



THE
**ANGLOPHONE
BRITISH
CURRICULUM**
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Anti-Bullying Policy *Updated June 2025*

1. Introduction

This policy sets out The ABC International School's approach to preventing and responding to bullying. The policy applies to bullying that takes place:

- On the school premises
- Outside of school, including the journey to and from school
- Online or via messaging, both during and outside of school hours

Policy Aims

This policy aims to:

- Ensure that staff, pupils, and parents/carers understand what constitutes bullying
- Make clear the school's procedures for preventing and responding to bullying
- Provide pupils and parents/carers with clear guidance on what to do if bullying occurs, how the school will respond, and the proactive steps taken to prevent bullying

Key Principles

- Bullying and prejudice-based behaviours are unacceptable and will not be tolerated
- Every student has the right to feel safe, respected, and valued
- Bullying prevention is integral to our caring school culture
- We promote respect and celebrate diversity
- Bullying can have serious, lasting consequences; we act promptly and consistently
- Anti-bullying work supports students' wellbeing, development, and mental health

2. Definition of Bullying

Our definition is based on the Department for Education's guidance, *Preventing and Tackling Bullying* (July 2017), and the definition used by the Anti-Bullying Alliance.

Bullying is:

The repeated, intentional behaviour by an individual or group that causes harm, either online or face-to-face, where there is an imbalance of power.

We teach students to understand bullying using the acronym S.T.O.P.: **Several Times On Purpose.**

3. Forms of Bullying

We recognise that bullying can take various forms, including:

- **Physical:** Pushing, hitting, punching, kicking.
- **Verbal:** Name-calling, insults, verbal abuse, threats, offensive mimicry of an accent or language, and discriminatory language.
- **Emotional:** Social exclusion, spreading rumours, and talking about someone behind their back.
- **Indirect (also known as social or relational bullying):** Spreading rumours, disclosing personal information, social exclusion, and graffiti.
- **Online (cyberbullying):** Bullying conducted through electronic means such as email, text messages, chat rooms, blogs, social networking sites, apps, and gaming platforms. This can include sending hurtful or threatening messages, spreading rumours, or sharing embarrassing images or videos.
- **Child-on-child abuse:** Bullying, including online behaviours such as the sharing of youth-produced sexual imagery or other harmful content, is recognised as a safeguarding concern. It may constitute child-on-child abuse, especially when behaviours are persistent, cause significant harm, involve non-consensual sharing of intimate images, or amount to sexual harassment or violence.

4. Recognising the Causes and Impact of Bullying

Bullying often arises when individuals are perceived to be different. It is frequently driven by prejudice towards specific groups or characteristics, many of which individuals cannot change or control. We are particularly mindful of the increased vulnerability of children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), who may be disproportionately affected by bullying and may not always show clear signs.

Bullying can be linked to, but is not limited to, the following:

- Race, religion, culture, or belief (including non-belief)
- Special educational needs and disabilities
- Being a young carer
- Socio-economic background or family circumstances
- Gender
- Physical appearance or body size
- Ability or academic attainment
- Perceived or actual differences in relationships or personal identity, including negative attitudes or stereotypes based on how someone expresses themselves

Distinguishing Bullying from Other Hurtful Behaviour

We recognise the importance of distinguishing between bullying and other forms of hurtful or inappropriate behaviour.

Our definition of bullying does **not** include:

- One-off incidents of unkindness or inappropriate behaviour
- Conflict or friendship difficulties between children or young people

While these are not classified as bullying, they are taken seriously, and staff will respond appropriately to prevent escalation or repetition. We recognise that disagreements, fallouts, and misunderstandings are natural parts of growing up. Our approach focuses on helping students develop social and emotional skills to manage these respectfully and constructively. Where necessary, we provide guidance, mediation, and restorative support to help pupils rebuild relationships and learn from their experiences.

5. Preventing Bullying

Our prevention approach includes teaching about healthy relationships, types and consequences of bullying, celebrating diversity, promoting equality, inclusiveness, and positive behaviour. This is implemented through:

We implement this through:

1. *A whole-school ethos and environment*
2. *Whole-school activities*
3. *Curriculum*
4. *Training and ongoing support for staff*
5. *Involving Students*

Whole-School Ethos and Environment

We aim to foster a positive, safe, and inclusive school culture where bullying is actively prevented, respectful relationships are promoted, and all pupils feel confident reporting concerns, knowing they will be taken seriously and acted upon.

