

No Bullying Policy

It is the policy of O'Bryant Primary School to maintain a safe learning and work environment that is free from bullying. Students, staff, and the school community are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful manner and demonstrate a level of respect and dignity towards others. We prohibit all forms of bullying.

DEFINITION: Bullying is intentional harmful behavior initiated by one or more students and directed toward another student. For our purposes, it takes place in the school, on school property, or on school field trips. Examples of bullying are as follows:

- Verbal: name calling, put downs, racist remarks, teasing, threats, spreading rumors, sending inappropriate (violent, sexual, malicious, etc.) notes or pictures in any medium (magazine, over a cell phone or internet, etc.)
- Physical: pushing, hitting, shoving, biting, hair pulling, scratching, spitting, tripping, damaging or stealing the victim's property, locking a person in a room, making mean faces or rude gestures, initiating or forcing inappropriate touching, etc.
- Social: ostracism or exclusion, ignoring, being unfriendly, alienating, etc.
- Psychological: acts that instill a sense of fear or anxiety, etc.
- Any act that insults or demeans an individual in such a way as to cause distress, reluctance to attend school, a decline in work standards or problem behaviors

REPORTING:

- Students and staff are prohibited from knowingly falsely accusing another of bullying.
- Any member of the school staff receiving a suspected bullying report (verbal or written) shall address the matter as soon as possible, prior to the end of the school day. The staff member shall assess the situation to determine if the behavior meets the criteria for bullying or if the behavior is an isolated incident that can be resolved within the classroom. (Not all conflict constitutes bullying.)
- If the behavior meets the criteria for bullying, the staff member must report this to the school principal or his/her designee immediately in order to protect the alleged victim. The staff member is to immediately forward a *Bullying Incident Report* to the principal for investigation. The staff member shall remind the victim/witness that "No one deserves to be bullied and we are going to do everything we can to stop it." The staff member is to commend the victim/witness for bringing the matter to the attention of school staff, and they are to begin intervention strategies for the victim.
- The principal or his/her designee will promptly and thoroughly address suspected reports of bullying. He/she will individually meet with the victim/witness and bully privately. The message for the child who bullies will be, "Your behavior is unacceptable, and mean, and must be stopped." He/she will inform the student that he/she will be closely monitored until trust has been built and all bullying behaviors cease. He/she will also ensure the careful monitoring of the victim during this time by enlisting the help of a class buddy. He/she shall ensure in a timely manner, notification of the incident has been given to the parents/guardians of both the victim and the offender, and that steps have been initiated to address and resolve the issue.
- Copies of the *Bullying Incident Report* shall be given to the victim's and offender's teachers, be placed in the victim's and offender's files in the school office, and be sent home to their parents. The report will serve as a reference for the school staff in determining whether or not a pattern of bullying behavior or abuse exists in regards to the offender or the victim.

"NO BULLYING" PLEDGE

We agree to do our part in preventing bullying at our school. We believe it is the equal right of everyone to enjoy our school and to have the confidence that it is a place where all will feel safe, secure, and accepted regardless of color, race, gender, popularity, athletic ability, intelligence, religion, and nationality.

Bullying can be pushing, shoving, hitting and spitting, as well as name calling, picking on, making fun of, laughing at, and excluding someone. Bullying causes pain and stress to victims and is never justified or excusable as "kids being kids," "just teasing" or any other rationalization. The victim is never responsible for being a target of bullying.

As parents/guardians, we pledge to:

1. Keep ourselves and our children informed and aware of No Bullying Policies and Procedures
2. Work in a partnership with the school to encourage positive behavior, valuing differences, and promoting sensitivity to others.
3. Inform faculty of changes in our children's behavior or circumstances at home that may change a child's behavior at school.
4. Alert faculty if any incidents of bullying have occurred.

As a student, I pledge to:

1. Learn about my school's No Bullying Policies and Procedures.
2. Show positive behavior and be sensitive to others.
3. Tell my parents or teachers if any bullying has occurred.

By signing below, we, the parents/guardians and student, agree to stand by the above pledges and to do our part in preventing bullying at O'Bryant Primary School.

<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Parent Signature	Parent Printed Name	Date
 <hr/>	 <hr/>	 <hr/>
Student Signature	Student Printed Name	Date

Tips for Parents...

- Never tell your child to ignore the bullying. Trying to ignore bullying may allow it to escalate.
- Don't blame your child or assume that he or she did something to provoke the bullying. Don't criticize how your child handled the situation.
- Listen carefully to what your child has to say and ask for details about each bullying episode and the tactics used.
- Empathize with your child. Tell your child that bullying is wrong and it's not his or her fault.
- Don't encourage physical retaliation. It could escalate the situation or get your child in trouble at school.
- Contact your child's teacher or principal. Do not contact the parents of the bully. Leave that to school officials.
- Help your child develop talents or positive attributes that could help him or her gain more self-confidence. Encourage contact with friendly classmates or help your child meet new friends outside of school.
- Teach your child how to seek help from an adult when feeling threatened. Assure your child that reporting bullying is not the same as tattling.



SOURCE: The Health Resources and Services Administration's "Stop Bullying Now" website, www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov

NOTICE TO PARENTS

If an incident of bullying is confirmed, the principal or designee shall promptly notify the parents of the victim and of the student who engaged in bullying.

DISTRICT ACTION

Bullying:

If the results of an investigation indicate that bullying occurred, the District shall promptly respond by taking appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the District's Student Code of Conduct and may take corrective action reasonably calculated to address the conduct.

Discipline:

A student who is a victim of bullying and who used reasonable self-defense in response to the bullying shall not be subject to disciplinary action.

