

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Reviewed and updated 12th September 2024

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

At L'École bilingue, we aim to provide a safe, caring and friendly environment for all our pupils to allow them to learn effectively, improve their life chances and help them maximise their potential. Bullying is not of any kind is unacceptable in our school. We expect our pupils to be respectful of others and feel safe in school; we want them to feel confident to seek support from school staff if they feel unsafe or concerned.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of this policy is to prevent bullying and for staff to know how to deal with bullying if it should occur.

Bullying is wrong and can seriously damage the health and wellbeing of the children in our care. We therefore do all we can to prevent bullying.

We aim to be a safe and secure school where all pupils can learn without anxiety.

This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.

GUIDANCE FOR STAFF

Bullying may be verbal, physical or psychological. In fact, any action which makes a child feel uncomfortable, insecure or threatened may be defined as bullying.

The school disapproves of bullying in all its forms and considers it a most serious offence.

Pupils will be made aware that bullying is unacceptable, and they must tell a teacher if it happens to them or a fellow pupil.

All staff, assistants, teachers and the head teacher, take the lead in creating a climate in which pupils feel comfortable in reporting any bullying incident in the expectation that it will be dealt with urgently and firmly.

All staff are required to report incidents of suspected bullying to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Miss Olivia Good or in her absence, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL), Laurence Hoffmann, who will notify the head teacher. Appropriate action is then taken. L'École Bilingue being an international school, specific care will be given in identifying bullying around Race, Religion and culture. Homophobic remarks and language need to be identified and dealt with (even if pupils may not know what the words means). Cyber-bullying will also be closely monitored.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

Education and Inspections Act 2006

Equality Act 2010

Human Rights Act 1998

Education Act 2011

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024

This policy has been written in accordance with guidance, including, but not limited to:

DfE circular 10/95 ‘Protecting Children from Abuse: The Role of the Education Service

DfE (2017) ‘Preventing and tackling bullying’

DfE (2018) ‘Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges’

DfE (2018) ‘Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools’

DfE (2017) ‘Preventing and tackling bullying: Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies’

DfE (2014) ‘Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff’

DCSF (2007) ‘Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools

DfEE 0064/2000 Bullying, don’t suffer in silence

BECOMING A PUPIL / “DEVENIR ELEVE”

Anti-bullying education is part of the school curriculum in “Becoming a pupil”.

Pupils are taught to respect and help others by developing their ability to communicate, exchange and socialise with everybody.

“Rules of life at school” (“Règles de vie à l’école”) will be established by the children and their teachers at the beginning of the year and will include “what we are expected and allowed to do”, “what we are forbidden to do” and “what we should do in case...”.

The purpose of this is to explore and discuss the basics rules of life in society by answering young children most frequent asked question.

These “rules of life at school” can be referred to at anytime.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying may be defined as any deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time and intentionally hurting another pupil or group physically or emotionally, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves, is often motivated by prejudice.

Bullying is generally characterised by:

- Repetition: Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over a period of time.
- Intent: The perpetrator(s) means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.
- Targeting: Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.
- Power imbalance: Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations. Vulnerable pupils are more likely to be the targets of bullying due to the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves. Vulnerable pupils may include, but are not limited to: Pupils with SEND; Pupils who are adopted; Pupils suffering from a health problem; Pupils with caring responsibilities.

Victims may be children who:

- are new to the school;
- are different in appearance, speech or background from the majority of other pupils;
- suffer from low self-esteem;
- demonstrate actions that may be entertaining to the bully e.g. tantrums, loss of control;
- are more nervous and anxious;
- are lonely or have few friends;
- have difficulty in establishing themselves in the peer group;

- have other emotional, social, physical, or disadvantage needs specific to one or more groups stated.

However, it is important to note that one-off acts may also be treated as bullying behaviour. Factors that may lead to a one-off act being considered as bullying include the severity and significance of the incident; evidence of pre-meditation; impact of the incident on individuals (physical/emotional); impact of the incidents on wider school community; previous relationships between those involved; and previous incidents involving the individuals.

