

Anti-bullying Procedure

Abergavenny Orchestral Society

Purpose and aim of this procedure

This procedure is supported by the Abergavenny Orchestral Society Anti-bullying Policy. Its aim is to provide detailed guidance to all adult members, 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 refers to situations where a young person may be behaving in a bullying way towards an adult member.

The procedure aims to ensure that Abergavenny Orchestral Society 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 participate in activities or events organised by Abergavenny Orchestral Society who may be bullied, behave in a bullying way towards others, or observe someone being bullied.

It also applies to all adult members who observe bullying perpetrated by children and young people within Abergavenny Orchestral Society, who may have incidents of bullying reported to them or who may be concerned that a child/young person or adult at Abergavenny Orchestral Society is showing signs of being bullied by another young person.

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 adult members.

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 or 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 do not 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 Abergavenny Symphony Orchestra 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 a child or young person being bullied

If you are being bullied you should never keep it to yourself. Tell someone you trust. This could be the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), deputy DSL, conductor, Chairman, or another adult at Abergavenny Orchestral Society 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 within Abergavenny Orchestral Society, we will sort it out here. If it is 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 they are being bullied

If you are a child or young person and someone tells you that they are being bullied, do not try to deal with it yourself. Talk to the person about getting help from an adult. Try to persuade them to go with you to explain the situation to the DSL, their deputy, the Chairman, or another adult within Abergavenny Orchestral Society. If they will not 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 them 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 DSL or, if you are the DSL, talk to the child about the bullying and discuss it with the Chairman.

Unless the incident is minor and can be dealt with informally, the child's parent or carer should be informed by the DSL within one working day. If possible, there should be a three-way meeting between the child, the DSL and the parent.

If the bullying is taking place in another environment (eg school) the DSL should ask what support the parent and child would like, in order to engage with whoever the responsible agencies might be. The DSL 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 Abergavenny Orchestral Society, 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 DSL, 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 an adult member and dealt with at the time, all bullying that takes place within Abergavenny Orchestral Society should be discussed within the committee before the next rehearsal.

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 DSL or 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 committee may handle issues of bullying in the 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 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, their parent/carer and to the bullies and their parents/carers. It should also be placed securely on file.

Bullying online (cyberbullying)

What to do if you find out that a young person is being cyberbullied

If you find out that a young person or child is being cyberbullied it is just as important to take action as it is with other forms of bullying. For more details on specific definitions of cyberbullying and advice about the safe and effective use of technology, please refer to the e-safety policy and procedures.

In terms of taking things forward, there are several additional things that the DSL, in consultation with the e-safety co-ordinator and Chairman, needs to do to take action:

1. Give reassurance to the young person that they have done the right thing by coming forward;
2. Help the child or young person to keep the evidence and offer support – e-mails, text messages, screen shots and noting web addresses or other relevant information;
3. Support the young person in ensuring they know how to block people, change details or leave certain services where appropriate;
4. Support the child or young person in containing the material – if they or you know the person, ask them to remove the content;
5. Contact the relevant service provider, eg mobile phone provider or social networking provider to get the content taken down. Go through the appropriate reporting channels, and follow up with the service provider as necessary;
6. Use existing behaviour codes and e-safety policies and practices to confiscate equipment where appropriate or limit access;
7. If the content is illegal or you have suspicions that it may be, contact the relevant authorities;
8. Keep an evidence trail in the same way that you do with offline bullying to ensure there is a clear record.

Follow up the incident in the same way as you would for any other type of bullying, using the guidance above.

Mobile phones

All UK mobile phone providers have call centres and/or procedures in place to deal with issues around bullying. You will be able to find the number with information about the child's or your own provider. You can advise that it may be possible to get the child's number changed if they are being bullied. If a certain type of handset is being used, it may be possible to set the phone so that it does not receive phone calls or texts from a particular number.

Social networking sites

Social networking sites like Facebook have become an integral part of how young people network and communicate with each other. Facebook itself stipulates that users should be at least 13 years old, but many young people have found ways round this rule, which makes it all the more helpful

that Facebook and other similar sites have reporting procedures and a safety centre that contains advice for children, young people, parents and professionals. These sites will remove content that breaches their terms and conditions. Facebook also operates something called “social reporting”; this encourages people to work with others in their community to report offensive content as well as reporting it “officially” through Facebook.

Video and picture hosting sites

If there are moving images or static pictures posted that are of a bullying nature, they should be reported in the same way as social networking sites. It may sometimes be necessary to create an account before the images can be reported. When making the report, remember to flag things that are deemed inappropriate in the website’s own policy.

IM (instant messaging)

It is important that, if bullying has occurred in this context, all messages are recorded and archived. This means that if a report needs to be made or evidence needs to be saved, then there is a clear record. As with other online services, reports should refer to breaches in the provider’s terms of service.

Support services

ChildLine is a service for children and young people to talk to on 0800 1111 or you can access help via the website <http://www.childline.org.uk>

Professional behaviour online

Adults, especially those working with children in a supportive and professional capacity, should always behave to the highest professional standards in the online environment. They should consider very carefully their conduct with young people via information technology, especially via e-mail, mobile phone and on social networks. Where possible, particularly when a child is under 18, they should not engage with them online and, where this cannot be avoided, they should behave in the same way as they do offline. The code of behaviour and the e-safety policy outlining the acceptable use of technology will outline this further.

What to do if you are an adult being bullied by a young person in the organisation

Unfortunately, young people sometimes bully adults – either face to face or online. It is important that where an adult member believes that this is happening to them, they keep an evidence trail and report the incident to their organisation. The person being bullied may need support of a pastoral nature and there may be additional measures that need to be put in place. If the adult is being bullied by a child or young person via a social networking site for example, the adult will need to follow the same procedure as above to get the content removed. In addition, the young person who is acting as the bully may have needs that should be addressed, and it may be appropriate to deal with their behaviour by using the organisation’s behaviour code.

Monitoring and review

The DSL is responsible for reviewing this procedure.
This procedure will be reviewed every two years.

Date of last review:

Date of next review:

Signed:.....Designated Safeguarding Lead

Signed:.....Chairman