



BRITISH SCHOOL OF GENEVA

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Statement of Intent

At BSG, we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell someone and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

Defining Bullying

Bullying is

- Deliberately hurtful
- Repeated over a period of time (though one-off incidents can be equally traumatic!)
- Difficult for individuals to defend themselves against

Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic because of, or focussing on, the issue of sexuality
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber All areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse
Mobile threats by text messaging & calls
Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities

Why is it Important to have an anti-bullying policy?

- No one deserves to be a victim of bullying.
- Everybody has the right to be treated with respect.
- It should be a part of the wider behaviour policy
- It projects the inclusive ethos of the school.
- It helps with the creation of a safe learning environment
- It helps to promote confidence in all members of the school community
- The aim of the policy should be to focus on prevention.
- When incidents occur we have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively.
- Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

Objectives of this Policy

- All teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.

- All teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- The message needs to be clear: **Bullying will not be tolerated.**

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they 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
- changes 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
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- 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 bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

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

Prevention

As previously stated, prevention is the most important tool in combatting bullying. The following strategies, which are both proactive and supportive, will be used:

- Staff will lead by example in modelling behaviour
- We will use curriculum opportunities to underpin the message
- Lessons/discussions of the issue will form part of the citizenship curriculum.
- Lessons dealing specifically with Internet safety will be part of the ICT curriculum.
- We will establish a restorative rather than punitive ethos & culture
- Playground supervisors will take care to be always alert for incidents, and step in before they develop.
- We will use a School Council made up of pupils as an additional forum for dealing with issues related to bullying. For example, attitudes towards fashion/dress etc.
- We will encourage parental involvement in making sure that pupils always feel able to talk to someone about bullying.

Procedures

1. The message that bullying should be reported must be strongly communicated to pupils.
2. Any cases should be reported without delay to the Form Teacher, HoS & Principal **before any action is taken.** (see flow chart)
3. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying will be investigated jointly by the above mentioned and appropriate action taken quickly.
4. In serious cases parents (of both parties) will also be informed and may be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem
5. In conjunction with this, an attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour.
6. Parents should be encouraged to report any suspicions/incidents of bullying to the school at the earliest opportunity.

Outcomes

- 1) The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place.
- 2) Serious cases may result in suspension or even exclusion.
- 3) If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.
- 4) After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.