



British Junior Academy of Brussels

Anti-Bullying Policy

Revised January 2021



The British Junior Academy of Brussels

Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy is for the whole school including the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Please also refer to the following policies: Safeguarding, Promoting Positive Behaviour, e-Safety, SMSC Development and Staff Code of Conduct.

## 1.0 RATIONALE

At the British Junior Academy of Brussels, we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Every student has the right to be safe and happy in school and to be protected when they are feeling vulnerable. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable. When bullying occurs, all pupils should be able to tell someone and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

The purpose of this policy is to inform all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, parents and pupils, what bullying is, how seriously we take it and the school procedures when bullying is reported. Pupils and parents are assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported. Staff awareness is raised by regular discussion and training. The school is committed to acting to reduce the risk of bullying.

## 2.0 DEFINITION

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another pupil or group either physically or emotionally and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disability, or because a child is adopted or is a carer – it may occur directly or through cyber-technology (social websites, mobile phones, text message, photographs and email). It might be motivated by actual differences between children or perceived differences.

(DfE Preventing and Tackling Bullying, 2013)

Bullying can take many forms:

- cultural - discriminating on the grounds of a person's background or different views
- cyber - the use of technology, particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else
- disability - discriminating due to someone's physical or mental disability
- emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- homophobic - because of, or focusing on, the issue of sexuality
- physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- sexist - targeting another for being a member of a particular gender – impacting on the individual person
- social isolation - behaviour leading to social isolation, including gossip, spreading gossip and encouraging others to ignore another
- verbal - name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing

## 3.0 THE SERIOUSNESS OF BULLYING

Staff should always be alert to children who may be vulnerable and at risk from bullying.

### **3.1 General**

Bullying is unacceptable in any form and the school will always respond to concerns and take appropriate action. The impact of bullying, both physical and emotional, can have extremely serious consequences for a child, including psychological damage and loss of self-esteem. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; the Headteacher will make her own judgement about each specific case.

### **3.2 Some signs and symptoms**

A pupil may indicate by signs or patterns of behaviour that he/she is being bullied. He/she may:

- become frightened of walking to or from school
- be unwilling to go to school
- feel ill in the morning and complain of tummy/headaches
- begin to do poorly at school work
- become withdrawn, start stammering
- regularly have books or clothes destroyed or stolen
- become distressed, stop eating, overeat
- cry easily or have nightmares
- become tired and listless due to inability to sleep
- become disruptive or aggressive
- have possessions go 'missing'
- be frightened to say what is wrong
- have frequent injuries and unexplained bruises
- run away
- self-harm

These signs and behaviour traits could indicate other problems but bullying should be considered as a possibility and should be investigated.

## **4.0 PROCEDURE TO FOLLOW WHEN BULLYING IS REPORTED**

### **4.1 General procedures**

The procedure for dealing with any incident of poor behaviour is detailed in the school's Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy. Should an investigation into an alleged bullying incident be found not to be bullying, then this does not mean that the incident is closed. It will be dealt with under the Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy.

Children are often reluctant to report friends and classmates and victims of bullying can be particularly reluctant to come forward. Although this is addressed in the PSHEE Curriculum and the annual Healthy Week, teachers must be vigilant at all times and report a bullying incident, including cyber-bullying and bullying outside school, or any concerns they may have about a child to the Headteacher.

### **4.2 Roles and responsibilities, and the parts all people can play in preventing bullying including finding themselves as bystanders**

#### **4.2.1 Class teachers**

A class teacher is best placed to talk to a child who is displaying any symptoms of being bullied or about whom they have concerns. They should first report their concerns to the Headteacher and discuss the best course of action. The conversation with the child should take place in a familiar place, which could be the classroom, but with no other children present and without the likelihood of interruption. However, the teacher should take sensible steps to protect themselves from allegations (see Safeguarding Policy).

#### **4.2.2 Parents**

Parents may be the first to notice symptoms that their child is being bullied and may report their concerns to the class teacher, Head of Pastoral Care or Headteacher. Parents should be told about the school procedures, including support for the child. However, great care should be taken that the term ‘bullying’ is not used out of context or incorrectly. Children can find life in any community quite hard and do not always behave as we may wish. There is a wide band of ‘unacceptable’ behaviour that is not bullying. It is bullying if the intention is to hurt another, either physically or emotionally.

