



**BRITISH SCHOOL  
OF GENEVA**

# Anti-Bullying Policy

Revised: September 2022

To be reviewed: September 2023

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Approved by S. Thompson, School Principal

## INTRODUCTION

We believe that the British School of Geneva is a very pleasant, caring and well-disciplined school, where bullying is rare. The whole ethos of the school centers around the principle that all who work or study here respect and understand the needs of others.

In this context, bullying will not be tolerated and could result in a student being suspended or expelled from BSG, if deemed appropriate. It is everyone's responsibility to prevent it happening and with this in mind, this document lays down certain guidelines which all students, parents and staff should follow.

No-one should underestimate the potential psychological damage that bullying can cause – often far in excess of the intentions of the bully.

It is our fundamental belief that every student has the right to pursue their education free from adverse interference from others. We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our students in which each student can reach their potential in all areas, so gaining self-esteem and being uniquely valued by others. This means respecting each other's space, privacy and differences and treating everyone with kindness and sensitivity and offering support and encouragement to each other.

### Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- Promote the importance of mutual respect and the development of positive relationships
- Create and encourage a learning environment in which every student feels welcomed, safe and able to learn
- Ensure that bullying behaviour is not acceptable within our school
- Have a shared and clearly understood definition of bullying behaviour
- Create an environment where students, staff and parents are encouraged to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour
- Ensure that mechanisms are in place to prevent and detect bullying
- Outline roles and responsibilities of staff, students and parents in recognising, reporting, recording and dealing with incidents of bullying
- Support students who are bullied and help to restore lost confidence and self-esteem
- Sanction and educate the students who bully.

### Definition of bullying

Bullying may be defined as the intentional and repeated hurting, harming or humiliating of another person by physical (including sexual or sexist), verbal or cyber (please see relevant policy) and emotional means (by excluding, tormenting or spreading malicious rumours). It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It can involve complicity that falls short of direct participation. Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and intimidatory.

Bullying may involve actions or comments that are racist, homophobic, religious or cultural, which focus

on disabilities (including special educational needs) or other physical attributes (such as hair colour or body shape). BSG believes bullying can cause serious psychological damage and it will never be underestimated.

## Where does bullying occur?

Although bullying may occur almost anywhere and at any time, some situations are more common such as:

- on the way to or from school or college, including buses;
- in corridors, classrooms, changing rooms, toilets;
- in the playground, particularly in isolated areas;
- in the dinner queue and dining hall.

Bullying frequently involves the use of mobile phones, computers and social media. This might involve an individual sending malicious or hurtful texts, emails or photos or using insulting or other hurtful descriptions on sites such as Facebook, Snapchat and Instagram.

## Cyber-bullying

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, which can happen 24/7, with a potentially bigger audience and more accessories as people forward on content at a click. For more information on how to respond to cyber-bullying and how pupils can keep themselves safe, please refer to the "Cyber-bullying Policy". Examples include: social websites, mobile phones, text messaging, photographs, videos, emails, sexting.

## Minimising the risk of bullying behaviour

1. Emphasis is placed on the quality of relationships between all members, staff and between staff, students and parents to encourage an openness designed to allow students to speak out where potential problems are perceived. The PSHCE programme provides opportunities for students to explore the issues surrounding bullying and also encourages the underpinning values of fairness, compassion, tolerance and forgiveness.
2. At a practical level, classroom teachers strive to create a positive, well-ordered environment where each student feels valued and respected. It is important to create an atmosphere where students who are being bullied, or others who know about it, feel that they will be listened to and believed, and that action will be swift but sensitive to their concerns. It is also important to involve all members of the school community in the identification and condemnation of bullying.
3. 4. All teachers are responsible for ensuring that students learn to listen to one another, to respect opinions they do not themselves hold, and for fostering an appropriate degree of assertiveness that permits students to express their own opinions.
5. The school will identify the 'hot spots' where bullying is likely to occur and will ensure that

supervision levels are adequate. Staff will supervise the main areas of the school before class, at break time and at lunch time and will be particularly vigilant during these times since some students are more vulnerable and bullying is less easily seen.