To support this, we:

- Uphold high expectations for behaviour, encouraging respect, responsibility, and kindness across the school community.
- Model and reinforce positive communication and conduct among pupils and staff, explicitly teaching and recognising expected behaviours, and consistently addressing prejudice-based language by explaining its impact.
- Promote open communication by encouraging pupils to speak to trusted adults when they feel unsafe or upset and by regularly seeking student voice through platforms such as Komodo and pupil feedback to inform prevention strategies and assess pupils' sense of safety.
- Provide well-supervised break and lunchtimes, where staff actively support positive peer interaction.
- Implement and promote an "Acceptable Use of Technology" policy that clearly outlines expectations for online conduct and addresses issues such as cyberbullying.

Whole-School Activities

- We actively support international campaigns such as Anti-Bullying Week to reinforce key messages.
- We recognise and celebrate difference and diversity through events such as Cultural Appreciation Week and Inclusion Week, as well as through displays, literature, and storytelling that feature a wide range of identities, backgrounds, and experiences.
- Assemblies explore the causes and consequences of bullying, equipping pupils with guidance on how to respond if they witness or experience it.

Curriculum

Teaching about bullying is a key element of our curriculum from Early Years through to Secondary education. It is integrated within statutory Relationships Education and Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education in Primary, and within statutory Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education in Secondary.

Our approach ensures that bullying prevention is consistently addressed and revisited across year groups, with a focus on:

- Understanding the different types of bullying, its impact, and how to seek help
- Developing and maintaining healthy relationships
- Challenging stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination while promoting respect for differences

Early Years students Learn:

- The importance of kindness, sharing, and taking turns.
- The impact of actions on others and the importance of caring relationships.
- Identifying feelings and developing empathy.
- Developing positive friendships and resolving conflicts with support.
- Expressing needs and seeking help when feeling upset or unsafe.

Primary students Learn:

- Bullying (both online and offline) is unacceptable.
- The definition of bullying, including its various types, such as online/cyberbullying and bullying based on differences.
- The impact of bullying on individuals, relationships, and mental health, including how it can lead to prejudice and discrimination.
- Why People Bully and Strategies to Respond to Bullying.
- The role and responsibilities of bystanders, how to report bullying, and how to seek support.
- How to prevent bullying.
- The importance of respect for others, inclusivity, and celebrating difference and diversity.
- That difference is positive, and everyone is unique.
- The negative impact of stereotypes.
- Skills to manage emotions, develop empathy, resolve conflict fairly, cope with friendship challenges, and maintain healthy relationships.
- How to stay safe online, behave responsibly, and report online bullying.

Secondary students Learn:

- Bullying, whether online or offline, is unacceptable.
- The different types of bullying include cyberbullying, verbal and physical bullying, and harassment based on personal characteristics.
- The impact of bullying on mental health, self-esteem, and relationships.
- How bullying can be linked to prejudice, discrimination, and hate crimes.
- Strategies for responding to bullying include developing assertiveness skills and accessing support networks.
- The role and responsibility of bystanders, the importance of reporting bullying, and challenging discriminatory language and behaviours.
- The impact of social media and online behaviour, including peer pressure and responsible online communication.
- Healthy and unhealthy relationships, including coercion, peer influence, and consent.
- The importance of diversity, inclusion, and challenging stereotypes in all aspects of life.
- How to seek help and where to access confidential support if affected by bullying.

Training and Support for Staff

All staff receive annual safeguarding training, which includes updates on this policy and guidance on identifying, responding to, and preventing bullying. This training is provided to all school staff, including support staff, site staff, and office staff, to ensure a consistent and proactive approach. It also acknowledges that pupils may disclose bullying to any trusted member of staff. Staff are trained to recognise potential signs of bullying, which may also be indicators of other safeguarding concerns. These signs can include a child:

- Becoming withdrawn or showing changes in their usual behaviour or attitude towards school, including disengagement from school life and activities.
- Appearing distressed or upset without an apparent reason.
- Engaging in self-harming behaviours.
- Having unexplained bruises or marks
- Frequently lacking lunch money or a packed lunch.
- Displaying bullying behaviour towards others.
- Stealing money or belongings to give to others.
- Expressing fear or reluctance about attending school, or refusing to attend altogether

Involving Students

We encourage all students to play an active role in shaping the school's approach to tackling and preventing bullying, including understanding their responsibilities as bystanders.