The discipline of a student with a disability is subject to applicable state and federal law in addition to the Student Code of Conduct.

CORRECTIVE ACTION

Examples of corrective action may include a training program for the individuals involved in the complaint, a comprehensive education program for the school community, follow-up inquiries to determine if any new incidents or any instances of retaliation have occurred, involving parents and students in efforts to identify problems and improve the school climate, increasing staff monitoring of areas where bullying has occurred, and reaffirming the District's policy against bullying.

TRANSFERS

Students who are Victims of Bullying

On the request of a parent or other person with authority to act on behalf of a student who is a victim of bullying, the Board or its designee shall transfer the victim to:

1. Another classroom at the campus to which the victim was assigned at the time the bullying occurred; or
2. A campus in the District other than the campus to which the victim was assigned at the time the bullying occurred.

Students who Engage in Bullying

The Board or designee may transfer the student who engaged in bullying to:

1. Another classroom at the campus to which the victim was assigned at the time the bullying occurred; or
2. A campus in the District other than the campus to which the victim was assigned at the time the bullying occurred, in consultation with a parent or other person with authority to act on behalf of the student who engaged in bullying.

The transfer of a student with a disability who receives special education services and who engaged in bullying may be made only by a duly constituted ARD committee under Education Code 37.004. For more information, see Policy FDB (LEGAL).

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying occurs when a student or group of students engages in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that occurs on school property, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, or in a vehicle operated by the District and that: (1) has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property; or (2) is sufficiently severe, persistent and pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for a student.

This conduct is considered bullying if it (1) exploits an imbalance of power between the student perpetrator and the student victim through written or verbal expression or physical conduct; and (2) interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operation of a school.

Examples of Bullying:

Bullying of a student may include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name-calling, rumor spreading, or ostracism.

WHAT IS CYBER-BULLYING?

Cyber-bullying involves the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behavior by an individual or group, that is intended to harm others. "Cyber-bullying" is when a child, preteen or teen is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by another child, preteen or teen using the Internet, interactive and digital technologies or mobile phones. It has to have a minor on both sides, or at least have been instigated by a minor against another minor. Once adults become involved, it is plain and simple cyber-harassment or cyber-stalking. Adult cyber-harassment or cyber-stalking is never called cyber-bullying.

BULLYING PROHIBITED

The District prohibits bullying as defined by this policy.

RETALIATION

The District prohibits retaliation by a student or District employee against any person who in good faith makes a report of bullying, serves as a witness, or participates in an investigation.

Examples of Retaliation:

Examples of retaliation may include threats, rumor spreading, ostracism, assault, destruction of property, unjustified punishments, or unwarranted grade reductions. Unlawful retaliation does not include petty slights or annoyances.

FALSE CLAIM

A student who intentionally makes a false claim, offers false statements, or refuses to cooperate with a District investigation regarding bullying shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

TIMELY REPORTING

Reports of bullying shall be made as soon as possible after the alleged act or knowledge of the alleged act. A failure to immediately report may impair the District's ability to investigate and address the prohibited conduct.

REPORTING OF SUSPECTED BULLYING

Student Report:

To obtain assistance and intervention, any student who believes that he or she has experienced bullying or believes that another student has experienced bullying should immediately report the alleged acts to a teacher, counselor, principal, District employee or complete the on-line Anonymous Bullying Report.

Employee Report:

Any District employee who suspects or receives notice that a student or group of students has or may have experienced bullying shall immediately notify the principal or designee.

REPORT FORMAT

A report may be made orally, electronically or in writing. The principal or designee shall reduce any oral reports to electronic or written form.

Reports of bullying may also be directed to the:

Student Services Department

Burleson ISD Administration Building

1160 SW Wilshire Boulevard, Burleson, TX 76028

(817) 245-1056

PROHIBITED CONDUCT

The principal or designee shall determine whether the allegations in the report, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct as defined by policy FFH, including dating violence and harassment or discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, or disability. If so, the District shall proceed under policy FFH. If the allegations could constitute both prohibited conduct and bullying, the investigation under FFH shall include a determination on each type of conduct.

INVESTIGATION OF REPORT

The principal or designee shall conduct an appropriate investigation based on the allegations in the report. The principal or designee shall promptly take interim action calculated to prevent bullying during the course of an investigation, if appropriate.

CONCLUDING THE INVESTIGATION

Absent extenuating circumstances, the investigation should be completed within ten District business days from the date of the initial report alleging bullying; however, the principal or designee shall take additional time if necessary to complete a thorough investigation.

The principal or designee shall prepare a final, written report of the investigation. The report shall include a determination of whether bullying occurred, and if so, whether the victim used reasonable self-defense. A copy of the report shall be sent to the assistant superintendent of administration and student services.

COUNSELING

The principal or designee shall notify the victim, the student who engaged in bullying, and any students who witnessed the bullying of available counseling options.

IMPROPER CONDUCT

If the investigation reveals improper conduct that did not rise to the level of prohibited conduct or bullying, the District may take action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct or any other appropriate corrective action.

CONFIDENTIALITY

To the greatest extent possible, the District shall respect the privacy of the complainant, persons against whom a report is filed, and witnesses. Limited disclosures may be necessary in order to conduct a thorough investigation.

APPEAL

A person having lawful control of the student who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal through FNG (LOCAL), beginning at the appropriate level.

RECORDS RETENTION

Retention of records shall be in accordance with CPC (LOCAL).

ACCESS TO POLICY AND PROCEDURES

This policy and any accompanying procedures shall be distributed annually in the employee and student handbooks. Copies of the policy and procedures shall be posted on the District's Web site, to the extent practicable, and shall be readily available at each campus and the District's administrative offices.