



Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy applies to: BCVN Preparatory

Policy owner:	Headof Prep
Frequency of review:	Annually
Date of policy	August 2024
Next formal review:	August 2025
	This policy is reviewed by the Head of Prep working with the Deputy Pastoral (DSL) in the Prep School

BCVN Anti Bullying Policy

Purpose and Scope of Policy

At Brighton College Vietnam Prep School, the morale and happiness of our pupils is paramount in all our pastoral care. Our aim is to encourage positive behaviour so that anti-social behaviour, such as bullying, is prevented. This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's *Policy to Promote Good Behaviour and Pastoral Care (Including Sanctions)*. We believe that encouraging positive behaviour is an essential part of preventing bullying.

Aims and Objectives

All staff and pupils should have an understanding of what is socially acceptable and what is not. Bullying is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. Members of staff discuss suspected bullying/friendship problems in whole staff and year group meetings.

We have clearly laid-out procedures for reporting bullying and dealing with bullying. These procedures should be understood by both staff and pupils. Pupils should be comfortable with the procedures and confident in using them.

Staff will be encouraged to pursue strategies to encourage positive behaviour - this may include discussions in lessons, appropriate novels, assemblies on bullying, role plays or children's stories. Regular INSET will also help staff deal with bullying issues. Adequate supervision at break-times, in areas such as the playgrounds and changing rooms, is important in preventing bullying.

Bullying is closely connected with pupil wellbeing and therefore will often require a safeguarding response (see Safeguarding policy). Bullying demonstrates a lack of respect for others which can overlap with abusive and harassing behaviour and which, in turn, can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children. All this informs the school's zero-tolerance approach, and it is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers that are actually abusive in nature.

Anti-Bullying Statement

Bullying is any behaviour (which may be persistent or could, in extreme cases, be a single instance), verbal, non-verbal, or physical, which upsets another person or persons or makes them unhappy. Different types of bullying may include racial, religious, cultural, sexual/sexist, homophobic, special educational needs/disability, and cyber.

Bullying, as defined, is unacceptable behaviour and will not be condoned, either by staff or pupils.

BCVN is a caring community where Curiosity, Confidence, and Kindness are the cornerstones of our values. All members are actively encouraged to respect others and to develop strong interpersonal skills with everyone they encounter in their lives.

Types of Bullying

Bullying can be:

Physical	Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
Verbal	Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
Emotional	Excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures), intimidation
Racial	Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
Sexual	Unwanted physical contact or abusive comments

Bullying also can be *prejudice-based/discriminatory* (see below), *cultural, religious, sexist, homophobic, cyber* (see below) or directed at *disability*.

However, discretion is needed in judging behaviour as isolated incidents of name-calling are often bad behaviour rather than bullying; the hiding of other children's things is not always bullying, for example.

In some incidents where children claim to be a victim of bullying, but which are not clear cut, it is best to take a 'no blame' approach, with open discussion taking place between all pupils involved. This can reduce any sense of injustice and resentment felt by pupils, if bullying in the true sense of the word has not taken place.

It should be remembered that each child is unique. Some children are more sensitive than others and children respond to bullying in different ways.

Cyberbullying

BCVN members of staff are constantly vigilant concerning the growing problem of 'cyberbullying'.

Cyberbullying is the use of information and communications technology, particularly social media websites, mobile phones (including texting and the sending of photos), emails and use of the internet, to upset someone else deliberately. It can take the form of many behaviours including:

- Harmful messages (text, social media, email)
- Impersonating another person online
- Sharing private messages
- Uploading photographs or videos of another person that leads to shame and embarrassment
- Creating hate websites/social media pages
- Excluding people from online groups

Cyberbullying is any form of online abuse, which can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography to those who do not want to receive such content.

Through various measures, including assemblies, not allowing pupils to email each other in school or to have mobile phones during the timetabled day, notices in newsletters, the school seeks to minimise any bullying in this area. Internet-blocking technologies are continually updated and harmful sites are blocked. Images and information about pupils and staff cannot be accessed from outside school. Pupils are made aware of their responsibilities within school and the school alerts parents to their responsibilities at home (when pupils can spend considerable time on computers).

Prejudice-based and Discriminatory Bullying

Bullying may be motivated by prejudice, such as comments or references made about another person's race, religion, culture, gender, sexuality or disability, among other things. It can also be motivated by actual or perceived differences between children, such as where a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. These comments may be made to the person's face or online or in their absence.

