

The British International School Istanbul Harassment Policy
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Aim

The aim of this policy document is to help prevent harassment of members of the School community. This policy links closely with the Behaviour, Anti-Bullying and Complaints Policies. At all times we adhere to our Guiding Statements: 'We are dedicated to instil respect, tolerance, integrity and compassion...'

What is Harassment?

Harassment is any hostile or offensive action against individuals or groups because of their skin colour, ethnicity, religion, cultural background, gender or other perceived difference.

Harassment can take many forms, including but not limited to:

VERBAL/WRITTEN	PHYSICAL	IMPLICIT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name calling • Insulting remarks • Making insinuations • Persistent teasing • Abusing on social networks • Email abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hitting • Kicking • Spitting • Taking other's belongings • Abuse • Threats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exclusion from groups • Humiliating • Spreading nasty rumours • Ridiculing • Insulting graffiti • Abusive gesturing • Abusive symbolism

Individual incidents of harassment can appear trivial to an external observer, but it is the steady and constant accumulation of experiences, which makes people feel they are victims.

What behaviours might be displayed as a result of harassment?

Students may:

- be frightened to travel to and from School;
- change their normal routine;
- be unwilling to go to school;
- become clingy;
- become withdrawn and lose confidence;
- feel ill, particularly in the morning;
- develop psychosomatic symptoms, e.g. stomach aches;
- begin truanting;
- have nightmares and become distressed and anxious;
- bedwetting in the case of younger children;
- display attention-seeking behaviour;
- start to bully other children;
- lose their temper and become aggressive and unreasonable.
- lose interest in the quality of their work;

Adults may:

- be reluctant to approach the School directly;
- feel unable to explain their difficulties;
- not be sufficiently aware of the School's procedures;
- not be confident that their concerns will be taken seriously.

What key features about the cause of harassment could we use in discussions with students and others?

There are a number of different reasons why some people harass others, of which the following are particularly significant:

Fear	Harassers are scared or unaccepting of people who are perceived by them to be different, preferring to believe negative stereotypes based on race, religion, gender, physical attributes or disabilities etc.
Ignorance	Harassers form opinions about other people's cultures without knowing or wanting to learn about the true facts.
Insecurity	Harassers need someone to blame for not feeling very good about themselves.
Upbringing	Harassers may have learnt these views from their families and/or friends/peers or the media.

How can we help individuals who believe they are being harassed?

Take their concerns about harassment seriously by:

- listening carefully to all complaints;
- reinforcing the School's total rejection of harassment;
- recording details of any incidents;
- reassuring complainants that firm action will be taken against anyone who is harassing them;
- explain to complainants that an investigation will take place and that they will be informed of the outcome;
- drawing attention to the 'You do not have the right to say (or do) that' campaign;
- ensuring that the action agreed as a result of the investigation is carried out;
- dealing with any health and safety issues immediately, as necessary;

What are the procedures for an investigation?

- The incident is reported to a member of the EYFS, Primary or Secondary SLT and an investigation should be started on the same day as the complaint where possible.
- An Incident Report Form is completed.
- Guidance Counselling will be offered, as appropriate.
- Witnesses questioned where applicable.
- A decision will be made by the EYFS, Primary or Secondary SLT member whether to deal with the incident themselves or pass it to the Whole School SLT.

What sanctions are in place in case of harassment?

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBLE	SANCTION
Student	In accordance with School Policies relating to serious incidents.
Parent, Governor, Other	In accordance with the School's complaints procedure.
Member of staff	In accordance with the Staff Handbook.