Karate & Dance Fed Ltd - 17150545

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KARATE & Dance FEDERATION

Anti-Bullying & Peer-on-Peer Behaviour Policy

Kindness – Diversity - Friendship

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1. Policy Statement

Karate & Dance Federation Ltd (KDF) is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and respectful environment in which bullying, harassment, intimidation and harmful peer behaviour are not normalised or dismissed as ordinary banter. Every student has the right to participate in KDF activity without being repeatedly targeted, humiliated, excluded, threatened or harmed by another student.

KDF recognises that conflict, disagreement and friendship difficulties are a normal part of childhood and adolescence and do not automatically amount to bullying. Staff must therefore distinguish between ordinary relational conflict, isolated inappropriate behaviour, persistent bullying and peer-on-peer behaviour that reaches a safeguarding threshold.

KDF will respond proportionately, protect the student experiencing harm and support the student displaying harmful behaviour to understand the impact of their actions and develop safer ways of relating to others.

KDF's approach reflects its values of Kindness, Diversity, Friendship and supports the KDF Promise: Every Student, Every Session, Every Time.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a consistent approach to preventing, identifying and responding to bullying and harmful peer behaviour across KDF Karate and KDF Dance.

It explains how KDF distinguishes bullying from disagreement, how concerns should be reported, how incidents are assessed, when safeguarding procedures must be used and how restorative practice, behaviour support and protective measures may be applied.

The policy also covers physical, verbal, relational, discriminatory, sexual and online forms of peer-on-peer harm.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all students participating in KDF activities, including Early Years students, SEND students, junior and senior students and young people undertaking junior coaching or leadership roles.

It applies during lessons, breaks, events, performances, gradings, competitions, external activities, online communication and any other context where peer behaviour materially affects a student's safety or participation in KDF.

Relevant expectations also apply where bullying begins outside KDF but has a clear impact within KDF provision.

4. Definition of Bullying

Bullying is behaviour that is intended to hurt, intimidate, humiliate or exclude another person and is usually repeated over time or involves a clear imbalance of power.

Bullying may be physical, verbal, relational, discriminatory, sexual or online. It may be carried out by one student or by a group.

A single serious incident may not technically fit every definition of bullying but may still require significant behaviour or safeguarding action.

5. Conflict Is Not Always Bullying

Not every disagreement between students is bullying.

Two students of broadly equal power may argue, fall out, disagree or respond badly to one another without either establishing an ongoing pattern of domination or targeting.

Staff should avoid labelling all conflict as bullying because doing so can obscure the different support needed for ordinary disputes, repeated bullying and safeguarding concerns.

6. Power Imbalance

Bullying often involves an imbalance of power, which may arise from age, size, confidence, social status, friendship group, popularity, disability, communication ability or access to online platforms.

A student may also be targeted because they are perceived as less able to defend themselves or less likely to report the behaviour.

Staff should consider both obvious and less visible forms of power when assessing concerns.

7. Physical Bullying

Physical bullying may include hitting, kicking, pushing, tripping, damaging belongings, throwing objects, deliberately excluding someone from safe access or using physical presence to intimidate.

Physical conduct that creates significant injury or risk may require action under the Aggressive, Volatile & Challenging Behaviour Policy.

Repeated physical targeting may also become a safeguarding concern.

8. Verbal Bullying

Verbal bullying may include insults, threats, name-calling, mocking, humiliation, repeated teasing or deliberately cruel comments.

Staff should consider tone, context, repetition, impact and whether the behaviour targets a known vulnerability.

A comment described as “just a joke” may still constitute bullying where it is repeated, harmful or clearly unwelcome.

9. Relational and Social Bullying

Relational bullying may involve deliberately excluding someone, spreading rumours, manipulating friendships, encouraging others not to speak to a student or repeatedly creating situations designed to isolate them.

This form of bullying can be difficult to identify because there may be no visible injury.

Staff should take patterns of social exclusion seriously where they are deliberate and harmful.

10. Online and Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying may occur through messaging apps, social media, gaming platforms, group chats, image sharing or other digital spaces.

It may include harassment, humiliating posts, impersonation, threats, deliberate exclusion, spreading rumours, sharing private information or manipulating images.

Where online conduct affects a student's welfare or participation in KDF, KDF may take proportionate action even if the content was created outside normal session times.

11. Discriminatory Bullying

Bullying linked to disability, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, nationality or another actual or perceived characteristic will be treated seriously.