6. As part of their leadership training, members of the students' council and peer mentors learn to appreciate they have a vital role in looking after the younger students. They are spoken to about their role and influence in the school by the Head of Pastoral Care and the Deputy Principal and they receive training in Safeguarding and Child Protection by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

## Roles and responsibilities

### Students

We expect our students to:

- refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity
- intervene to protect the pupil who is being bullied, unless it is unsafe to do so
- report to a member of staff any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying, to dispel any climate of secrecy and help to prevent further instances
- not to suffer in silence but to speak out to put an end to their own suffering and that of other potential targets.

We endeavour to encourage discussion to open up at all levels and hence to break the silence and the culture of secrecy in which aggressive behaviours thrive.

### Parents

We ask our parents to support their children and the school by:

- watching for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children, which might be evidence of bullying
- advising their children to report any bullying to a member of staff and explain the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other pupils
- advising their children not to retaliate violently to any form of bullying
- being sympathetic and supportive towards their children, and reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken
- keeping a written record of any reported instances of bullying including text messages and online communications
- inform the school promptly of any suspected bullying, even if their children are not involved
- co-operating with the school, if their children are accused of bullying, trying to ascertain the truth, and point out the implications of bullying, both for the children who are bullied and for the bullies themselves.

Parents are encouraged to reassure their child that we will deal with all forms of bullying sensitively but

firmly. If a child tells us, or we discover that they are being bullied, or they are bullying others, we will deal with the matter appropriately. All such disclosures will be acknowledged quickly and dealt with firmly but sensitively.

Parents can contact the Form Tutor/Head of Section/ Head of Pastoral Care to report incidents of bullying which they might suspect or that have come to their attention through their children or other parents/guardians.

## Staff

### Suspicion of bullying

1. Students who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour. All staff should be aware of the possible implication of such behaviour change, report promptly any suspicions of bullying to the student's Tutor and fill in the Record of Concern Form.
2. Staff should make appropriate enquiries about the concern raised, speaking to relevant parties (the student's teachers, the student themselves and possibly their friends) and alert the Head of Section and the Head of Pastoral Care. Staff should keep a written record of all discussions.
3. If the student acknowledges that they are being bullied, Staff must report what has happened to the Head of Section and / or the Head of Pastoral Care directly, so that appropriate action may be taken and that there is parity in any decision made.
4. If the student denies that they are being bullied and their denials are unconvincing, a particularly close watch should be kept on the student and the concerns should be shared with the student's parents.

### Disclosure of bullying

Should a disclosure of bullying be made to a member of staff, the person hearing the disclosure must:

- Always take what is said seriously
- Not promise confidentiality
- Reassure the student
- Determine what action the student would like to see taken
- Explain what will happen next (the Head of Section and the Head of Pastoral Care must be informed as quickly as possible)
- Ensure that the student feels safe
- Once the initial disclosure is concluded, make a record of key points disclosed using the Record of Concern Form
- Pass the record of the disclosure to the DSL

### Witnessing bullying

A member of staff who witnesses bullying must deal with the incident immediately and directly.

## Our response to a bullying incident

Our initial concern is to prevent bullying rather than punish the bullies. However, bullying is a major offense and will be dealt with firmly.

- a) In any bullying incident, teachers should speak separately to the students involved. All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and students should be reassured that their concerns will be listened to.
- b) Bullying incidents are best investigated in a quiet place to avoid the public humiliation of the person subjected to bullying or the student engaged in bullying behaviour.
- c) When investigating incidents of bullying, teachers should seek answers to the following: Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?
- d) Teachers should keep a written record of their discussions. It may also be appropriate/helpful to ask any others involved to write down their account of the incident. All records should then be passed on to the DSL.
- e) If it is concluded that a student has been engaged in bullying as defined in our policy, it should be made clear to them that they are in breach of the Code of Conduct. Appropriate sanctions, in accordance with the school's Policy, should then be taken. This is likely to involve contact/meeting with parents. A follow-up meeting with the two parties involved should be arranged either separately or together soon after the incident to see if progress has been made.
- f) If the bullying that has taken place involves any illegal activity, then the police or other relevant agencies may be contacted for support and guidance.
- g) Serious incidents will be investigated by the Heads of Section and / or Head of Pastoral Care and /or Deputy Principal. The Principal will be notified. If it's necessary, a Pastoral Support Programme will be set up for all the students involved or suffered from bullying.
- h) Extreme or persistent bullying will be dealt with by the Deputy Principal and then the Principal, who, if necessary, may suspend or expel the offender.
- i) A bullying incident will be treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. Further information can be found in the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.
- j) Students involved in bullying will talk to the Head of Pastoral Care. They may require additional support in order to prevent any future incidents. This includes the students who have been bullied and those who displayed bullying behaviour.
- k) If a bullying incident is reported that has occurred outside school hours and premises, parents/guardians may be advised to seek assistance from relevant agencies. (<https://www.ge.ch/qui-m-adresser-si-quelqu-me-traite-mal-si-je-me-sens-danger>)