#### **4.2.3 Headteacher**

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to implement the school anti-bullying strategy. As part of raising the awareness of bullying, at the start of each year the Headteacher or Head of Pastoral Care shall review Appendix A with the pupils of the school. It is important that all concerns about bullying are reported to him immediately. The Headteacher, working closely with the Head of Pastoral Care, has responsibility in the investigation of any incident.

Once a case of bullying has been reported, the Headteacher will discuss the matter with the victim’s class teacher and decide on the course of action in order to ascertain the facts. The class teacher will ask the child to talk to the Headteacher or the Head of Pastoral Care and may be present during the interview.

The Headteacher or the Head of Pastoral Care may need to interview other children, including the alleged perpetrator. It may be that asking all children to write down their account of an incident is helpful in getting a clear picture of an incident and frees the children from the fear of ‘telling’. With younger children (EYFS and Y1) this is not practicable; however, puppets, dolls or other toys can sometimes be used to help to talk about the issue.

Once the facts are clear, the Headteacher or the Head of Pastoral Care will discuss the incident with the parents of all children concerned. Should it emerge that this is a case of bullying then the Headteacher will see the perpetrator’s parents in person and will discuss the school’s response. The child will also be asked to join the discussion and will be informed of the Headteacher’s decision.

The Headteacher will also discuss the bullying incident with the victim’s parents and later with the victim present. The Headteacher and the Head of Pastoral Care will put in force a programme of support for the victim and a programme of support and education for the bully and their parents.

Ideally, in the presence of the Headteacher or the Head of Pastoral Care, the victim and the perpetrator will meet to share their feelings and should shake hands after an apology. For minor incidents, the school tries to avoid the label of ‘bully’ and will give the child who is at fault guidance and support to help them to modify their behaviour.

The incident will be logged by the Headteacher, and if the incident has been deemed bullying then it must be recorded as such with a record of the sanctions imposed.

#### **4.3 Reporting a bullying issue to external agencies, e.g. police or social services (please also refer to the Safeguarding Policy)**

A bullying incident should be treated as a safeguarding concern when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

#### **4.4 Sanctions (please also refer to the Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy)**

To convey a deterrent effect, sanctions will be imposed which reflect the seriousness of an incident and the age of the pupil concerned. Should a repetition occur, the nature of the sanction will escalate. For serious bullying incidents exclusion from school may be an option.

#### **4.5 Record keeping**

All incidents are recorded on CPOMS.

## **5.0 ETHOS, TRAINING, MONITORING AND DEVELOPMENT**

### **5.1 A school ethos**

Bullying is wrong and can cause serious psychological damage to individuals or groups of children. Therefore, we do all we can to prevent it by developing a positive school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable.

### **5.2 Staff**

Regular training raises the awareness of staff, so that the principles of the school policy are understood, legal responsibilities are known, action is defined to resolve and prevent problems, and available sources of support are understood. At times, the school invests in specialist training to understand the needs of their pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities. Staff also lead by example, in an atmosphere of mutual respect and tolerance (please see Values Policy).

Staff awareness is raised through training including ensuring:

- the principles of this policy are understood including reporting and recording arrangements,
- legal responsibilities are known,
- action is defined to resolve and prevent problems, including in relation to on-line bullying, those with special educational needs or disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) pupils

Regular discussions at staff meetings should review places where bullying is most likely and where there is need for staff vigilance. In the event that a potential bullying incident is observed then the member of staff must not let it go unnoticed. A gentle reprimand, the separation of a group, the calming down of horseplay or sending for a member of the Senior Leadership Team can prevent situations escalating, and also gives the children a message about the boundaries of acceptable behaviour.

### **5.3 The classroom**

Children need to know the difference between right and wrong, although very young children will often not distinguish between the contexts in which words such as 'right' and 'wrong' are used, e.g. sometimes the word 'wrong' will refer only to socially unacceptable behaviour, like poking your tongue out; whilst at other times a moral absolute is involved, like bullying. Nevertheless, children need to be introduced from an early age to concepts of right and wrong, so that moral behaviour becomes an instinctive habit.