BULLYING OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL PREMISES

It is also important to note that, while schools are not directly responsible for bullying that occurs off the premises, we know that bullying can occur outside the school gates, on journeys to and from school and online. The bullying may be done by pupils from our own school, by pupils from other schools or by people who are not at school at all. Where a pupil or parent tells us of bullying off the school premises we will:

- Talk to pupils about how to avoid or handle bullying outside of school.
- Talk to the head teacher of another school whose pupils are bullying.
- Talk to the police if deemed necessary.

Types of bullying

Many kinds of behaviour can be considered as bullying and can be related to almost anything. Teasing another pupil because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, home life, culture, disability, or SEND are some of the types of bullying that can occur.

Types of bullying can include verbal, physical, emotional or online abuse.

Bullying can include:

Racist bullying: Bullying another person based on their ethnic background, religion or skin colour. Racist bullying is a criminal offence under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Public Order Act 1986.

Homophobic bullying: Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

Transphobic bullying: Bullying based on another person's gender 'variance' or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.

Sexist bullying: Bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.

Sexual bullying: Bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal or non-verbal sexual dimension/dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes.

Prejudicial bullying: Bullying based on prejudices directed towards specific characteristics, e.g. SEND or mental health issues.

Relational bullying: Bullying that primarily consists of excluding, isolating and ostracising someone – usually through verbal and emotional bullying.

Examples of unacceptable behaviour include :

- Physical (including sexual) assault.
- Verbal abuse, by name calling, teasing or making offensive remarks.
- Cyber-bullying, which is defined as the use of ICT by an individual or group in a way that is intended to upset others. Examples include using social websites, mobile phones, text messaging, photographs, video and e-mail.
- Indirect emotional tormenting by excluding from social groups or spreading malicious rumours.

Bullying may involve complicity that falls short of direct participation by, for instance, manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It may be overt and intimidatory but is often hidden and subtle. It includes actions or comments that are racist, religious or cultural, homophobic, transphobic, sexist, sexual or

which focus on disabilities or other physical attributes (such as hair colour or body shape) or any reference to Special Educational Needs and/or disability.

Bullying is among the top concerns that parents have about their children's safety and well-being at and on the way to and from school. Bullying is also a top concern of children and young people themselves. Bullying makes the lives of its victims a misery: it undermines their confidence and self-esteem; and destroys their sense of security and can be psychologically damaging. Bullying impacts on its victims' attendance and attainment at school, marginalises those groups who may be particular targets for bullies and can have a life-long negative impact on some young people's lives. At worst, bullying has been a factor in pupil suicide.

It is acknowledged that bullies may have complex reasons for their behaviour and may well need help. It should also be recognised that the consequences of being allowed to 'get away with it' can be detrimental to them as well as to their victim. All pupils deserve the opportunity to be helped to understand what acceptable behaviour is. Pupils are educated through PSHE, assemblies, and drama to raise awareness, with discussions of differences between people and the importance of avoiding prejudice. There are criminal laws that apply to harassment, assault and threatening behaviour. If staff feel that an offence may have been committed, they should seek assistance from the police.

SIGNS OF BULLYING

Staff will be alert to the following signs that may indicate a pupil is a victim of bullying:

- Unwillingness to attend school
- Saying that they feel ill and aren't able to go to school
- Being frightened to travel to or from school
- Asking to be driven to school
- Truancy
- Becoming anxious or lacking confidence
- Decreased involvement in school work
- Returning home with torn clothes or damaged possessions
- Missing possessions
- Asking for extra money or stealing
- Cuts or bruises
- Lack of appetite
- Unwillingness to use the internet or mobile devices
- Becoming agitated when receiving calls or text messages
- Lack of eye contact
- Becoming short tempered
- Change in behaviour and attitude at home or school

Although the signs outlined above may not be due to bullying, they may be due to deeper social, emotional or mental health issues; therefore, they are still worth investigating. Pupils who display a significant number of these signs will be approached by a member of staff to determine the underlying issues, whether they are due to bullying or other issues. If staff become aware of any factors that could lead to bullying behaviours, they will notify the pupil's class teacher, who will investigate the matter, alert the school designated safeguarding leads via our reporting system, and monitor the situation and well-being of the pupil.