## Recording

Bullying concerns or incidents must be reported using the Record of Concern Form. The completed form must be passed to the DSL. Records will be kept securely in the DSL's office. In cases of alleged child abuse which come to court, child protection records may be required by the court.

## Procedures and disciplinary steps related to unkind and bullying behaviour

Children will occasionally do or say something that is hurtful. And while it is important to address the behaviour, it is essential to distinguish between unkind/mean/undesirable interactions between peers and bullying behaviour. The distinction is critical because it may require different interventions and consequences based on the severity of the situation.

As children grow, they learn how to communicate, to express their thoughts and feelings as well as experiencing conflicts with peers. Impulsivity, immature problem-solving skills, difficulty managing feelings, limited perspective-taking ability, following the crowd, or just experimenting with social power are all part of their learning as well as factors that could lead children to display unkind or mean behaviour.

Fights, disagreements, conflicts, good-natured teasing, unkind remarks are part of growing up and key elements to learn how to solve problems peacefully and respectfully.

Those behaviours, such as teasing, calling someone a name or pushing someone once, being rude or having an argument with someone is not bullying as long as it's playful and mutual. Being left out or feeling lonely is also different from being excluded from a group. It's also important that children on the receiving end of unkind behaviour learn how to communicate their feelings with the offending child.

Of course, those unkind behaviours should be addressed and it is our responsibility as staff and adults to teach children how to communicate respectfully and how to express themselves in a thoughtful and calm way.

### Rude, mean or bullying?

How is bullying different from unkind behaviour?

#### Definitions

**Rude:** Saying or doing something hurtful that wasn't planned or meant to upset someone.

**Mean:** Saying or doing something hurtful to someone on purpose once or twice.

**Bullying:** Someone more powerful saying or doing something hurtful to someone on purpose, over and over again.

## What's the difference?

There are four things that can help you identify bullying over unkind behaviour:

### Bullying is:

**Unbalanced:** the person who is bullying has more power (older, bigger, stronger, smarter, more control or influence).

**Harmful:** leaves the person's feeling hurt, harmed, unsafe, threatened and makes them unable to defend themselves or make it stop.

**Targeted:** the person says or does things on purpose to hurt, embarrass, scare, harass or put the other person down.

**Repeated:** the person acts this way towards the same person over and over again, even if they are told to stop.

How to tell if it's bullying? The following questions might help you to distinguish between unkind and bullying behaviour:

- Was it done on purpose to hurt the student?
- Is it a pattern? Does it keep happening?
- Is it about power - Is the student older, stronger or have more influence than the victim?

If the answer is YES to all those questions, then it's likely to be bullying.

### Example:

Joking and teasing become bullying when there is a conscious decision to hurt another person. Teasing becomes bullying when the child:

- Make degrading comments
- Engage in name-calling
- Spread unpleasant rumors
- Make threats
- Targeting the same person consistently

And finally, the goal of the bully is to harm the other person in some way so that they have even more control and power over the victim.

It can become challenging to figure out the difference between bullying and insensitive/unkind behaviour.

Regardless of whether a certain behaviour meets the formal definition of bullying or not, it is our responsibility to engage children and encourage kind behaviour in all our relationships.

