



# Anti-Bullying Policy

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**APPROVED BY:** Principal: Janice Short December 2020  
Regional Head of Schools: Karl Wilkinson December  
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This Policy is to be reviewed **every two years** and updated as and when changes occur.

Date of next review: August 2022



# Anti-bullying Policy

## Introduction

Learning, teaching and community well-being are enhanced when positive attitudes are prevalent within a school. However, they can be compromised if the attitudes and are incompatible with the school's ethos and expectations.

Baleares International College, Sant Agusti seeks to create a safe environment in which all members of the school community feel supported and free from bullying; we are working with staff, students and parents to create a school community where bullying is not tolerated. All types of bullying are harmful and can prevent students achieving their academic and personal potential.

We will be firm with anyone who compromises the learning or well-being of others and will take a strong stance against bullying of any type, since it indicates a lack of appreciation for the feelings of others. We will take care to prevent intimidation or taunting using racial, religious, cultural, sexual/sexist or homophobic language or accusations, or towards people with special educational needs or other disabilities.

This policy sets out how we uphold these statements by preventing or tackling bullying. It should be considered in conjunction with, and with reference to our:

- Behaviour Policy;
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- Staff Handbook;
- Concerns & Complaints Policy.

## What is 'Bullying'?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group, either physically or emotionally. Bullying can cause deep distress, to the extent of victims refusing to attend school or even, in extreme cases, attempting or committing suicide.

Four main types of bullying can be identified:

- **Physical** - hitting, kicking, spitting, taking or hiding belongings;
- **Verbal** - name calling, teasing, insulting, threatening, writing or sending unkind notes or messages, including cyber-bullying (see later in policy);
- **Emotional** - being intentionally unfriendly, social exclusion, tormenting looks or gestures, or spreading rumours;
- **Cyber** - harassing, spreading rumours or threatening via text messages, e-mail, social media or social networking sites, including fake websites and profiles or the distribution of photographs, kicking, spitting, taking or hiding belongings; videos or other recordings of someone doing something embarrassing or against their will.



## Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and they should investigate if a child:

- begins to do poorly in school work;
- is unwilling to go to school;
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged;
- has possessions go missing;
- regularly feels ill in the morning;
- becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence;
- cries him/herself to sleep at night or has nightmares/bedwetting;
- stops eating;
- starts stammering;
- has unexplained cuts and bruises;
- attempts or threatens self-harm;
- is frightened to say what is wrong;
- is frightened of walking to or from school or changes his/her usual routine;
- may exhibit signs or engage in bullying behaviour.

All staff should be aware of these possibilities and report promptly any suspicions of bullying to the Principal.

## Dealing with Bullying Incidents

Research shows that bullying is best dealt with immediately, by those who witness it. Bystanders must make it clear to the bully that such behaviour is unacceptable. At Baleares International College, Sant Agusti, we take a zero-tolerance approach: no members of staff will ever encourage or turn a blind eye to any of form of bullying.

## Students

We expect the students at Baleares International College, Sant Agusti to be respectful to each other, treating others as they would like to be treated themselves. At the same time, they are encouraged to - and have the confidence to - speak to a member of staff if they are in distress or have been the victim of inappropriate behaviour. In the event of experiencing or witnessing bullying, students are expected to:

- deny the bully an audience by not accepting bullying behaviour at its source, at the first indication of the problem;
- report all bullying incidents to their Class Teacher or any other member of staff (especially during breaktimes), even when they believe that their actions have been effective in halting the behaviour.

## Staff

All staff are expected to play an active part in building a sense of community, model the type of behaviour considered acceptable and to apply the agreed standards of behaviour consistently. They should be alert to signs of bullying and racist attitudes and deal firmly with such issues.



a. No Blame Policy

A teacher or member of the staff receiving a report of bullying should write down what they know and pass it to the student's class teacher, who will decide with the Principal who is to apply the procedure. In principle, any member of staff can follow the steps outlined here. The Principal in consultation with the class teacher and member of staff will also decide whether the incident should be considered as 'serious bullying' and is in need of further referral, possibly leading to exclusion.

The teacher interviews the person who feels bullied, and records who was involved in the bullying, and how the speaker feels. The teacher asks for clearance to report these things to those concerned.

The teacher then meets all involved. He/she explains the problem, and the feelings of a class member. He/she promises that no-one is to be blamed or punished, but states that she knows that the group are responsible and can do something about the problem. He/she asks all concerned for their suggestions about how to change the situation so that the class member feels happier. All names are kept confidential and no single student is identified as either a victim or perpetrator.

The group offers suggestions about how the student could be helped to feel happier. The teacher responds positively but does not look for promises of improved behaviour. Then the problem is left with the group. An arrangement is made to see them again to see how things are going.

A week later or after a suitable agreed time, he/she checks how all the people concerned are getting on. A second meeting is occasionally needed.

