



Anti-Bullying Policy

Introduction

In accordance with our overt endorsement of the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#), the spirit of our School mission and the guidelines established in our School Behaviour Policy, as well as the unwritten rules of civilized behaviour, all dictate that there should be no place in the School for bullying. All our actions and teaching should reinforce the principles of thought and consideration of others; tolerance; equality of opportunity; and the recognition and acceptance of others. It is readily recognised, however, that in any community, human nature is such that there are likely to be times when these principles are breached. Universal and constant vigilance are necessary from all staff so that potential bullying is noticed and acted upon immediately.

It is also a legal obligation, as set out in the school's Agencies Reporting Policy, that incidents are reported to the correct national or local agencies, who will liaise with school authorities with regard to next steps. In this regard, the age of the child (under 13, under 16, over 16) will have a critical bearing on processes and outcomes.

Aims and Objectives

The aims of the policy are:

- To ensure that our children are provided with a safe and secure learning environment
- To ensure that all children are aware of the psychological damage that bullying can inflict on others
- To ensure that staff, students and parents are all aware of what constitutes bullying and what does not.
- To ensure that staff raise awareness amongst our children that bullying, threats and violence are not acceptable in society and in our school community (including children and parents). Staff are Required to develop their awareness of anti-bullying strategies through training.
- To ensure that the community is aware that incidents perceived as minor might constitute part of a bigger picture, and should still be reported to those who might identify a pattern.
- To support children who are being bullied and to help them feel safe again, to rebuild their confidence and self-esteem
- This policy aims to produce a **consistent** school response to any bullying incidents that may occur, whether within the school environment, or outside it.

Definitions

What is bullying?

«Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online. » *ANTI-BULLYING ALLIANCE*

Definition of bullying

There are generally three components of bullying:

1. **Repeated.** The action of the bully is generally a repeated action, occurring time after time.
2. **Intentional.** The target does not knowingly provoke the bully and, as such, the bully is intentional with their behaviour/actions.
3. **Power Imbalance.** In bullying situations, there is a real or perceived power imbalance between the two parties. This imbalance can be physical strength, access to information, or even popularity.

Peer conflict

In contrast, "normal" peer conflicts differ from bullying situations in the following ways:

1. The children involved are of equal power or are friends.
2. The conflict that occurs is occasional or often accidental.
3. There is an equal emotional reaction to the conflict with both children and power or control is not being sought.

Having disagreements with peers is a normal developmental feature of childhood; bullying, while it may be a common childhood experience, should not be tolerated.

Conflict, though unacceptable, should not be regarded as bullying, though they will nevertheless be addressed by staff **and logged on CPOMS**, with the possibility of considering whether patterns are being established.

Signs of bullying:

Each individual student who has been bullied or is bullying others will respond and act differently. A student's behaviours and moods can also change for a variety of reasons.

However, the following are some signs that may indicate a student is experiencing bullying.

Signs a teacher may notice:

1. becomes aggressive and unreasonable
2. starts getting into fights/arguments
3. refuses to talk about what is wrong
4. school grades begin to fall.
5. student is often alone or excluded from friendship groups at school
6. student is a frequent target for teasing, mimicking or ridicule at school
7. change in the student's ability or willingness to speak up in class and appears insecure or frightened.
8. change in attendance patterns.

Signs a parent may report/notice:

1. doesn't want to go to school
2. changes their method or route to school or are frightened of walking to school
3. changes in sleep patterns
4. changes in eating patterns
5. frequent tears, anger, mood swings
6. unexplained bruises, cuts, scratches
7. missing or damaged belongings or clothes
8. arriving home hungry.

Procedures for staff:

Staff are obliged to take all incidents seriously, log, report and discuss incidents and to distinguish between isolated moment of conflict and the possibility of bullying when possible.

In all instances, staff must act promptly, and must never ignore or dismiss incidents.

Staff should remain objective and helpful, taking reports from all parties involved.

In all cases, incidents should be recorded on CPOMS, and the appropriate Primary class teacher, Secondary tutor and Pastoral Coordinator informed. Parents should also be informed by the Pastoral Coordinator, who will also decide whether to escalate the incident to the Pastoral and Safeguarding Lead, depending on the nature of the incident.