This may include slurs, mocking accents, disability-related taunting, racist comments, sexist behaviour, homophobic or transphobic abuse, religious hostility or deliberate exclusion based on identity.

Such behaviour may engage safeguarding and equality procedures as well as ordinary behaviour management.

12. SEND-Related Bullying

Students with SEND may be particularly vulnerable to bullying because of communication needs, social differences, sensory needs or assumptions made by peers.

KDF will not tolerate mocking of stimming, communication differences, sensory supports, regulation breaks, assistive tools or reasonable adjustments.

Students should be taught that different support does not mean unfair treatment.

13. Appearance and Body-Based Bullying

Comments about body shape, weight, size, clothing, appearance or physical development may cause significant harm and are not acceptable where used to shame or target another student.

This is particularly important in karate and dance environments where students may already feel self-conscious about performance or appearance.

Staff should model neutral, respectful language and avoid reinforcing body-based comparison.

14. Sexualised Peer Behaviour

Sexual comments, unwanted touching, sexual jokes, coercive behaviour, sexualised name-calling, image requests or pressure for sexual content must not be dismissed as ordinary banter.

Such behaviour may constitute peer-on-peer abuse and should be considered under safeguarding procedures where harmful, coercive, persistent or developmentally inappropriate.

The student experiencing harm should not be blamed for previous friendships, clothing, communication or behaviour.

15. Child-on-Child Abuse

Some peer behaviour may move beyond bullying into child-on-child abuse.

This may include serious physical assault, sexual violence, sexual harassment, coercion, image-based abuse, severe intimidation, initiation-type behaviour or repeated discriminatory abuse.

Where the safeguarding threshold may be met, KDF will apply its Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and Safeguarding Roles, Reporting & Responding to Concerns Policy.

16. Group Behaviour

Bullying may involve several students reinforcing one another's behaviour.

A group dynamic can increase the power imbalance and make it more difficult for the targeted student to speak up.

KDF will consider the role of each student individually rather than assuming all group members hold equal responsibility.

17. Bystanders

Students who witness bullying may feel unsure, fearful or pressured to join in.

KDF will encourage students to seek adult help and reinforce that reporting harmful behaviour is not "snitching".

Where appropriate, bystanders may also need support to understand how silence or encouragement can contribute to harm.

18. Reporting by Students

Students should be encouraged to tell a trusted adult if they are being bullied or are worried about someone else.

Reports should be taken seriously and should not be dismissed because the student cannot provide perfect detail or because no adult directly witnessed the incident.

Students should understand that adults may need to share information in order to keep people safe.

19. Reporting by Parents and Guardians

Parents and guardians should report bullying concerns to KDF through the appropriate communication route.

KDF asks families to avoid confronting another child or parent directly, as this can escalate conflict and make resolution more difficult.

Reports should focus on what has happened, when it occurred and how the student has been affected.

20. Staff Observations

Staff do not need to wait for a formal complaint before acting.

Repeated teasing, exclusion, power imbalance, fear of a particular student, changes in attendance or sudden distress may indicate bullying even where the targeted student has not yet disclosed it.

Professional curiosity is particularly important for students who find it difficult to communicate concerns.

21. Initial Response

The first priority is to ensure that the student experiencing harm feels safe and listened to.

Staff should gather enough information to understand the concern without conducting an unnecessarily prolonged or adversarial investigation.

Where immediate risk exists, protective measures should be implemented before attempting wider restorative work.

22. Assessing the Concern

KDF should consider the frequency, seriousness, power imbalance, intent, impact, age of students, SEND needs and whether the behaviour appears to be escalating.

The assessment should distinguish between isolated conflict, repeated bullying, serious aggression and safeguarding concern.

This distinction helps ensure that the response is proportionate and effective.

23. Immediate Protective Measures

Protective measures may include increased supervision, temporary separation, changes to seating or grouping, changes to arrival or collection arrangements or additional staff awareness.

These measures should protect the targeted student without unnecessarily excluding them from normal activity.

Where possible, the burden of change should not fall entirely on the student who has been harmed.

24. Restorative Practice

KDF may use restorative practice where both students are sufficiently regulated and the situation is suitable.

A restorative conversation should help students understand what happened, who was affected, what needs to be repaired and how future behaviour can change.

Restorative work must never be used to pressure a student who has experienced serious harm into immediate reconciliation.

