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Anti-Bullying Policy

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1. Introduction

As set out in our mission statement, all of us at the Deutsche Schule London (DSL) – parents, legal guardians, teachers, nursery-school teachers and pupils – consider ourselves to be part of an open-minded school community. Respect and tolerance are key values which dominate the learning atmosphere and the way in which we interact with each other. Every pupil has the right to develop, with hindrance, their full academic, personal and social potential. Bullying is a serious threat to this right. It can cause mental and physical harm and impair the performance of the pupils affected, sometimes with profound and long-lasting effects. This also means that bullying is always an act of violence and has no place in the 'normal' development and growing-up of a child. Therefore, it is in particular DSL's duty to respond to all incidents of bullying and deal with everyone affected individually and to develop coordinated measures to protect the victims.

The Deutsche Schule London has a school-wide prevention programme in place which is designed to promote '*social interaction*'. This contributes to the general development of pupils and minimises the occurrence and build-up of transgressive situations.

Transgressions of any kind will *NOT* be tolerated at the Deutsche Schule London. This is why the Anti-Bullying Policy is embedded in an integrated and comprehensive set of rules and policies, which forms the basis of the school's approach to prevent and combat any such behaviour. The protection of victims is the school's primary concern and, in addition to the Anti-Bullying Policy, there other rules and policies in place at DSL which help ensure this:

- General School Regulations (SR01)
- Disciplinary Procedures (SR02)
- E-Safety Policy (SR03)
- School Rules (SR04)
- Behaviour Policy for Pupils (SR05)
- Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy

2. Definition of bullying

2.1 What is bullying?

Bullying is any kind of physical, verbal or social behaviour where one or more individuals intentionally and repeatedly hurt or harm another individual and which involves an imbalance of power. Any pupil can potentially become a victim of bullying.

The following criteria can help differentiate between everyday conflicts – which will usually be addressed on the basis of the other rules and policies listed above – and incidents of bullying – which will be addressed on the basis of this Policy. Bullying occurs when the following signs are apparent <u>at the same time</u> (according to Dan Olweus):

- **Imbalance of power:**
  The victim is on his or her own against one or several perpetrators who act with the purpose and intention of inflicting harm and their followers who support them, for instance by clapping, prevent others from helping the victim and encourage bullying. This means that the term bullying is not used when two pupils of approximately the same physical or emotional strength are fighting or quarrelling (in which case the school would respond on the basis of the other rules and policies mentioned above).

- **Frequency:** The incidents typically occur repeatedly.

- **Duration:** The incidents occur typically over a longer period of time. The length of time over which the incidents occur will be significant for the teacher's professional assessment of the situation.[1]

- **Conflict resolution:** In most cases, victims cannot stop the bullying behaviour on their own and will need help from others.

2.2 Not every argument or quarrel is bullying

Therefore, situations of conflict that arise spontaneously, such as quarrels or arguments, do not meet the criteria of bullying. However, teachers and supervisors take any transgression seriously and get actively involved to bring about an appropriate solution. Their actions are based in particular on the rules and policies referred to in Section 1.), and responsibility lies primarily with the class teachers, who may ask their own and other teams for assistance.

2.3 Types of bullying

Bullying can happen in many different ways. This Policy applies to any kind of bullying, including:

- **emotional:** being unfriendly or unfair, excluding someone, isolating someone by preventing others from befriending him or her, laughing at someone or causing distress (by hiding books, using insulting gestures or facial expressions);
- **nonverbal:** insulting looks, facial expressions, body language with the aim of excluding or hurting someone;
- **physical:** pushing, kicking, hitting or any other form of physical violence;
- **racist:** humiliating remarks, slogans or gestures related to the cultural or family background of an individual;
- **homophobic:** insulting gestures and remarks related to the gender identity of an individual;
- **verbal:** derogatory nicknames, abusive remarks about the physical appearance of an individual, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing or picking on someone;

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[1] The sign of *duration* as part of the definition of bullying should of course not be misunderstood to mean that the school would only tackle bullying if the behaviour has already occurred over a prolonged period of time. This is not the case at all. As stated in Section 1.), transgressions will not be tolerated at the Deutsche Schule London and there will be an immediate response from the school to any such incidents.

- **cyberbullying:** on the internet or in social media, such as abusive emails, online chats, class chats, abuse through mobile phones or text messages; abusive use of cameras and so on;
- **material bullying:** any kind of blackmail or destroying or laying claim to someone else's property;
- **gender-related bullying:** any form of sexual humiliation and harassment, e.g. harassing comments or unsolicited physical contact. Examples are vulgar gestures, sexual nicknames etc.