Below you find the BSG unkind behaviour and anti-bullying flowchart. The aim of the flowchart is to guide staff through the procedure when unkind behaviour is witnessed or disclosed by students. Our goal is to prevent bullying, to set up early intervention and to intervene before the situation escalates and unkind behaviour transforms into bullying.

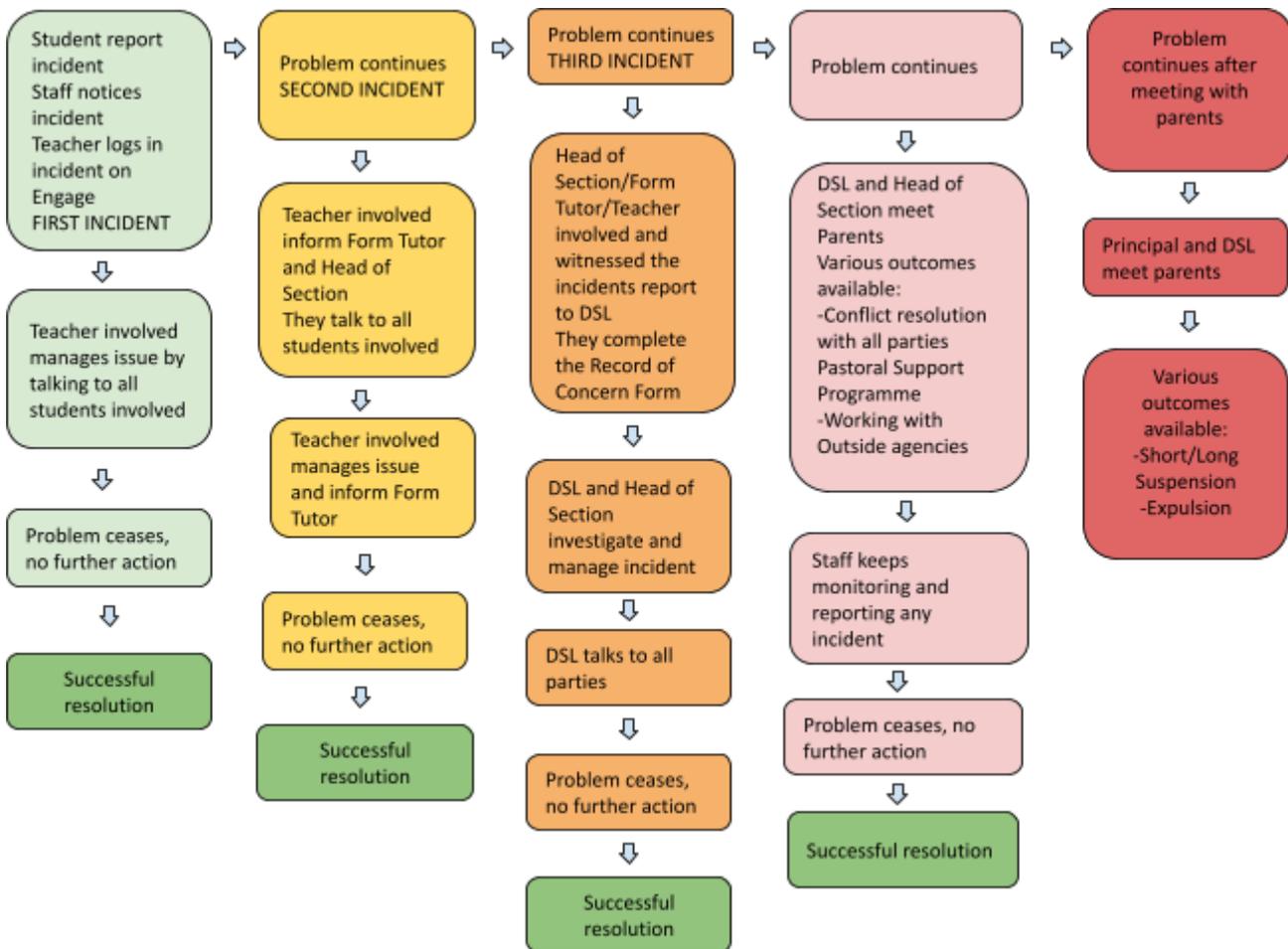
The flowchart starts with unkind behaviour, one time incidents and goes toward a repeated, targeted bullying behaviour. It is important to note that depending on the situation, a child may enter this system of disciplinary steps at point one, or anywhere else. The consequences and interventions will be adapted to the severity of the incident.



