

Preventing and Responding to Bullying and Harassment Policy 2026

Summary:

This policy explains how the International British Theatre School (IBTS) ensures that all children and staff are protected from bullying, harassment, or discrimination. It outlines the definitions, prevention strategies, reporting procedures, and response actions aligned with Ofsted, DfE, and EYFS guidance for 2026. The policy also includes support and restorative practices for both victims and perpetrators.

Policy Statement

IBTS is committed to providing a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment where all children can thrive free from bullying or harassment. Bullying of any kind—physical, verbal, emotional, psychological, or online—will not be tolerated. This policy applies to all staff, children, parents, carers, volunteers, and visitors.

Legislative and Regulatory Framework

This policy is written in accordance with:

- DfE “Preventing and Tackling Bullying” (2024)
- DfE “Behaviour in Schools” (2024)
- EYFS (2024) – Safeguarding and Welfare [3.53-3.54]
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- Equality Act 2010

These documents inform Ofsted inspections and set out the school’s

responsibilities in safeguarding and promoting children's welfare.

Definition of Bullying and Harassment

Bullying is defined as the repeated, intentional harming of another individual or group, whether physically, verbally, or emotionally. Harassment is unwanted conduct that causes humiliation, intimidation, or offence, often relating to a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. Examples include:

- Emotional: Deliberately excluding others, spreading rumours, or making fun of peers.
- Physical: Hitting, kicking, tripping, spitting, or damaging property.
- Verbal: Name-calling, teasing, or using discriminatory or offensive language.
- Online/Cyberbullying: Misuse of social media or messaging platforms to harass or intimidate.
- Discriminatory: Racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, or disability-based harassment.

Preventing Bullying and Promoting Respect

IBTS adopts a proactive approach to prevention through:

- Clear behaviour expectations shared with all children and parents.
- Embedding respect, kindness, and inclusion into daily activities and lessons.
- Staff training on recognising early signs of bullying and intervention techniques.
- Encouraging children to report concerns confidently through trusted adults.
- Open discussions about friendship, empathy, and digital citizenship.
- Displaying anti-bullying pledges and information around the setting.

Responding to Bullying or Harassment

When bullying or harassment is reported or suspected, staff will:

1. Listen to the child or person reporting and reassure them that their concerns are taken seriously.
2. Record the incident in the Incident Log within 24 hours.
3. Inform the Manager and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately.
4. Investigate sensitively, interviewing all parties and witnesses.

5. Inform the parents/carers of both the victim and perpetrator.
6. Support the victim and monitor their wellbeing.
7. Help the perpetrator understand the impact of their actions and provide guidance for behaviour change.
8. Implement sanctions where appropriate, which may include exclusion in severe or repeated cases.

Where the bullying may constitute safeguarding or criminal behaviour (e.g., hate crime or assault), the DSL will refer to external agencies or the police.

Recording and Monitoring

All incidents will be recorded on the Incident Log and reviewed by the Manager and DSL monthly to identify trends. Data will inform staff training and policy updates. Serious or repeated incidents will be discussed at senior leadership level and may require multi-agency coordination.

Support for Children and Staff

IBTS provides follow-up emotional support for victims and witnesses. Perpetrators will receive behaviour-support interventions. Staff who manage incidents will have access to debrief and reflective supervision.

Partnership with Parents

IBTS promotes open dialogue with parents and carers to prevent and resolve bullying concerns. Parents will be involved in restorative discussions where appropriate and provided with information on anti-bullying strategies.

Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Suspensions and Exclusions Policy

Policy Review

Reviewed: 15 November 2026

Next Review Due: 15 November 2027

Signed: Ben Whiteside

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International British Theatre School