2.4 Warning signs and symptoms that suggest bullying

Changes in the behaviour and conduct of a pupil can mean that he or she is being bullied. Here is a list of symptoms any one of which may occur individually or in combination with others:

A pupil:

- is scared of going to school or going home after school;
- does not want to walk to school or use public transport;
- asks to be driven to school;
- changes his or her habits;
- shows signs of school phobia;
- withdraws or loses self-confidence;
- plays truant;
- starts to stammer;
- tries to harm himself or herself or runs away from home;
- cries out in his or her sleep or has nightmares;
- complains about stomach ache or headache;
- does worse at school;
- comes home with damaged clothes or books;
- loses more and more things;
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay his or her bullies);
- seems to have money go missing;
- comes home hungry (money or lunch was stolen);
- becomes aggressive or acts irrationally;
- bullies other children;
- stops eating;
- is afraid to talk about his or her worries;
- gives dubious or unlikely explanations for the above mentioned behaviour;
- is afraid to use the internet or his/her mobile phone;
- is nervous when getting an email or text message.

2.5 Bullying and age groups

Bullying is primarily a group phenomenon. The bullying system's stability – and probably also its severity – will differ depending on the age group concerned. At primary level, the bullying system is less stable due to the explorative and less systematic nature of transgressions. The relationships between pupils in primary education are more evenly balanced and so is the social interaction between them. At higher education levels, the perpetrator and victim roles are more firmly established and this can lead to a manifestation of the perpetrator or victim role.

3. Anti-bullying measures at DSL

3.1 A comprehensive anti-bullying programme at DSL

DSL's goal is to create and preserve a school environment in which the bullying of children, or adults, has no place. The following measures are taken to achieve this goal:

- Identify bullying behaviour early on and tackle it promptly and appropriately;
- Encourage mutual respect, consideration for others and awareness, and celebrate diversity;
- Recognise and take account of the fact that some members of the school community might be more vulnerable to bullying and its impact than others;
- Review DSL's anti-bullying strategies and their effectiveness on a regular basis;
- Seek to learn from good anti-bullying practices applied elsewhere to improve DSL's own anti-bullying practices;
- Show adequate appreciation of success as a way to create a positive ethos.

DSL's four areas of support ('*Beratungsquadrat*' – BQ) are responsible for overseeing the anti-bullying programme.

3.2 Prevention

By strengthening our social interaction through DSL's evidence-based bullying prevention programme, we are able to develop a constructive approach and build strong relationships between pupils and their teachers. DSL's bullying prevention programme is implemented as follows:

- Implementation of the 'Lubo' training programmes in all pre-school (PS) groups and throughout Year One.
- 'Ben & Lee' as the follow-up programme designed for Year Three to be implemented thereafter (this is scheduled to begin in School Year 20-21).
- Implementation of the 'Fairplayer' programme throughout Year Five and Year Seven.

Programme to promote social competences at DSL

Preventing Bullying (as at 4 July 2019)

PS	1	3		5	7

LUBO | LUBO | Ben & Lee | | FAIRPLAYER | FAIRPLAYER
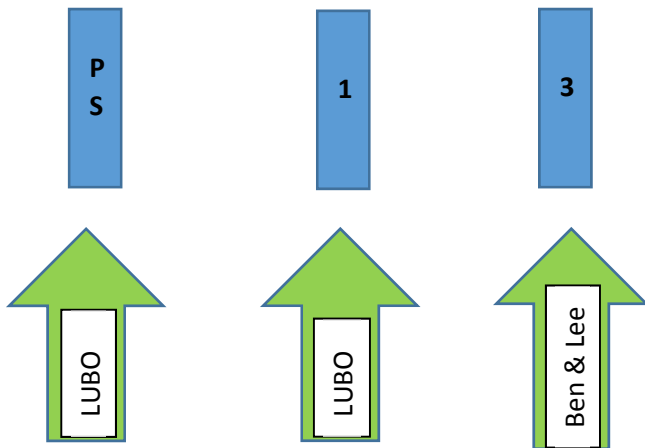
Pre-school and primary school

Secondary school

Pre-school Lubo (starting in 2019/20, all groups)

Year 1 Lubo from Outer Space

- Length of time: 30 sessions at 60 minutes (2 sessions per week)
- Starting in 2019/20, all Year One classes
- Parents' information evening
- Parents' letters

