



**GERMAN
INTERNATIONAL
SCHOOL | Boston**

GISB Bullying Prevention Policy

GISB is committed to providing all students with a safe and supportive learning environment. This means an environment that is free from bullying.

GISB is dedicated to preventing bullying by fostering a positive school culture and providing an bullying prevention curriculum that encourages social skills development. We work to enhance students' abilities to develop healthy relationships and to take positive action when they witness or personally experience bullying.

Bullying is a conscious, willful, deliberate, hostile and repeated behavior by one or more people, which is intended to harm others. Bullying takes many forms, and can include many different behaviors, such as:

Verbal	name-calling
Physical	punching, pushing
Relational	leaving someone out of a game or group on purpose
Cyberbullying	using computers, the Internet, mobile phones, etc. to bully others

We work with students, teachers, and families to create a shared language around bullying. We use the following terms when discussing a bullying incident:

- person engaged in an act of bullying
- person being bullied, or target of bullying
- person who directly sees or hears the incident. We may also use the terms “bystander” or “ally” here. People in this role can be hurtful (by encouraging or passively accepting) or helpful (by getting help or supporting the student being bullied) in bullying incidents.

All forms of bullying on school grounds or during school-related activities are deemed unacceptable by the school and should be reported by students, families, and staff immediately. Bullying that occurs outside of school or school activities may be outside of the school's disciplinary reach, but we still encourage families and students to share potential incidents with a trusted staff member if the school may need to have a heightened awareness about protecting students' safety while at school.

When bullying does occur, an investigation will promptly follow. Before fully investigating allegations of bullying or retaliation, the Head of School or School Counselor will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety and protect the alleged target. The confidentiality of all members involved is maintained throughout the process.

GISB prevents and responds to bullying and retaliation in the following ways:

- Teachers work as a team to create a school-wide culture of friendliness, openness to difference, and strong social skills (e.g., self-advocacy, courtesy). Students will learn practical, safe and age-appropriate ways to respond to, report, and discuss an incident of bullying.
- A GISB staff member is required to report immediately to the Head of School or School Counselor any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses. Students are also strongly encouraged to immediately report any instance of bullying to a trusted adult.
- Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, families, or others, and may be oral or written. Bullying Report forms must be completed for each incident and can be found on the GISB website or in the school counselor's office. Staff members receiving an oral report from a student or parent must document the report using the same form as soon after the oral exchange as possible.
 - Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not staff members may be made anonymously. No disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report.
 - If it is determined that an individual knowingly made a false accusation, the individual may be subject to disciplinary and/or legal action.
- If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the Head of School or School Counselor will take steps to prevent recurrence and to ensure the safety of the target. Further conversations with involved families regarding any underlying social/emotional difficulties that may have contributed to the bullying behavior may lead to a plan for additional social skills development or emotional support from the School Counselor. Community resources for the student and/or family may also be provided as appropriate.
- Consequences for a student who bullies may range from reflective discussion and writing a letter of apology to dismissal from school. When appropriate, law enforcement officials may be notified. Parents will be notified of all school decisions that relate to their own child.