If in instances where the 'No Blame' approach has been unsuccessful, the school will adopt - after detailed and sustained investigation - the following stepped approach:

b. Bullying investigation approach

At Baleares International College, Sant Agusti, intimidating or bullying others (including by electronic media [cyber-bullying]) are considered as 'serious' breaches of the Behaviour Policy, and a range of strategies and/or sanctions may be applied, determined in accordance with the Behaviour Policy and through consideration of the nature of the bullying on a case-by-case basis.

Where students do not respond to preventative strategies or to our No Blame policy to combat bullying, further action will be taken as follows:

**STEP 1:** for minor/single incidents

An apology and assurance that bullying will stop and/or a detention including an extended piece of written work. A temporary exclusion from certain areas of the school site may also be considered. A formal letter will be sent home explaining the actions taken and the reasons why. This may also include:

- Writing a letter of apology
- Removal from the group (in class);
- Withdrawal of break and lunchtime privileges;



**STEP 2:** for more serious cases

As Step 1 and parents will be asked to come into school to discuss the problem. This may also include:

- Withdrawal of other privileges
- Withholding participation in any School trip or sports events that are not an essential part of the curriculum;
- A **Weekly Report Card** monitored by the Class Teacher or by the Principal;
- **Warning** of exclusion in the event of further misbehaviour;

The Principal will contact the parents/guardian, by telephone or e-mail, to inform them of the situation and will arrange a meeting with the student, the parents, and the Class Teacher (and with the SENCO/Child Protection Officer if necessary). The appropriate sanction will be explained at the meeting and subsequently implemented.

Some offences, where it is the duty of the school to report incidents, may lead to police/regulatory authorities' involvement in order to safeguard the school community. The school may also offer support to the student in terms of outside counselling.

**STEP 3:** for very serious cases or incidents sustained over time

As Steps 1 and 2 and exclusion from lessons (internal exclusion) or temporary exclusion from school (external exclusion). In the most extreme cases a student may be permanently excluded from school and removed from the Baleares International College student roll.

- **Internal Suspension** (between 1 and 3 days, depending on severity);
- **External Suspension** (between 1 and 3 days, depending on severity). Student and parents must meet with the Principal on the day of return, prior to the student being permitted back in class;
- **Indefinite Suspension** is an exclusion from school for an unspecified period. This is usually used to enable further investigations into serious incidents to take place;
- **Permanent Exclusion** (expulsion) is the ultimate sanction.

**Further Offences**

Any further instances of bullying will be dealt with directly by the Principal and may result in the parents being required to find alternative arrangements for the education of their child.

In such cases, the Principal will inform Orbital Education and discuss options with the Regional Head of Schools.

The Principal will notify the parents/guardians of the sanctions by letter.

**Review and Appeal**

The review and appeal process for serious disciplinary matters is outlined in and governed by the Concerns & Complaints Policy.



## **Staff guidance: if bullying is reported, or if staff notice a bullying incident.**

Minor incidents will be reported to the student's Class Teacher, who should investigate the incident and inform the Principal in writing of the outcome.

For serious incidents of bullying, staff will inform the Principal straight away.

### **1. Interview the victim, alleged bully and any witnesses separately.**

- Try to ensure that there is no possibility of contact between the students interviewed.
- If a student is injured, take the student immediately to the Reception Office for a medical opinion of the extent of the injuries.
- Use a room that allows you to interview in privacy. A witness is recommended for serious incidents.
- Avoid making premature assumptions. It is very important not to be judgemental at this stage.
- Be non-confrontational.
- Ask the alleged bully and the alleged victim to write down details. This may need prompting with questions from you to obtain the full picture though these should not be leading.
- Ask additional witnesses/by-standers for information, preferably written.
- Listen carefully to all accounts - several students saying the same does not necessarily mean they are telling the truth, particularly if they have had an opportunity to discuss the incident in advance.
- Do not attach blame until your investigation is complete.
- Adopt a problem-solving approach which moves a bully on from justifying themselves. Ask the alleged bully to suggest ways in which the situation can be improved.
- If the bullied student might have provoked the bullying incident, help them to understand how.
- Tell all students interviewed that they must not discuss the interview with other students.

### **2. Record details of the bullying**

- Write a very brief summary of the incident and share with relevant parties.
- Write a more detailed single account and attach written statements of alleged victim, alleged bully and witnesses. Full names of all involved should be included in this account. (ISAMS)
- All written notes should have copies made and shared with the Principal and an entry is made into the student file.

### **3. Take appropriate action to deal with the bully**

- If you are satisfied that bullying did take place, help the student to understand the consequences of their actions and warn them that there must be no further intimidation. Inform them of the type of sanction to be used if the bullying is repeated: STEP 1, STEP 2 and STEP 3 of the sanction procedure.
- If possible, try for reconciliation and genuine apology from the student.
- Realise that some students do not appreciate the distress they are causing and are willing to change their behaviour.
- Try to reach agreement on reasonable long-term behaviour.



