



British Overseas School Policy: Bullying and Harassment

A. Introduction

Bullying in ANY form is completely unacceptable in the community at British Overseas School. We are all committed to fostering a positive environment and a culture of inclusion. The culture of our school promotes learning and personal growth. We are all entitled to feel safe, confident and valued. Everyone is entitled to work and achieve at their optimum level.

It is important that we all realise behaviour that involves harassment, victimisation or bullying of any form between individuals, or between individual groups and individuals, is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in any part of the school.

The British Overseas School is dedicated to creating an environment in which all of its members feel safe, valued and supported. To demonstrate our commitment to this we have developed a Behavioural policy that addresses each of the three major components of our population: Students, Parents and Staff.

B. Definitions of Bullying

Bullying is behaviour that is deliberately intended to hurt, threaten or frighten another person or group of people. It is usually unprovoked and may continue for a long period of time. It always reflects an imbalance and abuse of power.

C. Effects of bullying

Bullying can:

- Produce feelings of powerlessness and isolation
- Undermine self- esteem leading to feelings of worthlessness, betrayal and negatively affecting the formation of positive relationships
- Affect attitudes to and performance in school, including absence, withdrawal or low levels of participation

- Result in anxiety and depression, physical illness or psychosomatic complaints

D. Forms of Bullying

Bullying manifests in a variety of forms. For example:

- Physical bullying - pushing, shoving, jostling, gestures, theft, invading someone's personal space or damage to property, assault. The main motive is to demonstrate power or create fear
- Verbal bullying - name calling, offensive language, nasty teasing, spreading rumours, messages via mobile phone and email, picking on individuals because of their race, ethnicity, gender or religion
- Victimisation - malicious accusations, spreading rumours, exclusion from social groups, ostracisation of individuals, repeated exclusion
- Sexual bullying - touching, brushing against another person in a sexual manner, sexually oriented jokes, drawing of or writings about, someone's body and commenting upon someone's morals
- Online bullying – through social media especially, pupils can continue to bully using their cell phones, tablets or laptops. Particularly insidious because the bully goes home with you.

Bullying can often be motivated by or originate from a pupil's:

- Appearance
- Religion
- Race or skin colour
- Gender
- Sexual orientation
- Sports ability
- Performance at school

Bullying and harassment can occur:

- Between students
- Between staff and students – Bullying and harassment of a student by a staff member or of a staff member by a student

- Between students and parents –Bullying and harassment of a student by a parent/guardian or a parent/guardian by a student
- Between parents/guardians and staff –Bullying and harassment of a parent/guardian by a staff member or of a staff member by a parent/guardian.

The School endeavours to provide a safe and secure environment for everyone by actively implementing the policy through classroom activities, tutorials, staff and parent education.

E. School Policy

The School's Anti Bullying Policy is underpinned by a whole community awareness of the procedures for identifying, reporting and taking action in the wake of incidents of bullying.

We regularly reiterate the importance of students informing teachers and parents about all allegations of bullying. These are investigated and, if confirmed, are acted upon according to agreed sanctions and procedures. Our curriculum and ongoing communications emphasise this general practice.

Students, parents and staff have the right to be treated fairly by fellow staff, parents and students regardless of gender, sexual orientation, body shape, or race. No member of our community should feel afraid that they may be harassed or degraded.

- The school community rejects bullying and harassment in any form
- Bullying and harassment is dealt with seriously and in a timely manner
- Students are actively encouraged to support each other and report when possible all instances of bullying and harassment. Bullying and harassment is too important not to report.
- Both the people who bully and are bullied, are offered appropriate intervention and support. This may include family involvement, counselling and mediation. The school reserves the right to discipline, which may include suspending or expelling any student whose behaviour is considered unacceptable.
- Examples of acceptable behaviour are recognized and praised.
- The school will educate students about the effects of bullying and harassment and encourage the peer group to be aware and ask them to help the victim.
- The School seeks to encourage the bully as an individual to accept responsibility and to understand why their behaviour is damaging and unacceptable

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