

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Adopted June 2017

1. Introduction

Everyone has the right to go about their daily lives without the fear of being threatened, assaulted or harassed. No one should underestimate the impact that bullying can have on a person's life. It can cause high levels of distress, affecting well-being and behaviour and, particularly for young people, their academic and social development right through into adulthood.

At Amersham Band, we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our members so they can learn and enjoy music in a relaxed and secure atmosphere free from oppression and abuse.

Bullying is an anti-social behaviour and affects everyone. All types of bullying are unacceptable in our band and will not be tolerated.

All members should feel able to tell and when bullying behaviour is brought to our attention, prompt and effective action will be taken. We are a TELLING organisation. This means that anyone who is aware of any type of bullying that is taking place is expected to tell a parent, committee member or musical director immediately.

2. What Is Bullying?

"Bullying behaviour abuses an imbalance of power to repeatedly and intentionally cause emotional or physical harm to another person or group of people. Isolated instances of hurtful behaviour, teasing or arguments between individuals would not be seen as bullying" (Torfaen definition 2008)

Bullying generally takes one of four forms:

- Indirect - being unfriendly, spreading rumours, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding bags or books);
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, slapping or any form of violence;
- Verbal – name-calling, teasing, threats, sarcasm;
- Cyber – all areas of internet misuse, such as nasty and/or threatening emails, misuse of blogs, gaming websites, internet chat rooms and instant messaging. Mobile threats by text messaging and calls, misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video facilities.

Although not an exhaustive list, common examples of bullying include:

- Racial bullying;
- Homophobic bullying;
- Bullying based on disability, ability, gender, appearance or circumstance.

3. Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be bullied. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Band members who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. The band has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

4. Objectives of this Policy

- All Trustees, Committee Members, Musical Directors, Members and Parents should have an understanding of what bullying is and they should know what the band policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All members and parents should know what the band policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As an organisation we take bullying seriously. Members and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

5. Implementation

The following steps may be taken when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the committee member or musical director who has been approached;
- A clear and precise account of the incident will be given to the Welfare Officer;
- The Welfare Officer may interview all concerned and will record the incident;
- Other Committee Members will be kept informed and if it persists they will advise the Welfare Officer;
- Parents will be kept informed as necessary;
- Punitive measures will be used as appropriate and in consultation with all parties concerned;
- If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.

Members who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a Committee Member, Musical Director, or Welfare Officer of their choice;
- Reassuring the member;
- Offering continuous support;
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence.

Members who have bullied will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened;
- Discovering why the member became involved;
- Establishing the wrong doing and the need to change;
- Where appropriate, informing parents or guardians to help change the attitude and behaviour of a child.

The following disciplinary steps can be taken:

- Official warnings to cease offending;

- Seating position being reviewed and changes made as appropriate;
- Exclusion from certain areas;
- Member being sent home.

Within the culture of the band we will raise the awareness of the nature of bullying through discussion at rehearsals and other times as appropriate, in an attempt to eradicate such behaviour.

6. Monitoring, evaluation and review

The band will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the organisation.

7. Prevention

We will use some or all of the following to help raise awareness of and prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

- Communicating this policy to band members;
- Writing and implementing a set of band rules;
- Signing a behaviour contract;
- Reinforcing awareness at band rehearsals;
- Setting up and sustaining a mentoring scheme.

8. Signs and Symptoms

Victims of bullying may not speak out when being bullied and may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Examples of such signs are when someone:

- changes their usual routine
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- uses excuses to miss band (headache, stomach ache etc)
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises or shows signs of being in a fight
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives unlikely excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a text message or email is received
- These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should always be investigated.

9. Document History

23 May 2017 Policy Drafted and reviewed at Amersham Band Committee Meeting

20 June 2017 Policy approved at Amersham Band Committee Meeting