



## Dealing with Bullying

At GEMS Winchester School Dubai, we commit ourselves to providing an environment where all students feel safe and protected from harm. This document endeavours to provide a set of guiding principles to promote a safe, caring and happy learning environment for all members of our school community to ensure that all students become confident, self-motivated and independent lifelong learners.

GEMS Winchester School Dubai has a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and we take proactive steps to teach our students about bullying through our curriculum, particularly in Moral Education, PSHE and through Computer Science for issues surrounding cyberbullying and staying safe online. This is further complimented by regular assemblies and communication to families to remind our community of the schools' expectations.

Bullying is defined as the repetitive, intentional harming of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying is, therefore:

- Deliberately hurtful
- Repeated, often over a period of time
- Difficult to defend

Bullying can include:

Type of Bullying	Definition
Emotional	Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting
Physical	Hitting, kicking, pushing, taking another's belongings, any use of violence
Prejudice-based and discriminatory, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Racial</li><li>• Faith-based</li><li>• Gendered</li><li>• Disability-based</li></ul>	Taunts, gestures, graffiti or physical abuse focused on a particular characteristic (e.g. gender, race)
Sexual	Explicit sexual remarks, display of sexual material, sexual gestures, unwanted physical attention, comments about sexual reputation or performance, or inappropriate touching
Direct or indirect verbal	Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
Cyber-bullying	Bullying that takes place online, such as through social networking sites, messaging apps or gaming sites

Teachers will respond to all episodes of bullying in order to send a clear message that it is unacceptable; different responses may be appropriate depending on the nature and degree of the bullying. Any student or family can report an incident of bullying by contacting the Homeroom Teacher, Head of Year, Phase Leader or relevant member of the Primary SLT. Once staff become aware of a bullying allegation, they should take a written statement and contact the appropriate colleague (for example, the Head of Year, Phase Leader, Senior Phase Leader or relevant Assistant Principal).

Initially, the questions identified below will be used to determine if the incident is primarily bullying or if it falls into another sanction's category. The teacher will ask the student the following types of questions:

- Was there teasing or aggressive words or actions said?
- Was the bullying unprovoked?
- Did the bullying intend to hurt, harm or frighten?

If the answer is 'yes' to all of the above, then it is bullying and will be followed up. If it's not a bullying incident it could be:

- Conflict: this may require conflict resolution
- Discipline: this may require HoY/SLT sanction
- Learning: this may require learning support

To prevent bullying, our students need to:

- Work to create a happy school environment for all
- Respect themselves and others
- Learn to tolerate and accept individual differences
- Stand up against bullying behaviour
- Ensure they use acceptable language when communicating with others
- Support the school policy on bullying

If a student feels they are being bullied, then they should:

- Tell the bully to stop
- Seek help and talk about it to someone they trust
- Report it to a teacher
- Try not to show you are upset - this is hard but a bully thrives on someone's fear
- Stay with a group of friends/people - there is safety in numbers
- Not fight back as it may make matters worse – instead they should inform a teacher

If a student is the victim of cyber-bullying, they should:

- Tell a trusted adult about the bullying
- Not open or read messages from cyber bullies
- Tell a teacher/HoY or SLT at school if it is school related
- Not erase the messages - they may be used to act against the bullies
- Protect themselves - never agree to meet face to face with anyone they meet online
- Block bullies on 'chat or instant' messaging websites
- Always make sure their privacy settings are tight

If a student is aware of another student being bullied, they should:

- Care enough to do something about it, whether it affects them personally or not
- Step in early and try to defuse the situation before it gets out of hand
- Report it to a teacher and/or parent - take a friend with them if they want
- Not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully
- Not be tempted to forward cyber messages on
- Not join a cyber-group just to find out 'what is going on'

If parents are aware of bullying taking place, then they should do the following:

- Work with the school to support their child – do not deal with the issue themselves but, instead, ask for the support of the school
- Call or email the school via their child's Form Tutor, not the other child's parents
- Report the incidents even if their child does not want this
- Tell their child the following:

- That bullying is wrong; - all students have the right to attend school without fear
- The problem is unlikely to stop without adult intervention
- For school related cyber-bullying, make a screen print of the bullying comments/photos and take to the relevant Assistant Principal
- Check their child's device and computer privacy settings
- Report the bullying person's cyber name to the website provider
- If extremely explicit, take the screenshots to the police or local safeguarding authority set in place by the UAE
- Help their child learn to stand up against bullying behaviour
- Support the school's stance on bullying and their various policies

If a parent finds out that their child is cyberbullying, we expect them to ensure their child knows:

- That there will always be a footprint in cyberspace of their child's behaviour and it can be traced
- That cyber-bullying has no geographical boundaries and their child can be involved in it 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- Take away IT hardware/Mobile phone from their child's bedroom, particularly at night
- Work with the school and support the school policy on anti-bullying