

<b>Name of Policy:</b>	Anti-Bullying Policy
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<b>Applicable to:</b>	All staff, student, parents and governors
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# The BRIT School

## Anti-Bullying Policy

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# Introduction

The BRIT School aims to develop students' achievements academically, vocationally, socially and morally so that they leave the School as independent, co-operative, responsible and creative young people with a lifelong interest and ability in learning, the arts, technology and self-development. The School is committed to supporting students in achieving these aims by creating a secure and safe environment for individual students and allowing them the opportunity to develop their own identity without fear of being bullied.

## Objectives of this Policy

- All teaching and support staff, students and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All teaching and support staff should know what the School Policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All students and parents should know what the School Policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.

### Links with other Policies

This policy is closely linked with the following policies: Behaviour, Child Protection and Safeguarding & Procedures, Online Safety, Acceptable Use, Anti-Racism and Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policies.

## What is Bullying?

There is no legal definition of bullying, however, it's usually defined as behaviour that is:

- Repeated.
- Intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally.
- Often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation.

### The BRIT School defines bullying as:

'A range of unacceptable behaviours that are intended to hurt, intimidate, frighten, harm, humiliate, undermine, or exclude. Bullying is often characterised by being repeated over time and difficult for the sufferer to defend themselves against.

### It is important to recognise that bullying behaviours can take many forms, including:

**Verbal:** name calling, insults, jokes, offensive language or comments including graffiti, threats, innuendo, teasing, taunting, bragging, ridicule.

**Non-verbal:** staring, gesturing, manipulating behaviour through intimidation, body language, invasion of personal space, spitting, stalking, refusing to touch, playing mind games.

**Physical:** unprovoked assault, such as prodding, pushing, hitting or kicking, 'rushing/steaming', shaking, inappropriate touching, blocking the way, contact involving objects used as weapons.

**Social:** humiliation through exclusion or rejection by peer group, 'blanking', spreading rumours, gossiping,

peer pressure to conform, using difference as a dividing factor.

**Cyber/Online:** via the internet, email or mobile phone, e.g. text messages, phone calls, pictures/video clips, chat rooms, instant messaging or posting on message boards or websites.

**Provocative:** inciting others to behave in a threatening, racist, sexist or homophobic manner, bringing in provocative literature or propaganda.

**Other:** extortion, hiding or interfering with personal property, forcing others to take part in embarrassing or humiliating acts.

Some students are more susceptible to being bullied for a wide variety of reasons, usually because they are perceived as being 'different' – for example physically, or in relation to learning, language, status, sexuality or family background - by other students. All staff need to be particularly vigilant for incidents of bullying involving more vulnerable groups.

## Reporting Bullying

Students are advised to report bullying at School in the first place and as soon as possible.

Some forms of bullying are illegal and should be reported to the police. These include:

- Violence or assault
- Theft
- Repeated harassment or intimidation, for example name calling, threats and abusive phone calls, emails or text messages.
- Hate crimes.

### **Call 999 if you or someone else is in immediate danger**

School staff will deal with bullying in different ways, depending on how serious the bullying is. They might deal with it in School, for example by disciplining bullies, or they might report it to the police or social services.

The Principal has the legal power to make sure students behave outside of the School premises. This includes bullying that happens anywhere off the School premises, for example on public transport or in a town centre or online.

Any discipline must take account of Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) that the students involved may have.

Although sometimes occurring between two individuals in isolation, it quite often takes place in the presence of others. Bullying can seriously damage a young person's confidence and sense of self-worth, and they will often feel that they are at fault in some way. It can lead to serious and prolonged emotional damage for an individual. Those who conduct the bullying or witness the bullying can cause emotional harm, and the impact on parents and School staff can be significant.

If students are reporting cyberbullying they are advised to keep a record of the date and time of the calls, emails or texts and not to delete any messages received.

# How we deal with bullying at The BRIT School

At The BRIT School we take bullying seriously. Students and parents should be assured that they are supported when bullying is reported. Bullying will not be tolerated.

Staff encourage students to talk about their experiences. It may help the student just to be aware that someone else knows. All staff are aware of their safeguarding duties and are able to hear student concerns. Incidents are referred to the appropriate member of staff through the processes set out in the Behaviour Policy.

## Possible signs that a student may be being bullied

- A student may appear unusually withdrawn and uncommunicative.
- A student may be unable to concentrate in class.
- A student's behaviour may change e.g. a student's participation in the curriculum and other activities may be lowered.
- A student may experience psychosomatic complaints.
- A student may have unexplained cuts/bruises – or give unconvincing explanations.
- There may be unaccountable and repeatable damage or loss to bags, books, equipment and money.
- There may be intermittent and long-term absences from School.
- A student may be truant from School.

### **What can I do if I am being bullied?**

Bullying can occur in many situations such as Schools, clubs and even the workplace. So, remember you are never alone; there are people from different ages and different backgrounds who have experienced bullying at some time in their life. There are lots of people and organisations linked to the School who are here to support you.

- Don't suffer in silence – bullying thrives when people don't speak out.
- Remember bullying is never okay and no one deserves to be bullied.
- The BRIT School celebrates your individuality – be proud of who you are.

Find a member of staff that you can talk to. This member of staff will probably be able to help, but your tutor is probably the best person to see in the first instance.

- Tell a parent.
- Tell a friend who you can trust.
- Tell anyone that you feel you can trust.
- Give as complete an account as you can of what has happened to you.
- Are there friends, classmates or witnesses?