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## UNKIND AND BULLYING BEHAVIOUR FLOWCHART

### Procedures and disciplinary steps



## Procedures for Dealing with Reported Bullying

If an incident of bullying is reported, the following procedures are adopted:

- The member of staff to whom it was reported or who first discovers the situation will control the situation if necessary, reassuring and supporting the pupils involved. Pupils should be removed to safety if necessary.
- The member of Staff must report the situation as soon as possible, complete the Record of Concern form and pass it to the DSL. The Form Tutor and Head of Section will be informed.
- The victim will be interviewed and asked to write an account of events. The student may be helped to do this, leading questions must be avoided and factual evidence should only be taken.
- The bully with all others who were involved, will be interviewed individually and asked to write an immediate account of events.
- The incident will be recorded on the Record of Concern Form and filed in the Head of Pastoral's Office.
- The Head of Section and the Head of Pastoral will be involved and decide if the situation requires a greater level of intervention.
- The parents/guardians of all parties should be informed and may be invited into school to discuss the matter. Their support should be sought.
- School should offer opportunities for reconciliation between victim and bully.
- A way forward, including disciplinary sanctions and a Pastoral Support Programme should be agreed. This should recognise that suitable support is needed both for students who are being bullied and for students who bully others, as well as dealing with appropriate disciplinary measures. Strong sanctions such as suspension or expulsion for repeated bullying may be necessary.
- A meeting involving all the parties, with close staff supervision could be helpful in developing a strategy for all concerned to close the episode.
- A monitoring and review strategy will be put in place. Staff must keep reporting any incident.
- In very serious cases and after the Principal has been involved, it may be necessary to make a report to the Police or to the Children's Services.

## Disciplinary steps

1. Students will be warned officially by the Form Tutor to stop offending and appropriate changes in behaviour will be required from the student.
2. If bullies do not stop, the bully's parents will be informed, demands for the appropriate changes in behaviour will be made. A pastoral Support Programme might be required.
3. If the bullying continues, the bully's parents will be informed for the second time and if they still do not stop target behaviours, bullies will be suspended for a fixed period.
4. If they then carry on they will be recommended for suspension for an indefinite exclusion.
5. If they will not end such behaviour, they will be recommended for permanent exclusion to the Principal.

5. Depending on the circumstance, a child may enter this system of disciplinary steps at point one, or at any other point. If the identified behaviour starts again, progress through the disciplinary steps will be rapid.

### Examples of bullying behaviour

#### Physical Bullying may involve:

- Hitting or kicking someone
- Jostling, shoving, pushing someone
- Spitting at someone
- Invading someone's personal space
- Physically humiliating someone (e.g by 'de-bagging' them)
- Taking, damaging or hiding someone's property

#### Verbal Bullying may involve:

- Spoken comments
- Written notes
- Emails or text / WhatsApp messages
- Improper use of Facebook, Instagram and similar social media
- Phone calls
- The defacing of notices
- Name-calling, spreading rumours, publicly blaming someone for something they have not done
- Circulating unflattering drawings or photographic images of someone

#### Indirect or Manipulative Bullying may involve:

- Ostracising a fellow student by refusing to sit alongside them in class, in the canteen etc (or by moving away when they come and sit down)
- The manipulation of social networks to ostracise, marginalise or intimidate individuals
  - Publishing photographs or images of someone that are intended to occasion mockery or gossip
- Encouraging others to become the agents of physical or verbal bullying against one's intended victim.

