



## **WHOLE SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

### **(Website and Parents)**

#### **Purpose**

The British School of Tenerife strives to provide a safe, secure environment for all our students where they are treated with respect and allowed to develop within a positive learning environment. We are committed to a policy of inclusion, equality and justice.

We have a zero-tolerance policy towards bullying of any kind and take all incidents seriously. All students at the BST have the right to be valued for their individuality, and we believe that when bullying is challenged effectively students feel safe to express themselves freely.

#### **Bullying is defined as:**

To verbally, physically or psychologically hurt, intimidate or embarrass another person.

- The action must be repeated over time.
- It must be deliberate.
- It involves an imbalance of power.
- It causes distress.

#### **Consequences of Bullying:**

Where bullying goes unchecked in schools:

- The victims will be unhappy and may feel unsafe. Their achievements at school may suffer, as may their health.

- All pupils are provided with a negative role model and are impoverished morally, spiritually and culturally.

**The British School of Tenerife aims to:**

- Promote a climate of openness about sharing feelings of being hurt (bullying thrives on secrecy).
- Ensure that all pupils feel there is an adult in school to whom they can talk to and that the incident will be dealt with in a discrete and sensitive manner.
- Encourage all pupils including witnesses and bystanders to speak out if they see or hear any bullying. They must be taught that they are not ‘telling tales’ but instead have a responsibility to tell an adult so that we can help the instigator change their behaviour. If despite this, a student is still worried about reporting a case of bullying, two anonymous Bullying boxes in Secondary, and a STOP box in Primary can be used to leave their concerns in writing.
- Ensure there is a clear procedure to follow with incidents of bullying ([\*ABP Bullying Investigation Procedure\*](#)).
- Prevent bullying by providing the opportunity to discuss it regularly in PSHEE lessons in both Primary and Secondary as part of the subject curriculum. To continue raising student’s awareness on this difficult issue, the school also celebrates Anti-Bullying week every year.
- Provide staff with presentations on bullying Investigation procedures.
- Make clear the unacceptable nature of bullying to pupils and parents.

**Types of Bullying**

**Physical bullying may include:**

- Hitting or punching
- Kicking
- Slapping
- Pushing

- Forcing others to fight
- Spitting
- Damaging property

**Psychological bullying may include:**

- Verbal abuse
- Racist abuse
- Sexist abuse
- Teasing (particularly involving family, appearance, clothes, abilities)
- Spreading rumours
- Isolating or excluding
- Stealing/demanding money
- Name calling/nicknames (without the person's consent),
- Taking away someone's control
- Dirty looks or staring
- Making threats

Those who collude by failing to intervene can also be guilty of bullying.

**Cyber Bullying** (Please see also E-Safety Policy)

Cyber bullying includes spreading rumours, manipulation and social exclusion and intimidation through the use of mobile devices. This can be done through identity theft, e-mail, text messaging, webcams, chat rooms, blogs, forums, etc.

Cyberbullying can occur anytime, anywhere with the possibility of reaching a very large audience very quickly. In some cases, it can be unintentional as students may not think about the consequences of sending messages or images online. Nonetheless the school zero tolerance to bullying practices would apply and the same procedures should be followed to refer a case of cyberbullying at BST.

It is important to understand that bullying is NOT an occasional falling out with friends or isolated acts of mean behaviour.

Pupils should be made aware of the fact that there is a Bullying box in Secondary and a "STOP" box in Primary and the location of the box. They should be assured that the information posted in there is confidential and anonymous.

There will be STOP signs in every Primary classroom and around school.

STOP = Several Times On Purpose.

STOP = Start Telling Other People.

### **When following The Anti Bullying Investigation Procedure**

- Interviews will be conducted with all students involved in the case and parents may be called in to discuss action plans.
- A meticulous record of all notes will be logged and shared with the relevant staff involved in the case.
- Parents of both instigators and victims will be regularly updated on the case.
- Counselling may be given to both instigators and victims during the process.
- An action plan will be created and shared with students, parents and teachers.
- All parties may be required to have regular meetings with the counsellor to track and monitor progress.
- If the Academic Director feels it is necessary to request the intervention of an external psychologist, students and parents MUST co-operate.
- The school investigators are free to continue to offer support to all involved and have the right to speak to any student named in a case of bullying.

- Instigator's parents will be informed of unacceptable behaviour and advised of consequences and sanctions. Parents who do not collaborate with the school may be asked to take their child out of the school.
- The instigator (or victim if they request) may be changed to a different class if the school deems it necessary.

### **Advice for Parents**

As a parent, your child will probably talk to you first about any concerns they have in school. It is important that you remain calm and be supportive.

Should your child confide in you, please speak directly to the class teacher or form tutor who will immediately refer the case to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

**However, if the concern is an issue of bullying, you must put this in writing. It will then be dealt with under the guidelines of the school's anti-bullying policy.**

While the school strives to respect confidentiality, this may not always be possible particularly where there are concerns that pupils' health and safety could be at risk.

*It would be useful if you could note down:*

- Who was involved?
- What form did the bullying take?
- Where it happened?
- When and how often did it happen?

So that the school can efficiently investigate any allegations, it is important that parents do not directly approach any other students involved (or parents of

students), but rather leave the investigation and interview process to the school. It is important not to jeopardise the case by discussing it with others whilst the procedure is in progress.

It is important to understand that bullying is NOT an occasional falling out with friends or isolated acts of mean behaviour. However, if it is considered a serious case of bullying the parents of both the victim and the instigator will be informed and possible action plans and appropriate sanctions discussed.

**Signs that your child may be being bullied:**

- Reluctance/ anxiety to attend school
- Deterioration in school work and/ or motivation
- Becomes withdrawn or lacking in confidence
- Has sleepless nights or nightmares
- Changes in their behaviour
- Reports regular illness
- Becomes nervous about using internet-based technology

**If you are concerned your child is bullying:**

It is important to recognise the reasons why pupils may bully others:

- They may be being encouraged by friends or copying the behaviour of others.
- They may be having social problems themselves within their peer group.
- They may be suffering from low self-esteem.
- There may be changes in personal circumstances.
- They may be feeling insecure about themselves.

Should you have concerns that your child may be behaving inappropriately, the best way to help is to talk to them at home about their behaviour and how it may be affecting others. It is essential that you discuss these concerns with the class teacher or form tutor.

### **Bullying Sanctions**

In relation to bullying all of the above sanctions apply and will reflect the level of severity. The level of involvement of each particular student will also be assessed. In addition, the following actions will be considered, and if necessary carried out.

- Suspected instigators will be interviewed individually.
- It will be made clear why their behaviour was inappropriate and caused distress.
- They will be offered guidance on modifying their behaviour, together with any appropriate disciplinary sanctions
- A way forward including disciplinary sanctions and counselling should be agreed
- Phone or electronic equipment may be confiscated and reviewed in incidences of cyber-bullying
- Instigators may be required to change class or year-group
- Particular students may be indefinitely separated during playtime and lunch
- In severe cases parents of instigators may be required to collect their children from classrooms and supervise them on the way home

### **Exclusion**

The Academic Director has the power to exclude a student. This will be considered when the continued presence of the student will cause distress and suffering to others, or where there has been a serious breach in school rules.

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