25. When Restorative Practice Is Not Appropriate

Restorative practice may be inappropriate where there is a significant power imbalance, serious safeguarding concern, sexual harm, intimidation, fear of retaliation or where the targeted student does not feel safe participating.

In such cases, protective and safeguarding measures should take priority.

Restorative work may be considered later if appropriate and genuinely voluntary.

26. Supporting the Student Experiencing Bullying

The student should be reassured that they are not responsible for being targeted.

KDF should consider whether they require additional check-ins, a trusted adult, changes to grouping, regulation support or other temporary adjustments.

The aim should be to restore their sense of safety and belonging within KDF.

27. Supporting the Student Displaying Bullying Behaviour

A student who bullies others should be held accountable while also being supported to understand why the behaviour occurred and how to change it.

Behaviour may reflect insecurity, poor social understanding, peer pressure, previous experiences of bullying, SEND-related difficulties or wider safeguarding issues.

Support does not remove accountability, but punishment alone may fail to prevent recurrence.

28. Individual Behaviour Support

Where bullying or harmful peer behaviour is repeated, KDF may create an individual behaviour support plan.

The plan may identify triggers, supervision needs, peer-group risks, communication strategies, restorative actions and clear expectations for continued participation.

Parents or guardians should normally be involved where concerns are significant or ongoing.

29. Tiger Retreat and Leopard Retreat

The Tiger Retreat and Leopard Retreat may be used to support emotional regulation where a student is distressed by peer conflict or has become dysregulated following an incident.

These spaces must not be used as punishment for either the student experiencing harm or the student displaying harmful behaviour.

Their purpose remains regulation and safe re-engagement.

30. Reward Station and Positive Peer Behaviour

KDF's Reward Station should reinforce the opposite of bullying by recognising students who demonstrate Kindness, Diversity and Friendship.

One student may be recognised for each value during relevant sessions, with emphasis on specific behaviours such as including others, helping a peer, respecting differences or showing genuine support.

The Reward Station should reinforce positive peer culture rather than become a popularity contest.

31. Sensei Spots and Dancing Dodo

Within Early Years provision, Sensei Spots in karate and Dancing Dodo in dance may be used to recognise positive friendship, sharing, kindness and inclusion.

These mascots help younger children understand prosocial behaviour in developmentally appropriate ways.

Recognition should focus on simple, meaningful examples rather than technical achievement.

32. Consequences

Consequences for bullying should be proportionate to the seriousness and persistence of the behaviour.

They may include verbal correction, restorative work, increased supervision, loss of access to a specific activity, behaviour plans, temporary separation or formal warning.

Serious or repeated bullying may lead to suspension or membership review.

33. Suspension

Temporary suspension may be considered where bullying is serious, persistent or creates an ongoing risk that cannot be managed safely within ordinary arrangements.

Suspension should allow KDF time to establish a safer return plan rather than operate solely as punishment.

The decision should take account of SEND, safeguarding and equality considerations.

34. Ending Membership

In rare cases, KDF may end a student's membership where serious or repeated peer harm continues despite reasonable intervention and the risk to others cannot be managed safely.

Ending membership does not remove any safeguarding duty to report or share concerns where required.

Such decisions should be proportionate and documented.

35. Retaliation

Retaliation against a student who reports bullying or participates in an investigation is prohibited.

Threats, exclusion or further targeting because someone has spoken to staff should be treated as an escalation.

Staff should monitor for retaliation after serious concerns are raised.

36. False or Malicious Reports

A report that cannot be substantiated is not automatically false or malicious.

Students may provide incomplete accounts, misunderstand events or struggle to explain what happened.

Where evidence shows that a student deliberately fabricated an allegation to harm another person, KDF will address that behaviour proportionately while still considering the underlying reasons.

37. Confidentiality

KDF will not disclose another student's confidential information simply to reassure a family that action has been taken.

Parents may be told that the concern has been addressed and that appropriate measures are in place, but specific sanctions, diagnoses or safeguarding information about another child will normally remain confidential.

Staff should also avoid discussing incidents casually with unrelated families.

38. Parent Conflict

KDF will not encourage parents to resolve student bullying through direct confrontation with one another.

Where parent conflict emerges from a peer issue, KDF should manage communication through appropriate staff routes.

Aggressive or threatening adult behaviour will be addressed under the Student, Parent, Guardian & Visitor Code of Conduct and Aggressive, Volatile & Challenging Behaviour Policy.