#### Bullying characterised by racism, sexism, homophobia and the exploitation of disability may involve:

- Spoken comments about someone (their friends or a member of their family), or about some groups of students
- Written notes about someone (their friends or a member of their family), or about some groups of students
- Emails, web postings or text messages about someone (their friends or a member of their

family), or about some groups of students

- Phone calls about someone (their friends or a member of their family), or about some groups of student
- The defacing of notices with snide remarks about someone (their friends or a member of their family), or about some groups of students

#### **Sexual bullying may involve:**

- Bullying that seeks to hurt people by drawing attention to their body shape, hair colour, manner of dress, alleged sexual attractiveness (or lack of it), close friendships (or the absence of intimate relationships in an individual's life)
- Physical action of a sexually intimidating nature (by the invasion of personal space, inappropriate touching)
- Spreading rumours about an individual's lifestyle (or the lifestyle of a close friend or relative)
- Spoken comments, written notes, emails, web postings, text messages, phone calls about someone (their friends or a member of their family), or about some groups of students.

#### **Bullying focused on religion, culture or family background may involve:**

- Spoken comments, written notes, emails, web postings etc that highlight an individual's religion or culture with the purpose of mocking them, for cultural or religious difference
- Comments, web postings etc that mock a particular religious or cultural tradition for the purpose of discomforting an individual or group at school
- Pejorative religious or cultural descriptors (eg 'Muslim terrorist', 'Pakki shopkeepers')
- Gossip about an individual's family circumstances, spreading stories about, for example, their being adopted, a parent in same-sex relationship

#### **Electronic or Cyber-bullying may involve:**

- Sending abusive, insulting or malicious text messages / emails
- Posting abusive or malicious messages on websites, using blogs, personal websites, on-line personal polling sites etc
- Posting on a social network site facts or photographs of someone with the intention to embarrass or belittle them in the eyes of others
- Indulging in malicious or spiteful conversations in chat-rooms
- Spreading abuse, malice or scurrilous gossip by other electronic means
- Hacking into social networking sites and removing personal materials
- Filming fights or assaults (eg 'happy slapping' clips) using mobile phone cameras and circulating these using cell phone networks or email
- Making repeated silent calls to a mobile phone or leaving abusive messages on voice mail
- 'Frapping' (using a pseudonym or someone else's telephone or email account) for anonymity when indulging in bullying.

Sexting is the term given to the practice of sharing sexually explicit images or texts. Circumstances in which students might 'sext' one another vary. In Switzerland, where school students under 16 years of age are involved, this practice is always illegal.

Students must also understand that:

- Sending someone your sexualised image, when you are under 18 is bullying – it is an action with threatening character because the recipient could face severe legal consequences and it causes anxiety.
- Passing on a sexualised image of any person under 18 is bullying – it is an action that threatens the recipient and one that demeans the person pictured. It causes anxiety
- Sending a sexualised image to try and initiate a romantic relationship is bullying – it is a threatening and offensive action. It causes anxiety.

The consequences of sexting can be serious for the perpetrator. It is illegal to publish or download a sexual image of someone under 18 even when it is the child themselves who created and posted the material online.

Students may attempt to justify the behaviours mentioned above as a ‘practical joke’ or banter rather than as bullying. This misconception must not be accepted. Bullying that is so extreme that a student suffers or is likely to suffer significant harm is a Child Protection concern and will be reported to the relevant authorities in accordance with the school Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.

### **Possible signs and symptoms of bullying**

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that they are being bullied. Everyone should be aware of these possible signs.

- Unwillingness to attend School/truancy or becoming anxious as holidays or weekends draw to a close.
- Anxiety about travelling to and from School/avoiding regular travelling times.
- Changing established habits which may indicate that they are trying to avoid doing something or going somewhere.
- Underachievement or a sudden drop in academic performance.
- Loss of concentration/enthusiasm/interest in School/changed behaviour.
- Repeated non-specific reasons for medical room visits – headache/stomach ache.
- A change in behaviour such as becoming anxious or withdrawn.
- A drop in self-confidence.
- Expression of anxiety about their appearance, their clothing, hair, body shape etc.

A reduced interest in personal hygiene or grooming.

- Physical signs of anxiety – stammering/nightmares/sleep difficulty/loss of appetite / nausea/ withdrawal.
- Physical bruising/torn clothes.
- Books torn or destroyed/missing possessions.
- Asking for significant increases in pocket money.

