

# Orpheus Young Singers (run by Brighton Orpheus Choir) - anti-bullying procedure



Registered Charity 260887

Adapted from Safe Networks tool C8

## Purpose and aim of this procedure

This procedure is supported by the Brighton Orpheus Choir anti-bullying policy. Its aim is to provide detailed guidance to staff and volunteers, as well as to children and young people who may experience bullying, so that they will know what to do if an incident of bullying occurs between children and young people.

The procedure also aims to ensure that Brighton Orpheus Choir responds fairly and consistently to incidents of bullying, recognising that those who bully often have needs too.

This procedure applies to all children and young people who attend Orpheus Young Singers (run by Brighton Orpheus Choir) who may be bullied, behave in a bullying way towards others or observe someone being bullied.

It also applies to all staff and volunteers who observe bullying between children and young people within Orpheus Young Singers, who may have incidents of bullying reported to them or who may be concerned that a child/young person at Orpheus Young Singers is showing signs of being bullied.

If an adult is bullying a child/young person, this should be reported under the child protection procedures.

If a child or young person is bullying another child to the extent that it may cause significant harm, then it will also need to be dealt with under child protection procedures.

This procedure does not cover incidents of bullying among staff members and volunteers.

## Forms bullying might take

*Safe from bullying in youth activities* (by the Department for Children Schools and Families, 2009) defines bullying as, "behaviour, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group physically or emotionally. One person or a group can bully others."

It can include:

- verbal teasing or making fun of someone
- excluding children from games and conversations
- pressurising other children not to be friends with the person who is being bullied
- spreading hurtful rumours or passing around inappropriate photographs/images/drawings
- cyberbullying (ie using computers or mobile phones to bully someone)
- shouting at or verbally abusing someone
- stealing or damaging someone's possessions
- making threats
- forcing someone to do something embarrassing, harmful or dangerous
- harassment on the basis of race, gender, sexuality or disability
- physical or sexual assault (although all sexual incidents and all but very minor physical incidents constitute abuse and must be dealt with in accordance with child protection procedures).

People are often bullied because they appear different from others.

## The signs and symptoms of bullying

If someone is being bullied, they might not tell anyone directly. This could be because they have been threatened and are afraid to say anything or because they believe that nothing can be done about it and that telling someone will only make it worse. It could even be because they don't recognise that what is happening to them is bullying.

Signs that someone may be being bullied could include:

- being unhappy, withdrawn and unwilling to spend time in a group, especially during unstructured periods eg break time
- being without friends
- missing meetings and activities at Orpheus Young Singers and/or expressing a reluctance to attend
- being clingy with adults
- appearing to lose possessions or money (things that may have really been stolen by or given away to bullies)
- unexplained injuries
- uncharacteristic illness or aggression.

Some of these signs might also indicate abuse at the hands of adults or other negative experiences, so they should be treated with caution.

## **What to do if you are being bullied**

If you are being bullied you should never keep it to yourself. Tell someone you trust. This could be your key worker, teacher, another helper at Orpheus Young Singers or someone else. It could also be your parent or carer.

You may prefer to tell another child or young person first and ask that person to help you tell an adult.

If the bullying is happening at Orpheus Young Singers, we will sort it out here. If it's happening somewhere else (at school, for example, or near your home), we will get other people involved to stop it happening there.

## **What to do if you observe a child or young person being bullied or if someone tells you he/she is being bullied**

**If you are a child or young person** and someone tells you that he or she is being bullied, don't try to deal with it yourself. Talk to the person about getting help from an adult. Try to persuade him or her to go with you to explain the situation to their key worker or another helper at Orpheus Young Singers. If he/she won't do this, the best way to help is to explain that you will have to tell an adult yourself -- and then go ahead and tell someone.

**If you are an adult** and a child tells you that he or she is being bullied, take the child seriously. Do not tell him/her to stop being silly or to keep out of the way of the bullies. This will not help and will make the child feel let down and less inclined to tell anyone else. Listen to the child's full account of what is going on and complete the bullying reporting form with the child as soon as possible.

If you observe the bullying directly, act assertively to put a stop to it. Explain to all concerned that the incident will have to be reported properly to stop it happening again. Report the incident to the child's key worker or, if you are the key worker, talk to the child about the bullying and discuss it with your manager.

Unless the incident is minor and can be dealt with informally, the child's parent or carer should be informed by the key worker within one working day.

If possible, there should be a three-way meeting between the child, the key worker and the parent.

If the bullying is taking place in another environment (eg school) the key worker should ask what support the parent and child would like, in order to engage with whoever the responsible agencies might be. The key worker should aim to work in partnership with both parent and child and any other people who may be involved.

If the bullying is taking place within Orpheus Young Singers, the parent and child should be reassured that it will be dealt with as a priority and should be asked for their views on what would be helpful to deal with the situation.

The key worker, having spoken to the child who has been bullied and the child's parent/carers, should also speak to the bully (or bullies) and obtain their account of what has happened or is happening. This should be noted in writing and the parents/carers of the bully (or bullies) should be informed. The bully and his or her parents/carers should be asked for their views on what should be done to put a stop to any further bullying and to repair the damage that has been done.

Apart from very minor incidents that have been directly observed by a staff member and dealt with at the time, all bullying that takes place at Orpheus Young Singers should be discussed within the staff group within five working days.

At the meeting, the bullying incident should be discussed and the details of a draft plan drawn up to address the situation, taking into account any suggestions made by the children involved and their parents/carers.

The following areas should be covered:

- details of any apology that has been or should be offered by the bully (or bullies)
- details of any support for the person who has been bullied eg use of buddy scheme, extra input from the key worker, referral to another service
- details of any consequences for the bully, in addition to making an apology, with reference to the behaviour code
  
- details of any support for the bully, with reference to the behaviour code details of any further discussions or work to be done with others in the group, including children who may
- have observed or encouraged the bullying □ details of any changes in how the staff group may handle issues of bullying in future.

The plan should be shared with the children concerned and their parents and should be reviewed regularly.

### **Keeping a record of the bullying**

Use the bullying reporting form included in this toolbox and take clear notes of any discussions or meetings that take place following the bullying incident. The plan for dealing with the aftermath of the incident should be copied to the child who has been bullied and his/her parent/carer and to the bullies and their parents/carers. It should also be placed on the file of all the children directly involved.

### **This procedure should be reviewed every two years**

Date of last review: 27th June 2017

Date of next review: July 2019

The person responsible for reviewing it is: The Managing Committee

Rev B