- Inform parents about bullying incidents and what action is being taken - the School Office will send a letter/email to parents.

#### 4. Support the victim - follow up checks

- The Class Teacher should check informally on a weekly basis for a month after the complaint of bullying.
- If necessary, break up the group dynamics by asking staff to assign places in classes.
- Discuss bullying in assembly or in the class/form or during PSHE delivery.
- If bullying is about a particular issue, mount an education programme during tutorial time, not focused on a particular child.
- Ask another student to befriend and support the victim.
- Give constructive advice if the victim seems to have been bullied because they are being a nuisance or intruding.
- Use peer mediation to resolve conflict if appropriate.

### Supporting Students

All the students concerned should be fully involved in discussions leading up to the solution and should not be left feeling isolated. The most effective resolutions may come from frank and honest group discussions that involve both the bullied and the bully, with other students of their choice in attendance and encouraged to participate, which help the students to resolve the matter themselves with support and vigilance from the staff. It must also be remembered that bullying is not a conflict between people of equal power who share equal blame and facing those who have bullied may further upset those who have been bullied.

#### Bullied students

Staff who deal with students who have been bullied must always offer reassurance. Students who have been bullied will be given support.

#### Bullies

Whilst the school recognises that sanctions will have to be used against a bully, it is also recognised that support must also be given to him/her. Changing the attitude and behaviour of bullies is part of the responsibility of the positive procedures used by the school. After the bullying issue is resolved, staff should continue to seek ways to help the student who bullied to understand how what they do affects other people, such as praising acts of kindness or talking about what it means to be a good friend.

### Bullying amongst adults

At Baleares International College, Sant Agusti, we do not tolerate the harassment or bullying of adult members of the school community in just the same way as we do not tolerate it amongst the students. Any cases of bullying among adult members of the school community should be reported directly to the Principal. If the bullying accusation is associated with the Principal, staff should contact the Regional Head of School.



## Reporting and Recording

Reports of bullying will be logged through a completed Bullying Incident form given to the Principal.

Once processed by the Principal, including sanctions applied, any further or follow-up actions and key points from the meetings with parents, records of bullying incidents are kept in a secure file by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Adults who are being bullied or who believe that another person of any age is being bullied should speak in confidence to the Principal without delay.

## Strategies for the Prevention of Bullying

### Curricular Contribution

The School embeds the anti-social nature of bullying through its PSHE programme, assemblies, class time, SMSC activities (Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural), Student Council activities and within the curriculum as appropriate. Individual Class Teachers will lead anti-bullying strategies, using Assemblies, Class time or break times, as appropriate, to create the time needed to address problems promptly, quickly and discreetly. Our Friendship Week and Anti Bullying theme days held every term are specifically designated to this important topic.

Themes and topics through these activities will include:

- **Knowledge**
  - what bullying is and what are the different types of bullying;
  - the school's Anti-Bullying Policy;
  - the harm caused by bullying and why it must be stopped.
- **Attitudes**
  - being unprejudiced;
  - being cooperative and empathetic;
  - resisting negative group pressure;
  - being self-accepting and resilient, as an antidote to discouragement.
- **Skills**
  - being assertive without acting aggressively;
  - resolving differences constructively, using conflict resolution techniques;
  - learning and using face-to-face communication skills to solve issues (rather than through messaging and social media)
  - helping others who are being bullied, as a good bystander;
  - reacting effectively if bullied.

In including these elements care must be taken to make sure that the content is age-appropriate and sufficient time is provided so that the knowledge can be assimilated, student attitudes significantly influenced, and the necessary skills developed as far as is possible.

## Cyber Bullying

Victims of cyber bullying should not respond to malicious texts or e-mails. They should save the evidence and report it immediately. To further help reduce the risk of cyber bullying, individuals should always keep their passwords safe and not give out personal details online.





## **Involving Parents**

Parents, as well as all staff and students, should know that the school will not tolerate bullying and takes a positive, proactive approach to educating pupils to combat it. Parents will be informed of the policy and procedures.

## **Links and Resources**

There is excellent advice at <http://www.bullying.co.uk/advice/bullying-policies-1#>, which outlines the dangers of ill-advised remedy by well-meaning teachers and this indicates clearly that the communication of problems by victims or witnesses is central to successful minimisation of bullying in school. Other helpful websites include:

<http://thebullyproject.startempathy.org/>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bullying>

<http://www.childline.org.uk/explore/bullying/pages/bullying.aspx>

[http://kidshealth.org/teen/your\\_mind/problems/bullies.html#](http://kidshealth.org/teen/your_mind/problems/bullies.html#)

<http://www.stompoutbullying.org/>

<http://www.erasebullying.ca/index.php>

## **Monitoring and Review**

This policy is to be reviewed every two years, though any deficiencies or weaknesses in these arrangements will be remedied without delay.

This policy will be reviewed by the Principal, who will forward recommendations to the Regional Head of School for approval.