- Loss of self-esteem/confidence/mood swings.
- Becoming aggressive or unreasonable, or becoming excessively eager to please.
- Starting to bully siblings or other children.
- Choosing the company of adults in preference to their peers.
- Running away.
- Suicidal ideation.
- Reluctance to say what is wrong.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

### Strategies for the prevention and reduction of bullying

Whole school initiatives and proactive teaching strategies can be used throughout the school to develop a positive learning environment with the aim of reducing the opportunities for bullying to occur. These can include:

- Making anti-bullying week a high profile event each year
- Awareness raising through anti-bullying assemblies
- Prominently displaying anti-bullying posters around the school
- Peer mentoring to help and support an individual experiencing difficulties
- Using drama activities and role-plays to help pupils be more assertive and teach them strategies to help them deal with bullying situations
- Using praise and rewards to reinforce good behaviour
- Using teaching methods, which encourage co-operative work and a variety of groupings, so that pupils extend their relationships beyond a small group of friends.
- Development of a Buddy scheme
- Dealing with the topic of bullying, in a way which explores why it happens and gives alternative ways of behaving, and dealing with difficulties.
- Open door policy of the Head of Pastoral care
- Opportunity to see the school psychologist
- A commitment to consult with and to inform pupils and parents fully about the policy and procedures in place to combat bullying.
- Undertaking regular questionnaires and surveys to monitor the extent of bullying in the school and the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

### Cyber-bullying

#### What is cyber-bullying?

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place over digital devices like cell phones, computers, and tablets. Cyberbullying can occur through SMS, Text, and apps, or online in social media, forums, or gaming where people can view, participate in, or share content. Cyberbullying includes sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or mean content about someone else. It can include sharing personal or private information about someone else causing embarrassment or humiliation. Some cyberbullying

crosses the line into unlawful or criminal behaviour.

(<https://www.stopbullying.gov/cyberbullying/what-is-it>)

### Significance for Victims

Cyber-bullying can have a greater impact than many other forms of bullying because:

- The bully is potentially anonymous;
- Upsetting messages / images can be broadcast to a huge audience (increasing the impact of the bullying);
- Upsetting messages / images can be widely disseminated at speed, repeatedly and by different people;
- The bullying cannot be escaped: cyber-space is open 24/7; so it can be difficult for children experiencing cyberbullying to find relief.
- Students who would not normally take part in bullying may be enticed into bullying in this way, initially by being drawn in as accessories of others' activities (eg by passing on an image received on a mobile phone from the primary bully).

On the positive side, cyber-bullies leave a trail and it is possible in many cases to gather evidence of the bullying activity a victim has experienced.

In very serious incidents, a single action can constitute bullying behaviour. When the harmful activity is on-line (eg on social media), a single action can have a repeated impact and can be viewed by a number of different people, so harmful and/or offensive behaviour on-line does not need to be repeated over time to constitute bullying.

### Significance for the Bullies

Cyber-bullies can easily break the Law by a number of offences that can be committed in the course of cyber-bullying such as harassment, defamation, distribution of pornographic material etc.

In such instances, the school will seek advice from a variety of organisations, as well as from the school's solicitor to establish whether the matter needs to be referred to the police.

### Expectations of the students

Students must not send messages or post comments or imagery with the intent of scaring, hurting, or intimidating someone else.

It is expected that students will report instances of cyber-bullying. Failure to do so may be construed by the school as evidence of complicity in the behaviour. Students should report their suspicions as well as confirmed facts.

Reports can be made to:

- Any member of staff;
- Other students such as peer-mentors, school council representatives, the Head Students;

### The school response

- The misuse of ICT technology is subject to the school's disciplinary policy
- The school reserves the right to monitor students' use of the Internet on a routine basis and to examine mobile phone and computer memory where there is reason to suspect abuse
- Students will be held responsible for all material they have placed on a website and for all

material that appears on a website of which they are the account holder

- Sanctions may include confiscation of mobile phones or laptop computers, or restrictions on the use of the school network or the Internet, but may also involve detention, suspension or expulsion.