A strong emphasis is placed by the school on each individual pupil feeling confident and free to be themselves, and it is vital that staff (and indeed other pupils) are quick to respond to any unkindness which may be targeted at such aspects of who a pupil is. This includes so-called 'banter' and jokes which will not be tolerated if linked in any way to unkindness or bullying which is in any way prejudice-based or motivated by discrimination.

Signs and symptoms (adapted from Stop Bullying! KIDSCAPE)

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

- Is frightened of walking to or from school
- Is unwilling to go to school
- Is unwilling to go out to play
- Begins to do poorly in school work
- Desires to move place in class
- Becomes withdrawn
- Starts stammering
- Regularly has books or clothes destroyed
- Becomes distressed
- Stops eating
- Cries easily
- Becomes disruptive or aggressive
- Has possessions go 'missing'
- Starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- Is frightened to say what's wrong
- Has nightmares
- Attempts suicide or runs away

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

Procedures

1. Report worrying or significant incidents to relevant staff – the class teacher in the first instance, and the Deputy Head Pastoral, The Head of Prep is informed of serious incidents. Break-time incidents that are not minor are referred to the relevant staff by duty staff.
2. Where the bullying raises safeguarding concerns (for either victim or perpetrator), report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead so that appropriate action may be considered and taken (see Safeguarding policy).
3. Significant incidents will be recorded by staff in the pupil files and pupils involved in incidents that are witnessed by two or more pupils, or one member of staff, should also automatically receive a red card or sticker, at the very least. Incidents where there is doubt can be recorded in the files with a rider, e.g. 'unproven' or 'not confirmed'.
4. Bullying incidents and reported incidents are recorded in the bullying log. The bullying log is used to consider any patterns identifiable, and to help to evaluate the effectiveness of the approach adopted. The records should distinguish any incidents of bullying which are motivated by prejudice or discrimination, to enable us to monitor effectiveness in instilling values of tolerance and respect and actively promoting the well-being of pupils.
5. Wherever possible, use a restorative approach. This involves getting the pupils together with a member of staff and asking the pupils to talk about how they each feel, try to get them to empathise with each other and then get them to 'make up' and move on.
6. Parents and guardians should be informed (in serious cases) and will usually be asked to attend a meeting to discuss the problem. This must be arranged with either the Head of Prep or relevant pastoral manager. In these cases, a record of the meeting will be kept in the pupil's file and it should also be recorded on iSAMS. Parents and guardians are regarded as part of a partnership with the school in supporting an anti-bullying ethos.
7. In serious cases, suspension or even permanent exclusion will be considered and in the latter case, the nominated governor for child protection and anti-bullying will be kept informed. Such sanctions are recorded in the pupil sanction record.
8. In extreme cases, and if appropriate, police will be consulted.

Bullying and Pupil Well-being

The school has a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Bullying will often require a safeguarding response from staff. Wherever there is a safeguarding concern, school staff must discuss with the designated safeguarding lead so that appropriate action may be considered and taken. Full details can be found in the school's Safeguarding policy.

Obviously, external support can be given to pupils whether or not it is deemed a safeguarding concern. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, we may draw on a range of external services

to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child engaging in bullying.

Bullying Off Site

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on. The Head of Prep has specific power to enable the policing of behaviour away from the school.

Desirable Outcomes

1. The bullying behaviour and threats of bullying must stop immediately.
2. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour – restorative practices should help with this.
3. The bully will be encouraged to offer an apology, either verbally or in writing and other appropriate actions may take place.
4. Support will be offered to the victim by peers and staff. At times, support may also be appropriate from prefects and peer mentors ('buddies') within the house system in the Years 4-8. The class teacher or assistant in the Year 1 to Year 3 would offer this too. In appropriate cases sessions can be offered with the school wellbeing practitioner in liaison with the relevant Deputy Head.
5. If possible, pupils will be reconciled (restorative practices).

BCVN ANTI-BULLYING CODE

1. The pupils of BCVN do not tolerate bullying.

Intimidation, silent treatment, excluding others, spreading rumours, racism, sexism, hiding/stealing property, practical jokes, fighting, ganging up and making fun of people are all examples of UNACCEPTABLE behaviour.

2. Support for each other is vital in the school.

If you encounter any of the above types of behaviour, you must tell someone about it. This advice applies to us all: the witness, the bully and the victim. You all have a responsibility to our school and the people in it.

3. Who do you tell?

It is more important to tell *someone* than to worry about exactly *who* you should tell. Possible people to tell are:

- Your class teacher
- Any of the teachers/teaching assistants
- The school nurse
- Parents
- A friend
- If you can't say it, write it!

4. Never suffer in silence

Be assured that anything you say will be dealt with in a sensitive way. You will be taken seriously, supported and kept safe.