



The Oxford School, Dubai

OUR ANTI-BULLYING & ANTI-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The school's aim for Pupil Welfare is to meet the personal and social needs of each individual in a healthy, safe and secure environment. We wish to promote good relationships within a happy, purposeful school community where respect for self and others, courtesy and consideration are valued and practiced so that all pupils can flourish.

'Bullying is deliberately hurtful behavior repeated often over a period of time. Others argue that bullying doesn't have to imply a series of incidents – it can be any occasion where someone deliberately intimidates or harasses another.

Children have described bullying as:

- being called names
- being teased
- being hit, pushed, pulled, pinched or kicked
- having their bag or other possessions taken
- receiving abusive text messages or emails
- being forced to hand over money
- being forced to do things they don't want to do
- being ignored or left out
- being attacked because of religion, gender, disability, appearance or ethnic or racial origin.'

As a school, we also consider the following as falling into the category of bullying - any form of discrimination or harassment on the grounds of:

- race, ethnic or national origin, nationality or colour;
- age;
- gender;
- disabilities, sensory impairment or learning difficulties;
- religion or philosophical belief;
- socio-economic status;
- other real or perceived differences.

This list is not exhaustive and other reasons for discrimination or harassment are not excluded from this Policy and associated procedures.

Some bullying can be unintentional or unconscious; the perpetrator may be unaware of how his/her actions, remarks or body-language can affect others.

Bullying of any kind or any form of discrimination (racist or otherwise) is unacceptable at our school. There should be no fear or danger, no threat of fear or danger, and no perception of fear or danger. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell someone and know that incidents will be responded to efficiently and sensitively. If a

victim is too frightened to tell, witnesses have a duty to do so. It is the duty of anyone who sees an act of bullying to stop it. Bullying thrives where bystanders collude by not interfering.

Bullying of any kind or any form of discrimination (racist or otherwise) affects everyone, and we – staff, parents and pupils – all have a responsibility to prevent it happening. Our view is that prevention is better than cure and we aim to create a climate of trust and respect by a cross-curricular approach. We explore the factors that lead to bullying, and practice skills to reject such behavior in a variety of areas including:

- Personal & Social Education
- Religious & Moral Education
- English and Drama
- Registration Time/ Circle Time
- Class Assemblies
- Anti-bullying Workshops.

OUR ANTI-BULLYING & ANTI-DISCRIMINATION PROCEDURES

The school's general approach

Any report of bullying or discrimination will be taken seriously. We will take firm action against any bullying, teasing, harassment, or other form of hurtful behavior.

1. Staff, parents, and pupils should look out for early signs of stress and note any change in behavior, deterioration in work, or reluctance to come to school.
2. Any pupil who experiences, observes, or hears of bullying should report it to a member of staff.
3. In Junior School, any member of staff who observes or hears of bullying should report it to the relevant class teacher. In Senior School, staff should report concerns to the relevant Supervisor.
4. When an incident is reported, it will be investigated promptly by the Discipline Committee who will interview both parties and witnesses.
5. The incident and interviews will be recorded, signed, dated and filed by the class teacher (Junior School) or The Supervisor (Senior School).
6. Class Teachers, Supervisors and other relevant members of staff will be informed as appropriate.
7. The Principal will be consulted as to whether parents should be informed and if appropriate they will be brought in to school to discuss the problem.
8. The situation will be carefully monitored; the victim will be seen at regular intervals until the situation is resolved. Every situation will be judged on its own merits, and strategies to deal with it will be selected with care and sensitivity.

Possible strategies to help the victim

- Sometimes a word from the teacher is enough to stop the offensive behaviour.
- Groups of pupils may be brought together to investigate the matter further and discuss solutions.
- The whole class may be brought together if the bullying is felt to be widespread.
- A genuine apology should be given, either verbal or written, and a reconciliation should be sought where and when possible.
- Peer mentoring may be employed.
- The Counselor will offer coping strategies for both victim and bully.

Coping strategies for the victim

- Victims will be made aware that it is not their fault.
- They should be encouraged to think positively about themselves.
- They should try to work out what reaction the bully wants and not give in.
- They should not retaliate.
- They should practice assertive behavior, including use of body language.
- They should avoid situations where bullying might occur.
- They should speak to people they trust and with whom they are comfortable.

Sanctions for the bully

These **may** include, as appropriate:

Senior School:

- verbal warning
- banning from P.E. and activities
- isolation at break
- loss of a current position of responsibility, or ineligibility for consideration for future posts
- suspension from school

Junior School:

- moving seat
- loss of P.E.
- loss of a position of responsibility

Positive strategies for the bully

- Bullies will be made aware of the victim's feelings, encouraged to accept responsibility and help find solutions.
- They should be helped to change their behavior and find positive outlets for their energy.
- They may be given opportunities to make a positive contribution to school e.g. organize an event.
- In some cases, counseling may be arranged.

We rely on trust, respect and good communications to deal with any reports of bullying. It is the responsibility of the whole school community to try to keep The Oxford School free of this unacceptable behavior.

Informal Procedures in response to an Incident of Bullying or Discrimination

Each step under this procedure should be undertaken without unreasonable delay and careful records must be kept to be filed appropriately.

Informal procedures will not always be appropriate but in relation to minor incidents of bullying, discrimination or harassment, individuals (through mediation with the help of a member of staff) are encouraged to resolve the

situation informally, by talking directly, politely and unambiguously to the person concerned. However, if this is not possible, or is inappropriate, or does not have the desired effect, the member of staff who has responsibility for dealing with the incident should initiate formal procedures involving the Deputy Head as laid out below.

During this process, staff may decide that the course of action will include specific sanctions as well as support.

Formal Procedures in response to an Incident of Bullying or Discrimination

Each step under this procedure should be undertaken without unreasonable delay and careful records must be kept to be filed appropriately.

1. A full investigation into the incident will be made under the supervision of the Vice Principal.
2. Statements will be gathered from the alleged bully and from the alleged victim giving their individual perspectives on precisely what happened.
3. Further statements may be taken from witnesses to the incident where appropriate. These witnesses may be pupils or members of staff but must stand up to scrutiny as objective.
4. Parents will be informed and, as required, asked to come into school to discuss what has happened.
5. A decision will be made as to the action required. This may involve disciplinary procedures intended to change and modify behaviour rather than label anyone as a bully or a racist. Possible sanctions are listed above (appropriate to the Junior or the Senior School).
6. Staff will monitor both bully and victim on an ongoing basis and will keep parents or guardians informed of any developments.
7. Each incident will be reviewed after an agreed period of time. The manner of this review will be dependent on the nature of the incident and the ages of those involved.

Sd/-
Principal
The Oxford School, Dubai