The school is mindful of its duty to combat cyber-bullying activity by students even when they are not present on the school campus thus:

- The misuse of the ICT technology outside the school will be subject to school disciplinary procedure if the welfare of other students or the culture or reputation of the school are placed at risk
- Students will be held personally responsible for material they have placed on a web site even if that material was added when the student was not on the school premises
- Students will be held personally responsible for abuse of the internet or mobile phone technology with any deleterious effect on other members of the school community (whether students or members of staff) even if the messages or images were composed or transmitted from outside the school premises.

The school will support students, teachers and parents in dealing with cyberbullying. BSG is committed to Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures and will act in accordance with our child Safeguarding and Protection Policy.

## Guidelines to Students

### What can you do if you are being bullied?

Wherever you are in school, you have the right to feel safe. Nobody has the right to make you feel unhappy. If someone is bullying you, it is important to remember that it is not your fault and there are people who can help you.

- Try not to let the bully know that he/she is making you feel upset. Consider responding by saying something like "... yeah, whatever, ..." each time, so you show them it isn't having the effect of upsetting you in the way they think.
- Try to ignore them.
- Be assertive - stand up to them, look at them directly in the eye, tell them to stop and mean it. You can say clearly "I don't have to accept that and if you say it again I will tell someone."
- Stay in a group; bullies usually pick on individuals.
- Get away as quickly as you can.
- Tell someone you can trust – it can be a teacher, a teaching assistant, a parent, a friend, another pupil, a brother, a sister or a relative.
- Ask a friend to go with you when you tell someone.
- Keep a record of what's been happening and refer to it when you tell someone.
- Save as evidence copies of electronic forms of bullying eg text messages/Facebook conversations.
- Keep on speaking out until someone listens and helps you.
- Don't suffer in silence. Remember your silence is the bully's greatest weapon.
- Do not be intimidated by a bully saying it will be worse for you if you report bullying. • Write down the information, put it in an envelope, address it to Stop Bullying, and post it in the letter box when intimidated.
- Don't blame yourself for what is happening.
- Talk to your Form Tutor or directly to the Head of Pastoral Care : **Ms Mariann Csoma - mariann.csoma@britishschoolgeneva.ch**

### What can you do if you see someone else being bullied?

When someone is being bullied or in distress, take action. Watching and doing nothing suggests support for the bully. Ignoring bullying is cowardly and unfair to the person being bullied. Staying silent means the bully has won and gives them more power. It also makes you complicit in that bully's actions. There are ways you can help without putting yourself in danger.

- Don't smile or laugh at the situation.
- Don't rush over and take the bully on yourself.
- Don't be made to join in.
- If safe to do so, encourage the bully to stop bullying.
- If you can, let the bully know you do not like their behaviour.
- Shout for help.

- Let the person being bullied know that you are going to get help.
- Tell a member of staff as soon as you can.
- Try and befriend the person being bullied.
- Encourage the person to talk to someone and get help.
- Ask someone you trust about what to do.
- If you don't feel you can talk to someone about it, write it down and pass it on. • Do not contribute to on-line communications where cyber bullying is occurring. For example, quit a WhatsApp group.
- Do not tolerate a bully in your circle of friends.
- Remember that calling someone names, incessant teasing or gossiping is bullying. Do not become a bully yourself

### Understanding bullies

If people are making nasty remarks about you, it may be because they are jealous or insecure. The bullies work out which buttons to push to make you upset. They may make remarks about:

- Your weight
- Your looks
- The clothes you wear
- The colour of your hair
- The sound of your voice
- Your family
- Your school work
- Your ethnic background
- If you have a disability
- If you are a different colour
- Or simply if you are 'different' in some way

If there is a ringleader, it is possible that other people who used to be your friends will avoid being seen with you. They could be worried that if they go around with you, they will get bullied in the same way. Try talking to them individually and understand what is going on.

### Body Language

Think about the last time you walked around school. How did you feel? Confident and powerful? Or timid and worried? And how did you look to other people? Were you striding out purposefully with your head up, looking forward, or were you trying to make yourself look insignificant in the hope that you would not be noticed?

Body language tells us a lot about other people. If you are trying not to be noticed and looking at the ground, it can make you more noticeable. You look defensive and vulnerable. If you step out boldly you may not be very confident but you'll certainly look it.