39. Online Evidence

Where cyberbullying is reported, relevant screenshots, messages or links may assist staff in understanding the concern.

Families and students should avoid repeatedly redistributing harmful content unnecessarily.

Sexual images or other potentially illegal material must not be forwarded to staff groups or other families and should instead be handled through safeguarding procedures.

40. Social Media and Group Chats

Students should not use social media, group chats or messaging platforms to exclude, humiliate or target others.

KDF may take action where off-site group-chat behaviour has a clear and significant impact on KDF relationships or student welfare.

The Online Safety, Photography, Filming & Digital Communication Policy should be applied alongside this policy.

41. Physical Aggression

Where bullying includes significant physical aggression, staff should immediately prioritise safety.

The Aggressive, Volatile & Challenging Behaviour Policy should be followed where physical risk is substantial.

Physical injury may also require first aid, accident recording and safeguarding review.

42. Safeguarding Referrals

Where peer behaviour indicates serious harm, sexual abuse, exploitation, significant violence or another safeguarding concern, KDF may refer to children's social care or police as appropriate.

A child displaying harmful behaviour may themselves require safeguarding support.

Safeguarding and behaviour management should therefore be coordinated rather than treated as entirely separate systems.

43. Police Involvement

Police involvement may be appropriate where behaviour includes serious assault, credible threats, sexual offences, stalking, blackmail, significant criminal damage or another potentially criminal act.

The age of the students involved should inform the response but does not prevent police contact where risk is serious.

KDF should not attempt to manage potentially criminal peer abuse solely through internal consequences.

44. Early Years Peer Conflict

Young children are still learning emotional regulation, sharing, boundaries and social communication.

Early Years peer conflict should therefore be approached primarily through teaching, modelling, redirection and restorative language appropriate to the child's development.

Persistent targeted harm should still be taken seriously and should not be dismissed solely because of age.

45. SEND and Communication

Students with communication difficulties may struggle to report bullying clearly or may show distress through behaviour rather than words.

Staff should use accessible language, visual supports, trusted adults or other communication methods as appropriate.

KDF should also avoid assuming that a SEND student displaying unusual social behaviour is intentionally bullying without considering communication and understanding.

46. Staff Training

Staff should understand how to distinguish bullying, conflict, aggression and safeguarding concerns.

Training should include discriminatory bullying, online harm, child-on-child abuse, sexual harassment, SEND considerations and restorative approaches.

Staff should also know when the seriousness of behaviour requires escalation beyond ordinary behaviour management.

47. Monitoring and Recording

Significant bullying concerns should be recorded factually and reviewed for patterns.

Records should consider repeated targeting, locations, times, peer groups, online activity and whether previous interventions were effective.

Monitoring should support prevention and early intervention rather than simply create an incident count.

48. Kindness, Diversity and Friendship

Kindness means treating others with care and challenging behaviour that deliberately harms or humiliates another person. Diversity means respecting difference and actively rejecting discriminatory bullying or exclusion. Friendship means building safe relationships based on mutual respect rather than control, pressure or fear.

These values should be visible in everyday coaching and reinforced through the Reward Station, restorative practice, Sensei Spots and Dancing Dodo.

49. The KDF Promise

This policy supports the KDF Promise: Every Student, Every Session, Every Time. Every student should be able to attend KDF without fearing repeated bullying, humiliation or peer intimidation.

The Promise also requires KDF to support students who display harmful behaviour to learn, repair relationships and return successfully where this can be achieved safely.

Where peer behaviour reaches a safeguarding threshold, the protection of students will take priority over preserving ordinary group arrangements.

50. Related Policies and Review

This policy should be read alongside KDF's Behaviour Management Policy, Aggressive, Volatile & Challenging Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy, Safeguarding Roles, Reporting & Responding to Concerns Policy, Student, Parent, Guardian & Visitor Code of Conduct, Online Safety, Photography, Filming & Digital Communication Policy, SEND Policy, Early Years Policy, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion & Equal Opportunities Policy, Disability & Reasonable Adjustments Policy and relevant complaints and incident-reporting procedures.

The policy will normally be reviewed annually, but earlier review may take place following a serious peer-on-peer safeguarding incident, repeated bullying pattern, significant cyberbullying concern or evidence that existing interventions are not effective.

KDF will continue to develop a culture in which bullying is challenged early, peer conflict is handled proportionately and students learn to build relationships based on Kindness, Diversity, Friendship.