In the event that an incident requires a more formal investigation, a person or persons will be nominated by the Pastoral and Safeguarding Lead in order to carry out this investigation. In all instances where bullying is defined as having occurred, the school is obliged to report it to outside agencies in line with its Agencies Reporting Policy.

In circumstances where it is felt that bullying has not occurred, and that mediation is the best course of action, this will be facilitated, but the incident will remain logged for future reference.

Disciplinary Action in line with the school's range of consequences will be taken where appropriate.

Procedures for parents

Schools are more effective when parents report incidents that concern them and support the school's efforts to deal with them. Even if a child downplays an incident, it is helpful to the school to know of it. Bullying thrives when information or reporting is suppressed.

If you hear of any incident with which you feel uncomfortable.

1. Make a note based on what your child has told you
2. Register your concern by contacting your child's Primary Form Teacher or Secondary Tutor.
3. Recognise that the school's subsequent investigations may require time, and outcomes involving third parties may remain confidential.
4. Stay in touch with the child's teacher or tutor and let them know if problems continue.
5. Support your child.

Procedures for Students

Encouraging reporting of bullying helps us to gain a more accurate picture of bullying or unkindness in our community. You have the right to feel safe and be safe. Here are some ideas about what you can do if someone is bullying you:

- Talk to someone you trust about it. This could be your tutor or any member of staff. Try to stay positive. Focus on things you do well.
- If you are not comfortable speaking to an adult:

Raise your concerns by speaking to a Be Kind Ambassador, who will be able to advise you.

In addition, you can raise your concerns through the SHARP SYSTEM. This enables anonymous reporting and is passed directly to the Pastoral and Safeguarding Team at OBS.

- If you are being bullied online, do not respond to it as it usually just makes it worse. Protect yourself online by unfriending them or using privacy settings to block them.

Prevention

OBS will incorporate all of the following routinely in its practices in order to educate about, and to prevent bullying at school and amongst its students outside school. OBS will continue to liaise with outside agencies such as No Bully Portugal and CIS and will review its policies and practices on an annual basis as a minimum and more frequently if required.

Awareness sessions with parents

The school holds frequent sessions with parents to inform them of the nature of its anti-bullying policies, its disciplinary policies and of its obligations under the terms of the Agencies Reporting Policy, as well as its approach to all matters related to bullying.

Be kind ambassadors

Through Be Kind Ambassadors, the school promotes a culture that does seeks to minimise bullying. Be Kind Ambassadors receive training, are encouraged to make themselves available to fellow students in the event of need, and are encouraged to contribute to the school's anti-bullying policies and practices.

Interventions

When required, the Pastoral and Safeguarding Lead and the DDSL will run interventions or mediations as appropriate.

Inclusion Prefects

The school annually appoints inclusion prefects amongst its Form 12 students, who in turn are tasked with developing the profile of the role, and promoting the school's values of inclusion throughout the school. Inclusion prefects are invited to advise the Senior Leadership Team on all matters related to inclusion, which might include incidents of bullying.

Tutor meetings

Tutor meetings, both in the morning and on other occasions, are used as an opportunity to brief students on behavioural matters, which may include bullying, and are used as a means for students to feed back on issues that concern them more generally; in turn, such matters may be referred up through the student council, though it is hoped that matters of concern would be raised more readily than this.

PSHE and assemblies

The school routinely addresses matters related to inclusion and its anti-bullying procedures through assemblies, either run by staff or students. Outside speakers (CIS, Escola Segura) are also invited to speak to students, staff and parents.

Vigilance on duty

Teachers are routinely reminded about particular areas or groups requiring specific vigilance. Prefects are also briefed if necessary.

Liaison with outside agencies and education about students' responsibilities under the law.

Useful references:

www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/

www.bullyonline.org/index.htm

www.bullying.co.uk

www.bullying-in-school.info

www.teachernet.gov.uk

www.childline.org.uk

www.nobully.com

www.bbc.net.uk/schools/bullying

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