Students are involved in a variety of ways, including:

- Participating in the school council's discussions on bullying prevention.
- Helping to plan activities and initiatives for the annual Anti-Bullying Week.

We also gather student voice through surveys, Komodo, and other feedback mechanisms to assess how safe students feel in school, their experiences with bullying (both in and outside of school), and their perceptions of how effectively the school addresses bullying. This helps us to refine our approach and ensure a safe and supportive environment for all students.

6. Responding to Bullying - Reporting, Recording, Response and Review

We maintain a consistent, whole-school approach to preventing and addressing bullying. All incidents are taken seriously and managed in line with the Behaviour Policy. Investigations are prompt, and pupils and parents are kept informed throughout.

Reporting Bullying

Pupils are encouraged to report bullying to any trusted adult in school. However, we recognise that some may feel reluctant to do so, especially as they get older, for fear of escalation. To support reporting, we provide multiple discreet and accessible options:

- A confidential web-based system (Komodo)
- School email
- Speaking directly to a trusted member of staff

Parents and carers can report concerns by:

- Emailing or requesting a meeting with the class teacher or form tutor

Staff who witness or are informed of bullying or prejudice-based language:

- Record the incident on the school's electronic reporting system.
- Inform the Head of Year
- Consult with the Pastoral SMT Lead who liaises with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) for strategic oversight as needed.

Recorded information includes:

- Whether the incident was isolated or part of a pattern
- Type of bullying or prejudice (e.g., racist, sexist)
- Nature of the behaviour (e.g., verbal, physical, online)
- A clear description of what occurred and who was involved
- Actions taken to resolve the incident
- Parental involvement and communication
- Evaluation of whether the response stopped the behaviour

Response to Bullying

Supporting the Student Who Has Been Bullied

The school is committed to ensuring that all children feel safe, heard, and supported. When a report of bullying is made, we will:

- Assign a senior manager to lead the investigation.
- Speak with the child in a calm and supportive manner to understand what has happened and what outcome they hope for.
- Inform and update parents/carers throughout the process. In Secondary, staff will discuss with the student whether and when to involve parents/carers, where appropriate.
- Offer support tailored to the child's needs, which may include access to the school counselling service.
- Monitor the child's wellbeing regularly to ensure that the behaviour has stopped and that they feel safe.

Addressing the Behaviour of the Student Who Has Bullied Others

The school will respond to bullying in a manner that supports learning, fosters accountability, and promotes the restoration of relationships. We will:

- Conduct a fair and thorough investigation, including speaking with the child to gain a deeper understanding of the context.
- Involve parents/carers early to ensure they are informed and can support the process.
- Clearly communicate that the behaviour is unacceptable, explaining the impact on others.
- Support the child in understanding the consequences of their actions and in taking responsibility.
- Use restorative approaches where appropriate to rebuild trust and repair harm.
- Explore any underlying factors contributing to the behaviour and provide additional support where needed.
- Apply appropriate sanctions, in line with the school's Behaviour Policy. The response will reflect the severity and persistence of the bullying, with a focus on promoting positive behavioural change.

Speaking with Bystanders

Bystanders play a key role in preventing and addressing bullying. The school will:

- Speak with any students who witnessed the bullying to understand what they observed.
- Encourage responsible reporting and reinforce the importance of not supporting bullying behaviour.
- Offer support if they have been affected by what they witnessed.
- Promote a culture of courage and care, where students are empowered to speak up and support their peers.

Review and Ongoing Monitoring

The school is committed to continuous improvement in its response to bullying. Following any reported incident, senior and pastoral leaders review and evaluate both individual cases and broader trends. This includes identifying patterns, assessing the effectiveness of responses, and using this information to inform future planning, prevent bullying, and address discrimination.

7. Links to other policies

This policy supports our wider approach to promoting positive behaviour and safeguarding. It should be read alongside the school's Behaviour Policy and Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

8. Policy Review

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure it remains current, effective, and aligned with best practice. Updates are made as needed to reflect changes in school procedures, safeguarding guidance, and evidence-based approaches to preventing and responding to bullying.

