

6b. Anti-Bullying and Cyber-Bullying Policy

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BIST Anti Bullying Policy is underpinned by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

All children and young people have the right to be protected from physical, emotional and mental violence; a right enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Children also have the right to learn, live, travel and play in a safe environment where they can thrive and achieve their full potential.

At BIST we believe that pupils should flourish and any behaviour which prevents pupils from feeling happy and secure should be dealt with immediately.

Aim

The aim of our anti-bullying policy is to ensure that all pupils at the British International School of Tunis (BIST) learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being mistreated or bullied. Bullying is anti-social behaviour, which affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated by any members of our community. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will pupils be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available at BIST.

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour which is repeated over time and in circumstances where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. The four main types of bullying are:

- Physical bullying (hitting, pushing, kicking, theft)
- Verbal bullying (name calling, discriminatory remarks)
- Indirect bullying (spreading rumours and personal attacks through written text often without the victim's overt knowledge)
- Cyberbullying (spreading rumours and personal attacks using internet-based communications technology)

Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or missing school. Pupils must be encouraged to report bullying in schools. Cyberbullying is often perpetrated both within and outside of School and is therefore an aspect of a child's life which parents must be aware of and vigilant with. All colleagues at BIST, whether academic, administration or support staff, are required and expected to be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with this policy and our overall responsibilities for safeguarding (Also refer to the Behaviour and Safeguarding Policies.)

Identifying and reporting concerns about bullying

All concerns about bullying will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. Pupils who are being bullied may often not report it. However, there may be changes in their behaviour, such as those mentioned above.

Pupils who are bullying others also need support, to help them understand and change their behaviour. Pupils who are aware of bullying ('bystanders') can be a powerful force in helping to address it and will be encouraged to do so in a safe way. However, bystanders who remain apathetic to incidents of bullying are acting in a manner which condones this behaviour and should expect to be disciplined. Apathy to any type of bullying from any member of the School community is not acceptable and will not be tolerated.

All pupils will be encouraged to report bullying by:

- Talking to a member of staff of their choice.
- Talking to a peer.
- Disclosing to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), school counsellor or the relevant Principal.

A member of staff, who believes that he or she is being bullied or harassed, will be encouraged to report it to the HR Department in line with the School Whistleblowing Policy.

Parents will be encouraged to report concerns about bullying and to support the School in tackling it. Trying to resolve bullying directly with the bully together with their families can prevent problems escalating.

Responding to reports of bullying

School: The school will take the following steps when dealing with concerns about bullying:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, it will be actioned immediately by the member of staff who has been made aware of it.
- A clear account of the concern will be recorded on the concern form (as used for Safeguarding purposes) and given to a senior member of staff: DSL, Vice/Assistant Principal or Principal.
- The investigating member of staff will interview everyone involved and keep a detailed record. This will be held in line with the School's Data Protection Policy in the Behaviour Modules of iSAMs.
- Parents and other relevant adults will be kept informed – this should preferably happen at one-to-one meetings, but parents may need to be informed via phone or email.
- Where bullying occurs outside School, any other relevant schools or agencies may be informed as required.
- Disciplinary measures may be used as appropriate and in consultation with all parties involved.
- Peer mentors may also be trained alongside relevant staff to listen to a pupil's concerns and recognise the signs of bullying.

Pupils and Staff: Staff who have been bullied will be supported by:

- The offer of an opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff of their choice.
- Providing reassurance that the bullying will be taken seriously and addressed.
- The offer of continuous support.
- Providing targeted support to help restore self-esteem and confidence.
- Support from the school counsellor.
- Help and advice on how to remove online material if needed.

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported via the offer of an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a teacher and/or Counsellor and/or member of the SLT who will:

- Reassuring the pupil.
- Offering continuous support.
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence through the restorative procedure clearly outlined in the Behaviour Policy.

Pupils who have bullied will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened.
- Discovering why the student became involved.
- Establishing wrongdoing and need to change.
- Informing parents to help change the attitude of the pupil.
- The use of special interventions where appropriate.

The following disciplinary steps may be taken:

- Official warnings to cease offending which may include a behaviour contract or IEP.
- Reflection time with a member of SLT (Primary.)
- Detention during breaks (Secondary.)
- Exclusion from activities, enrichment opportunities and certain areas of school premises.
- Group or one-to-one sessions to explain the negative effects of bullying to the perpetrators.
- Confiscation of access to online materials.
- Fixed-term school exclusion.
- Permanent school exclusion.
- Other consequences as per the Behaviour Policy.

Parents

- Most concerns about bullying will be resolved through discussion between home and school. However, where a parent feels their concerns have not been resolved, they are encouraged to use the formal Complaints Procedure. (Please refer to the Concerns and Complaints Policy.)
- Where a pupil participates in bullying others outside school, i.e., through the use of the internet at home, parents will be asked to work with the school in addressing their child's behaviour, for example, restricting/monitoring their use of the internet or mobile phone.

All incidents of bullying are recorded in writing and stored in the pupil's file on iSAMs.

Educating Pupils about Bullying

Everyone within the School community must know what bullying is and the consequences of bullying someone. This will be communicated throughout the Academic Year via PSHE lessons, assemblies, anti-bullying week and anti-bullying sessions. All staff will deal with complaints seriously, no matter how trivial they may seem.

Anyone has the capacity to bully. There are no completely reliable predisposition diagnoses. However, those who perceive themselves as low status within a community, institution or group may use bullying to artificially boost their status. Self-esteem is therefore a key factor in whether someone bullies or not. This puts equal opportunities and inclusion at the centre of all anti-bullying work in schools.

Anyone can be bullied: from pupil to parent, member of staff to volunteer. Those who are victims of bullying are often perceived by others to be different. Sometimes the perceived difference is individual to that person – shyness, physical appearance, clothing and possessions, accent, perceived inappropriate behaviour. At BIST, differences may and do originate from nationality, perceptions of ethnic and cultural backgrounds and family financial situations.

Within the curriculum the school will raise the awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in various programs such as class PSHE lessons, form time, assemblies and specialist teaching areas, as appropriate, in an attempt to eradicate such behaviour. Pupils will be given the opportunity to take part in programmes such as raising self-esteem through PSHE. Active supervision throughout the school day particularly at lunch and break times, at the beginning and end of the day is extremely useful in spotting bullying behaviour and the impact.