STAFF PRINCIPLES

- Unpleasantness from one pupil towards another is always challenged and never ignored.
- Pupils who are unpleasant to someone will be asked to spend time reflecting on their behaviour and repair the situation.
- Staff treat reports of bullying seriously and they will not ignore signs of suspected bullying.
- Staff act swiftly when they become aware of a bullying incident; this applies to all staff, not solely teaching staff.
- Staff always respect pupils' privacy, and information about specific instances of bullying are not discussed with others, unless it is in a setting that the victim has given consent to, or there is a safeguarding concern.
- If a member of staff believes a pupil is in danger, e.g. of being hurt, they will inform the DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) immediately.
- Follow-up support is provided for both the victim and bully

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In all cases the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Miss Olivia Good or in her absence, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL), will have to be informed and will deal with the teacher(s) of the children concerned and inform the head teacher as appropriate.

Each case will be treated individually and, depending on the circumstances, one or more of the following strategies will be employed:

The DSL will:

- Review and amend this policy, accounting for new government guidance.
- Keep a record of all reported incidents.
- Analyse the data in the record books at termly intervals to identify trends, so that appropriate measures to tackle them can be implemented.

Class teachers and teaching assistants will:

- Communicate and meet with parents where necessary.
- Provide a point of contact for pupils and parents when more serious bullying incidents occur.
- Be alert to the needs of their class.
- Be available for pupils who wish to report bullying
- Provide follow-up support after bullying incidents
- Be alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups.
- Report any instances of bullying once they have been approached by a pupil for support.
- Support pupils in following the school's behaviour expectations.

Other school staff will:

- Provide a point of contact for pupils, when more serious bullying incidents occur.
- Be alert to pupil needs.
- Be available for pupils who wish to report bullying.

PROCEDURE

All reports of incidences of bullying will be recorded and the DSL, or in her absence, the DDSL will be informed, who will notify the headteacher as appropriate.

The dated report will detail a brief description of the incident (what happened) with all participants having a voice; who was involved (hurt/affected) and any follow-up action that was taken at the time as a result.

The child's teacher will be informed.

Appropriate steps will be taken to ensure the bullying is stopped and both the victim and the bully are supported. This may include discussions with the bully and the victim and appropriate sanctions.

If remedial action within school proves unsuccessful, both sets of parents will be informed. A constructive plan to support the victim and the bully will be offered to both sets of parents. To this end, a meeting will first be held with the class teachers, who will also offer follow-up support to the victim and the bully.

If incidents reoccur, a meeting will be held with the class teachers and the DSL. External help may be sought for the bully and the victim.

If the DSL/senior leadership team is satisfied that serious bullying did take place, the pupil will be helped to understand the consequences of their actions and warned there must be no further incidents. The pupil will be informed of the type of sanction to be used in this instance and future sanctions if the bullying continued. Parents are informed of bullying incidents and what action is being taken. The class teacher informally monitors the pupils involved over a period of time.

Sanctions and strategies can include:

- Apologies
- Removal of privileges/activities
- Detention
- Exclusion

Exclusions are used in exceptional cases only and when the nature of the behaviour is such that the school wishes to signal a strong degree of disapproval.

Such behaviour includes:

- physical violence to staff or pupils
- persistent bullying
- consistently poor behaviour over a sustained period
- persistent disruption of the learning of others

VULNERABLE CHILDREN

Vulnerability is not always visible to adults. The victim may look no different to any other child. Sometimes the victim can also be a bully. Vulnerable pupils may include, but are not limited to:

- Pupils with SEND.
- Pupils who are adopted.
- Pupils suffering from a health problem.
- Pupils with caring responsibilities.

Victims may be children who:

- are new to the school;
- are different in appearance, speech or background from the majority of other pupils;
- suffer from low self-esteem;
- demonstrate actions that may be entertaining to the bully e.g. tantrums, loss of control;
- are more nervous and anxious;
- are lonely or have few friends;
- have difficulty in establishing themselves in the peer group;
- have other emotional, social, physical, or disadvantage needs specific to one or more groups stated.

Linked Policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy/Safer Recruitment
- Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- ICT/Online Safety Policy