applies if the behaviour is directed at an individual because of their association with an individual or group (harassment because of association), or it is directed at an individual because the harasser believes that they possess a characteristic or protected characteristic (harassment because of perception).

Behaviour amounting to harassment may include but is not limited to:

- Insults, name-calling and offensive language, jokes, and gestures.
- Ridiculing and undermining behaviour.
- Inappropriate or unnecessary physical contact.
- Physical assault or threats of physical assault.
- Intimidating, coercive, or threatening actions and behaviour.
- Isolation or deliberate exclusion.
- Inappropriate comments about a person's appearance, intrusive questions or comments about a person's private life and malicious gossip.

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- Sending or displaying offensive images and literature.
- Pestering, spying, or stalking.

Harassment, when related to the protected characteristics, is illegal and may constitute a hate crime.

Sexual Harassment or Violence/Abuse

Sexual harassment can be defined as an uninvited, unreciprocated, and unwelcome behaviour related to sex or gender reassignment which is offensive to the person involved and causes that person to feel threatened, humiliated, or embarrassed.

Examples of sexual harassment through any platforms (in person or through Cyberbullying) are:

- Requests for sexual favours, including implied or overt promises of preferential treatment or threats concerning present or future employment status.
- Offensive gestures or comments.
- Sexually orientated jibes, innuendo, or jokes.
- Unwanted physical contact.
- The displaying or sharing with an individual sexually offensive visual material such as calendars, photographs, books, or videos.

There are 2 types of sexual abuse – contact and non-contact abuse.

Contact abuse is where an abuser makes physical contact with a child and includes:

- Sexual touching of any part of a child's body, whether they're clothed or not.
- Using a body part or object to rape or penetrate a child.
- Forcing a child to take part in sexual activities
- Making a child undress or touch someone else.

Contact abuse can include touching, kissing and oral sex – sexual abuse isn't just penetrative.

Non-contact abuse is when a child is abused without being touched by the abuser. This can be in person or online and includes:

- Exposing or flashing.

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- Showing pornography.
- Exposing a child to sexual acts.
- Making them masturbate.
- Forcing a child to make, view or share child abuse images or videos.
- Making, viewing or distributing child abuse images or videos.
- Forcing a child to take part in sexual activities or conversations online or through a smartphone.

Find out more about [grooming](#) and [child sexual exploitation](#).

Signs of sexual harassment and/or violence/abuse include:

- Avoiding being alone with or frightened of people or a person they know.
- Language or sexual behaviour you wouldn't expect them to know.
- Having nightmares or bed-wetting.
- Alcohol or drug misuse.
- Self-harm.
- Changes in eating habits or developing an eating problem.
- Changes in their mood, feeling irritable and angry, or anything out of the ordinary.

Peer Abuse

Peer-on-peer abuse is any form of physical, sexual, emotional, and financial abuse, and coercive control, exercised between children, and within children's relationships (both intimate and nonintimate), friendships and wider peer associations." Firmin, C., *Abuse between Young People: A Contextual Account*. 2017. Oxon: Routledge. Peer-on-peer abuse can and does happen in a whole range of settings that children attend but often goes unseen.

It might take place online, for example, or away from the school or setting. Therefore, training for professionals to help them recognise the signs, and know what to do, is essential. All children are capable of abusing their peers, and this is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

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- Bullying (including cyberbullying).
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm.
- Youth and serious youth violence.
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault.
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
- Upskirting typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing to view their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification or to cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm.
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent.
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images or videos.
- Sexting (also known as youth-produced sexual imagery).
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.
- Harmful sexual behaviour.
- Relationship abuse, teenage relationship abuse or domestic violence.
- Child sexual exploitation.
- Prejudice-based violence.

Victimisation

Victimisation is when a person (A) subjects another person (B) to a detriment because person B has (or person A believes they have) made allegations of bullying or harassment, intend to make such an allegation, or has assisted or supported a person in bringing an allegation.

Examples of victimisation may include but are not limited to treating an individual in any way less favourably as a result of their actions.

Victimisation is unacceptable and may be unlawful, and will be treated as a form of harassment under this policy.



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