An atmosphere of trust, care and respect in the classroom is essential. This is augmented by the use of educational elements such as personal, social, and health education (PSHE) and citizenship, with discussion of differences between people and the importance of avoiding prejudice-based language as well as assemblies, drama, stories, literature, historical events and current affairs to stimulate discussion.

### **5.4 EYFS**

With younger children a few moments of reflection or time out can be very effective, however it is often a case of misunderstanding of boundaries at this early age therefore good guidance and thoughtful use of PSHE time can make a huge difference. The message to staff is: if in doubt – act.

### **5.5 Older pupils**

All pupils are encouraged to show a kind and caring attitude to others. Their example is made evident to younger pupils.

### **5.6 Rewards**

The award of House Points is not only for academic success but can be for small acts of kindness, a general helpful attitude for generosity of time in, for example, charitable fundraising. In this way, the importance of personal and moral values is celebrated.

### **5.7 Bullying linked to disability**

At BJAB, we are aware that a child with a disability, be it physical or mental, may be subject to bullying from other pupils. These children will be continually monitored to ensure that they are not the subject of ridicule or bullying in any way. By nature of their disability, for example, autism, some children may be seen to provoke other children into an act of aggression or verbal abuse. However, this is not acceptable and to prevent this teachers and learning support assistants impress on all pupils the need to be kind and thoughtful to everyone.

### **5.8 Bullying linked to ethnicity or faith**

There is no place for either of these in our school culture, which embraces a diversity of ethnicities and faiths. Each family is welcomed into the school community and is valued for their contribution to our happy, stable and cosmopolitan environment. As our youngest children may be intrigued by differences in the physical appearance or customs between themselves and their classmates, this is covered in our PSHEE programme and parents are invited to the school to talk about, for example, their celebration of a religious festival.

### **5.9 Cyber-bullying (please also refer to the e-Safety Policy)**

Cyber-bullying includes bullying by electronic means (social websites, mobile telephones, text messages, email, photographs, etc.) and is equally unacceptable. At BJAB, we do not allow pupils access to their own email accounts and pupil mobile phones are not permitted in school. Social networking sites are similarly not allowed in school. Pupils are given strict guidance within PSHE and computing lessons about the use of the internet and are made aware that any inappropriate use within school or off-site may well be treated as a serious offence.

### **5.10 Peer on peer abuse (please also refer to the Safeguarding Policy)**

Children can abuse other children. This is generally referred to as peer on peer abuse and can take many forms. This can include (but is not limited to) bullying (including cyberbullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexting and initiating/hazing type violence and rituals.

At BJAB we believe that abuse is abuse and should never be passed off as 'banter' or 'just having a laugh' or 'part of growing up'. All staff have received training in identifying and dealing with Peer on Peer abuse.

## **6.0 COMMUNICATION**

The school's policies on behaviour and bullying are regularly communicated to parents, and are available on the school's website. Parents are therefore aware of the school's attitude to bullying and feel confident in coming to report any concerns that they may have.

## **7.0 AVAILABLE RESOURCES**

CEOPS – Think You Know resources

<http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

[http://www.staysmartonline.govau/schools\\_and\\_teachers](http://www.staysmartonline.govau/schools_and_teachers)

This policy is the responsibility of Sarah White, Headteacher and Madame De Maertelaere, the Proprietor.	Revised: January 2021
<b>Sarah White</b> <b>Headteacher</b> .....	
<b>Madame De Maertelaere</b> <b>School Proprietor</b> .....	
<b>To be reviewed:</b>	January 2022

## APPENDIX A

# We don't accept bullies at the British Junior Academy of Brussels

The British Junior Academy of Brussels is not prepared to accept pupils who are unkind in what they say or do.

You have the right to lead your life without being upset by bullies.

Bullies are people who keep worrying you by pushing, punching or teasing you.

Bullying is any form of repeated unkind actions or words. Cyberbullies use text messages, nasty web sites and emails.

Pupils must help each other by telling if they know of others being bullied or cyber-bullied.

If you are worried about bullying and are not sure what to do:

Tell a teacher or learning support assistant

or

Tell your parents

or

Tell anyone who works in the school

**TELL SOMEONE**

Telling about bullies is not 'telling tales'.

We will find the time to listen to your problem, or your friend's problem, and will help you.