### **Steps that you can take to challenge bullying:**

- Try not to show a bully that you are upset – this might be the reaction they are looking for.
- Be strong and try to show confidence. If you are uncomfortable in a situation, walk away.
- If you feel nervous, you can go to a safe place where you feel more comfortable; we suggest the School library, a teacher's classroom or simply sitting with some nice students.
- Don't be pressured into fighting back either physically or through swearing or insulting.
- Language – this is likely to make the problem worse. Instead you should walk away and go straight to a member of staff.

You could speak to your tutor, a member of the Key Stage 4 team, or one of your teachers as they are all trained to support you, but remember that all staff at The BRIT School take bullying very seriously and will listen to you and take appropriate action, so if you'd like to speak to someone else, you can. It is helpful to provide staff with examples of what's been happening.

**What you do if you see a student being bullied:**

- Find a member of staff and tell them exactly what has happened.
- Challenge the students responsible if you feel that you are able or it is appropriate.
- Record the names and tutor groups of the bullies.

**Online Safety**

The rapid development of, and widespread access to technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside School. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click.

The wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 give teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones.

(DfE Report, Preventing and tackling bullying 2013)

We take 'Cyber Safety' very seriously and this is part of our PPD programme. Students are educated about the benefits of the internet and Social Media sites such as Facebook, Google +, Twitter and so forth. Students are also taught about the dangers of these sites and the importance of responsibility and maturity when using them.

Every computer terminal has a 'report' button that students can use to report concerns regarding online content viewed at School.

# Tips for parents/carers from Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP)

- Be involved in your child's online life. For many of today's young people there is no line between the online and offline worlds. Young people use the internet to socialise and grow and, just as you guide and support them offline, you should be there for them online too. Talk to them about what they're doing, if they know you understand they are more likely to approach you if they need support. Tips on how to discuss tricky issues with your child.
- Watch Thinkuknow films to learn more. The Thinkuknow programme has films and advice for children from 5 all the way to 16. Your child may have seen these at School, but they can also be a good tool for you to find out more about what young people do online and some of the potential risks.
- Keep up-to-date with your child's development online. Be inquisitive and interested in the new gadgets and sites that your child is using. It's important that as your child learns more, so do you.
- Set boundaries in the online world just as you would in the real world. Think about what they might see, what they share, who they talk to and how long they spend online. It is important to continue to discuss boundaries so that they evolve as your child's use of technology does.
- Know what connects to the internet and how. Nowadays even the TV connects to the internet. Your child will use all sorts of devices and gadgets; make sure you're aware of which ones can connect to the internet, such as their phone or games console. Also, find out how they are accessing the internet – is it your connection or a neighbour's Wifi? This will affect whether your safety settings are being applied.
- Consider the use of parental controls on devices that link to the internet, such as the TV, laptops, computers, games consoles and mobile phones. Parental controls are not just about locking and blocking, they are a tool to help you set appropriate boundaries as your child grows and develops. They are not the answer to your child's online safety, but they are a good start and are not as difficult to install as you might think. Service providers are working hard to make them simple, effective and user friendly. Find your service provider and learn how to set your controls.
- Emphasise that not everyone is who they say they are. Make sure your child knows never to meet up with someone they only know online without taking a trusted adult with them.
- Know what to do if something goes wrong. Just as in the offline world, you want to help your child when they need it. Therefore, it is important to know when and how to report any problem. What tools are there to help me keep my child safe?

There is a wealth of information, advice and online videos on the CEOP website

<https://www.ceopeducation.co.uk/parents/>

# What to look out for if you suspect your child is experiencing bullying

## **Signs and Symptoms:**

Many children and young people do not speak out when being bullied and may indicate by signs or behaviour that they are being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and should investigate if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from School.
- Doesn't want to go on the School/public bus.
- Begs to be driven to School.
- Change their usual routine.
- Is unwilling to go to School (School phobic).
- Begins to truant.
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence.
- Starts stammering.
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away.
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares.
- Uses excuses to miss School (headache, stomach ache etc.).
- Begins to suffer academically.
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged.
- Has possessions which are damaged or "go missing".
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bullies).
- Has dinner or other monies continually "lost".
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises or shows signs of being in a fight.
- Comes home starving (money/lunch has been stolen).
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable.
- Is bullying other children or siblings.
- Changes their eating habits (stops eating or over eats).
- Goes to bed earlier than usual.
- Is unable to sleep.
- Wets the bed.
- Is frightened to say what's wrong.
- Gives unlikely excuses for any of the above.
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone.
- Is nervous and jumpy when a text message or email is received.



# Where can parents and young people get help?

Croydon Education Welfare Service - ask the pastoral team for details of your Education Welfare Office.

## **Anti-bullying campaign**

Website:

[www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)

## **Childline**

Website:

[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

## **Croydon Anti Bullying Helpline**

Website: [Kidscape](http://Kidscape)

## **Stonewall**

Website: [www.stonewall.org.uk](http://www.stonewall.org.uk)

## **Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP)**

Website: <http://ceop.police.uk/>

# Getting offensive content taken down

If online content is offensive or inappropriate, and the person or people responsible are known, you need to ensure they understand why the material is unacceptable or offensive and request they remove it.

Most social networks have reporting mechanisms in place to report content which breaches their terms. If the person responsible has not been identified, or does not respond to requests to take down the material, the staff member should use the tools on the social networking site directly to make a report.

Some service providers will not accept complaints lodged by a third party. In cases of mobile phone abuse, where the person being bullied is receiving malicious calls and messages, the account holder will need to contact the provider directly.

Before you contact a service provider, it is important to be clear about where the content is; for example by taking a screenshot of the material that includes the web address. If you are requesting they take down material that is not illegal, be clear to point out how it breaks the site's terms and conditions. Where the material is suspected of being illegal you should contact the police directly.