

AIMS OF THIS POLICY

At BIS everyone is valued and respected. We are committed to providing a caring, safe and friendly environment (physical & virtual) in which effective teaching and learning can take place and all children can do their best. Moreover, we give technological advancement its careful attention for the benefit it has on students' lives, achievement, and career development. However, the School is mindful of the potential for bullying to occur. Central to the School's anti-bullying policy is the belief that 'all pupils have a right not to be bullied' and that 'bullying is always unacceptable'. The School also recognizes that it must 'take note of bullying perpetrated outside School which spills over into the School'. Based on this belief and on the UAE national restrictions set to terminate such types of bullying, the school has set this policy to protect all involved personnel.

EXPECTATIONS

The school expects that all members of the school community will adhere to this policy and promote acceptable behaviour and to stop bullying including cyber bullying at every opportunity. The school recognises that high standards in behaviour can only be promoted when everyone has clear understanding of what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.

We define bullying online & otherwise as:

aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual using electronic or other forms of contact repeatedly over time against a victim who cannot easily defend himself/herself. By cyber-bullying, we mean bullying by electronic media:

- Bullying by texts or messages or calls on mobile phones
- The use of mobile phone cameras to cause distress, fear or humiliation
- Posting threatening, abusive, or humiliating material on websites, to include blogs, personal websites, social networking sites
- Using e-mail to message others
- Hijacking/cloning e-mail accounts
- Making threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating remarks on any social networking site

PROCEDURES

The staff and management of the school will:

- Treat all incidents reports promptly, seriously and sympathetically following the incident reporting channel
- Students are aware of the online safety group members & how they can be contacted
- Remain totally objective and helpful
- intervene and investigate and deal with the alleged incident
- take disciplinary action, in line with the Ministry of Education's Behaviour Policy, will be taken where appropriate. Such action may include letters, meetings with parents, internal suspension or further action deemed appropriate by the school for the situation
- Cyber-bullying is generally criminal in character. It is unlawful to spread defamatory information in any media including social networking sites. If deemed necessary legal action will be taken
- work with the Police if necessary to detect those involved in criminal acts.
- use, as appropriate, the full range of sanctions to correct, punish or remove pupils who bully fellow pupils or harass staff in this way, both in or out of school.
- use its power of confiscation where necessary to prevent pupils from committing crimes or misusing equipment.

Prevention

- At all times, it should be made clear to students and parents that bullying in all forms- virtual or otherwise is unacceptable. All actions and words must show that we care and that we listen to and act upon all complaints
- Make sure standards of monitoring and supervision out of classrooms are maintained
- Establish potential “danger areas’ and monitor rigorously
- Identify potential bullies and victims — ensure they are provided with appropriate counselling and monitoring
- Ensure students know staff are available and accessible at any time
- EDUCATE pupils both in the proper use of telecommunications and about the serious consequences of cyber-bullying and will, through ICT lessons and assemblies, continue to inform and educate its pupils in these fast-changing areas.
- STAFF TRAINING to respond effectively to reports of cyber-bullying or harassment and have systems in place to respond to it. The details about school’s data protection & password security requirements are shared with teachers so they work in a way that helps to promote online safety.
- IT SUPPORT to block access for inappropriate web sites, using firewalls, antivirus protection and filtering systems and no pupil is allowed to work on the internet in the Computer Room, or any other location within the school which may from time to time be used for such work, without a member of staff present.
- AUDITS of ICT communications and regularly review of the security arrangements in place if required. Whilst education and guidance remain at the heart of what we do, the school reserves the right to take action against those who take part in cyber-bullying.
- REPORTING by all members of the School community who understand their duty to follow the incident reporting channel for any example of cyber-bullying or harassment that they know about or suspect.

GUIDANCE FOR STUDENTS

- If you believe you or someone else is the victim of cyber-bullying, you must speak to an adult as soon as possible. This person could be a parent/guardian, your tutor, or the supervisor.
- Do not answer abusive messages but log and report them
- Do not delete anything until it has been shown to your Form Teacher, parents/guardian or the supervisor (even if it is upsetting, the material is important evidence which may need to be used later as proof of cyber-bullying)
- Do not give out personal ID details
- Never reply to abusive e-mails
- Never reply to someone you do not know 4 Cyber Bullying Policy
- Stay in public areas in chat rooms

GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS

It is vital that parents and the school work together to ensure that all pupils are aware of the serious consequences of getting involved in anything that might be seen to be cyber-bullying. BIS informs parents of the cyber-bullying policy and the procedures in place to deal with cyber-bullying.

- Parents can help by making sure their child understands the school’s policy and, above all, how seriously the school takes incidents of cyber-bullying

- Parents should also explain to their child/children legal issues relating to cyberbullying (Refer to UAE law regarding digital crimes)
 - If parents believe their child is the victim of cyber-bullying, they should save the offending material (if need be by saving an offensive text on their or their child's mobile phone) and make sure they have all relevant information before deleting anything
 - Parents should contact the Head of the school as soon as possible. A meeting can then be arranged with the Head, which may involve other relevant members of staff
 - If the incident falls in the holidays the school reserves the right to take action against bullying perpetrated outside the school which spills over into the school.
 - E-SAFETY AT HOME Several sites offer helpful advice to parents, particularly with respect to how they can best monitor their child's use of the computer at home.
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Date of Update of this policy: **January 2022**

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Approved by the Management of British International School Ajman