



SAVVY
Theatre

Revised September 2022

Anti-Bullying Policy

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY



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Role: Administrator & Artistic Director

Date: 17 September 2022

Aims and Objectives

Bullying is extremely damaging. SAVVY Theatre (ST) aims to create an environment in which members are psychologically, emotionally and physically safe, and where bullying is regarded as unacceptable.

This policy aims to produce a consistent approach to how we tackle bullying and make clear each person's responsibilities with regard to the prevention, reporting and eradication of bullying within the organisation.

This policy should be used alongside ST's Code of Conduct, Safeguarding & Behaviour Support Policies and our Company Handbook.

We have a zero-tolerance policy towards bullying and take all accusations seriously, however it is also important that people have a clear understanding of what bullying is.

Definitions

Government guidance defines bullying as actions that are meant to be hurtful, and which happen on a regular basis. Bullying can be direct (either physical or verbal) or indirect (for example, being ignored or not spoken to). Bullying can also happen online.

The five essential components of bullying:

1. **Intention to harm:** bullying is deliberate, with the intention to cause harm. For example, friends teasing each other in a 'good-natured' way is not bullying, but a person teasing another with the intention to deliberately upset them is bullying.
2. **Harmful outcome:** one or more persons are hurt physically or emotionally
3. **Direct or indirect acts:** bullying can involve direct aggression, such as hitting someone, as well as indirect acts, such as spreading rumours.
4. **Repetition:** bullying involves repeated acts of aggression. An isolated aggressive act, like a fight, is not bullying.
5. **Unequal power:** bullying involves the abuse of power by one or several persons who are (perceived as) more powerful, often due to their age, physical strength, or psychological resilience.

ST's Approach to Bullying or Hurtful Behaviour

SAVVY will immediately challenge bullying or hurtful behaviour, including verbal, physical acts and gestures or body language (whether it's being displayed by members, staff, support workers or other visitors).

In the first instance, people are made aware of their behaviour (as outlined in our behaviour support policy) and encouraged to reinforce the positive culture of ST as outlined in our Code of Conduct.

It is OK to not like someone, however it is not OK to deliberately exclude them, be rude to them, speak badly about them (either to their face, behind their back or on social media), or refuse to work with them in a workshop.

Other inappropriate Behaviour at SAVVY may include:

- physical and verbal abuse to others, and unacceptable language (including sexual references)
- behaviour that could cause damage to any building, furniture, equipment, or personal belongings of people at ST
- deliberately ignoring or excluding people
- convince someone else to not like someone or encourage them to take part in any of the above behaviour

SAVVY is an inclusive company, creating a community through theatre.

We acknowledge that we are all different and that no one person is more important than anyone else.

Any disciplinary procedure will follow the steps laid out in our Behaviour Support policy.

If needed, a mediated restitution meeting between people may also take place to ensure all those involved can continue to be involved with SAVVY (this may also include the drafting up behaviour contract)

Immediate expulsion from the group will only occur if the offence is serious enough to be considered a criminal action, such as deliberate and/or prolonged physical or sexual assault or cyber-bullying. In this extreme case, the police will also be involved.

Responsibilities

Parent/Carers, Key Workers and Support Workers are responsible for supporting ST members to abide by the Code of Conduct, actively encouraging members to be a positive part of their group.

Staff, Volunteers and Work Experience Placements must take bullying seriously, and seek to prevent it from taking place. They are responsible for:

- Immediately challenging bullying or hurtful behaviour, or behaviour that may become hurtful or perceived as bullying.

- Speaking to individuals and/or to the group as a whole about the consequences of hurtful or bullying behaviour, and the expectations of taking part at ST
- Reporting hurtful or bullying behaviour in post-session debriefs, writing incident reports and agreeing an action plan for addressing the behaviour (as needed)
- Ensure all hurtful behaviour that could potentially escalate, is well documented

The Artistic Director is responsible for ensuring all staff are aware of and able to implement SAVVY Theatre’s anti-bullying policy. The Artistic Director will:

- Ensure that all staff know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying through appropriate induction, training and support.
- Set the supportive tone of the organisation, making bullying less likely.
- Address issues arising around bullying, record incidents and report them to the Board of Trustees, as appropriate
- Support staff in investigating and addressing issues of bullying that cannot be challenged within the session activities.
- In extreme cases, where significant physical or emotional harm has occurred, contact external authorities and manage the incident in line with ST’s Safeguarding Policy.

The Board of Trustees is responsible for overseeing an organisational culture that does not condone bullying or behaviour that may lead to bullying. The Board of Trustees will:

- Support the Artistic Director in all attempts to eliminate bullying from ST.
- Take seriously any incidents of bullying that occur, and support the Artistic Director in managing them.
- Monitor any incidents of bullying that occur, and review the effectiveness of this policy.

Reporting Bullying or Hurtful Behaviour

1. Contact Staff

Members, parent/carers, support staff, volunteers, work experience, partners etc... who feel they/someone involved with SAVVY has been bullied or who are upset about the behaviour of either another member or ST worker, should report their concerns as soon as possible to the staff leading on their project, who will follow the responsibilities as laid out above.

If needed, staff will report hurtful or bullying behaviour to the Safeguarding Lead. If the behaviour hasn’t stopped through initial intervention in the session, staff, in consultation with the Safeguarding Lead will:

- Speak to the person directly to address the behaviour
- Review any reported incident of bullying
- If possible speak to the member’s key worker, parent/carer, support worker to make them aware of the behaviour and steps taken
- If bullying or hurtful behaviour continues, the person will be asked to leave SAVVY and a follow-up meeting may take place, explaining the reasons they have been asked to leave and what they will need to do to re-join SAVVY in the future (this may involve them moving to another group).
- Speak to the victim of bullying or hurtful behaviour to assess their needs and ensure they are supported to continue with SAVVY.
- Refer the victim of bullying or hurtful behaviour to additional support if necessary

2. Contact the Artistic Director

If members or parent/carers are not satisfied with the action taken by staff leading on their project, or are unable to contact them, they should in contact the Artistic Director. Concerns should ideally be raised in person or over the phone so the Artistic Director can get a good understanding of the concern.

The Artistic Director will discuss the concern with the member or parent/carer and the staff team to find a mutually agreeable resolution. The Artistic Director will agree with the parent/carer and the member further actions.

If a ST staff member is accused of bullying, the Artistic Director will share this accusation immediately with the Board of Trustees, who will be involved in addressing the concerns from the beginning.

3. Raising Concerns with the Board of Trustees

If members or parent/carers are unsatisfied with the actions taken by ST staff and/or the Artistic Director, they can contact the Trustees directly.

The complaint can be emailed to admin@savvytheatre.co.uk with the following subject heading:

For the attention of the Board of Trustees – CONFIDENTIAL

Alternatively they can send their complaint by post: For the attention of the Board of Trustees
CONFIDENTIAL
SAVVY Theatre Company
Fairfield Halls, Park Lane, Croydon, CR9 1DG

The Board of Trustees may invite the complainant to a meeting to discuss concerns. Following this meeting, they will consider the complaint and provide a response in a written reply.

This policy will be reviewed by SAVVY Theatre Company every 2 years, or earlier if there are changes to legislation or an incident relating to these policies. Copies of this document are made available to all employed facilitators (paid or voluntary), group members of SAVVY Theatre Company and their parent/carers via our website and on request.

Any questions or concerns regarding this policy should be forwarded to:

**SAVVY Theatre Company
Fairfield Halls
Park Lane, Croydon, CR9 1DG**

Charity Number: 1179492
Company Number: 6357764

www.savvytheatre.co.uk