



## Peninsula School of Dance Bullying Policy

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### **Our Commitment**

Peninsula School of Dance is committed to creating and maintaining a safe, nurturing and supporting learning environment for all students.

Peninsula School of Dance is committed to creating a safe dance environment free from bullying for both its staff and employees.

We are committed to managing any instances of bullying as a partnership approach with students, staff and parents/carers.

### **Background**

With the increase in social media usage, bullying has extended into students' online worlds, meaning if they're being affected, they sometimes feel like there's no escape from it. Bullying in schools is a critical issue as it can lead to negative impacts for the person being bullied, bystanders, the person doing the bullying, and the school as a whole. Almost all young people are affected by bullying behaviour, either through experiencing it or engaging in it themselves, or through witnessing someone being bullied.

A whole-school approach recognises the effects of bullying in school, and that all members of the school community play a role in preventing bullying behaviour. Encouraging respectful relationships among students, positive family relationships and support from friends and others can reduce the negative consequences of bullying in schools.

### **Definition**

Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.

Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records).

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.

The key features of bullying are that it:

- causes hurt and distress;
- is repeated;
- involves the use of power in an unfair way.

### **What is NOT Bullying**

“One off” incidents involving social isolation, conflict, random acts of aggression/intimidation or meanness are not defined as bullying.

### **Peninsula School of Dance will**

- Provide our students with opportunities to develop skills, which will build their self-awareness and self-management skills.
- Create dance class environment that is of supportive and encourages open communication between students, student leaders and teaching staff.
- Encourage students to 'tell' of incidents of bullying or of being bullied.
- Establish 'telling' as acceptable and responsible behaviour valued in our community.

### **Response to Reports of Bullying**

**When an investigation about bullying is required, the following procedures will be followed:**

Peninsula School of Dance adopts a 'no blame' approach and process in the first instance. Those involved will be interviewed (by the Director, Melanie Gard) and made aware of the suspected bullying and the school's anti-bullying position. At this stage there may not be any consequences and parents may not be notified. The incident, if deemed not to be bullying, may be recorded and held on file.

If bullying is identified, the Director, Melanie Gard, will contact the parents/carers of both the child exhibiting the bullying behaviour and the child who has been bullied.

An action plan will be formulated and may include:

- Mediation
- Group discussions in class
- Individual counselling

A record of the incident will be kept on the file.

### **Support and Monitoring**

Continued monitoring and support by the relevant dance teacher/s and/or the Director will take place for an agreed period of time.

This will be dependent on a number of variables some of which may be

- age,
- severity of incident,
- frequency,
- patterns of behaviour.

Monitoring and support given will be recorded.

Continued bullying would result in a further action being taken by the Director and may include the following:

- Offering opportunities for reconciliation between victim and bully
- Referral to ongoing counselling from an appropriate agency
- Rewards for positive behaviour
- Offering alternative class timetable where practical
- Removal of service

### **Record Keeping**

All complaints of bullying will be recorded and kept on file

Details on the database will include:

- Details of incident
- Dates and names of parties concerned
- Student bystanders and staff witnesses