Year 3 Ben and Lee

- Length of time: 35 sessions at 60/90 minutes (2 sessions per week)
- Starting in 2019/20 with a pilot class
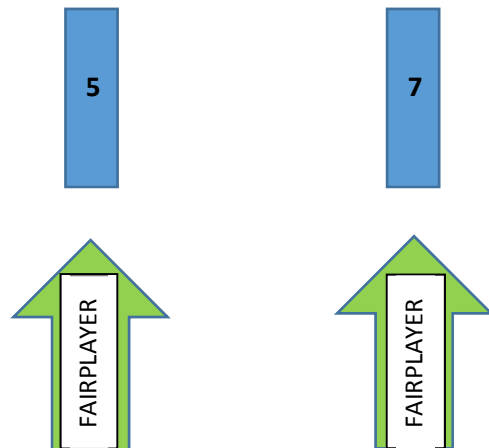
Year 5 Fairplayer

- Length of time: **approx. 12 weeks (12 sessions) at 90 minutes plus 2 parents' evenings**
- Implemented by trained/certified disseminators
- Starting in the first half of 2019/20, all classes

Year 7 Fairplayer

- Length of time: **16 sessions at 90 minutes over one half of the school year plus 2 parents' evenings**
- Implemented by trained/certified disseminators
- Fits in with the curriculum goals for Ethics, History, Social Studies, Religious Education, German (Communication)
- Starting in the second half of 2019/20, all classes

3.3 Interventions and general approach

Bullying is a problem within a group of people and an indication of the fact the system of rules and standards of such a group (for example within a class) has been distorted over a prolonged period of time. A particular approach is therefore required to intervene in such a situation.

One of the components of the overall prevention strategy at the Deutsche Schule London is its intervention concept to be used in cases of suspected bullying. This is described in detail in the Intervention Guide: How to deal with bullying (please contact Beratungsquadrat on beratungsquadrat@dslondon.org.uk to request a copy).

The objectives of the guide are to give structured directions as to how to evaluate situations of bullying, to take the necessary actions in a specific case using the forms available and to give certainty of action to those who have to deal with incidents of bullying in everyday school life at DSL.

It is the responsibility of a specially trained and qualified team – made up of educational psychologist, social pedagogue and safeguarding officer – from DSL's four areas of support (*BQ*) to initiate the necessary steps of intervention and manage cases in consultation with the class teacher. Protecting the victims based on the common '*zero tolerance of violence*' approach is always of utmost priority. The steps to be taken will depend on the needs of those affected, the situation of the class and the severity of the case.

As a general rule, it can be assumed, as outlined in DSL's Intervention Guide, that the steps taken are as follows:

- **Exchange of information** ('Suspected Bullying' Record Sheet) between the reporting person(s), guardians, class teachers and BQ contacts;
- **Prompt initial meeting with the bullied pupil.** Ascertain whether the incident is a case of bullying; take minutes of the discussion; plan ways in which to provide help and support; explain clearly and transparently what the next steps will be; pass information on to the relevant individuals if necessary;
- **Timely, unannounced meeting with the bullying pupil(s).** Set boundaries clearly and unequivocally; initiate steps to protect the victim; make an agreement against violence; send information to the school management, parents, etc.; assess whether disciplinary steps need to be taken based on DSL's rules and regulations, such as:
  - o withdrawal of privileges;
  - o exclusion from events;
  - o exclusion from lessons for some days;
  - o warning of expulsion from school;
  - o expulsion from school.
- **Group meeting,** if several bullying pupils and supporters are involved;
- **Work with the whole class.** Set up a support group or appoint expert helpers for bullied pupil;

- Initiate, **if necessary, the re-integration** of the bullying pupil;
- **Follow-up discussion with the bullied pupil**;
- **Follow-up discussion with the whole class.**

4. Roles and responsibilities

The responsibilities of educational and other staff at DSL as well as parents and guardians are in general as follows:

- Continually ensure that attention is paid to this problem in everyday school life and raise awareness of transgressive behaviour in conferences and at other events. Preventing bullying is therefore to be considered a school development task;
- On 'back-to-school' days, inform both the educational and non-educational staff, among other topics, about bullying and threats to child welfare (reference to the Bullying Intervention Guide);
- Staff training on our prevention programme (see above);
- Advice and support for teachers through DSL's four areas of support (BQ), including safeguarding;
- Use parents' evenings and coffee mornings, 'Embrace' and 'Weekly' events as well as the school website to inform parents/guardians and directly involve them where necessary;
- Inform class teachers (class conference) and involve liaison teachers, mediators and possibly pupils' representatives;
- Give information to the police (*local police liaison officer*).

5. Other references

Keeping children safe in education, Statutory guidance for schools and colleges, September 2019
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/835733/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2019.pdf

Guidance, **Preventing bullying**, Guidance for schools on preventing and responding to bullying. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying

German: http://www.schueler-gegen-mobbing.de/mobbing-in-der-schule/