

# Our Parent *Guide*

*Bullying*

We Can All Help  Stop it



**OAKRIDGE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL  
VISAKHAPATNAM**

A NORD ANGLIA EDUCATION SCHOOL

## Stop *Bullying*

At Oakridge International School Visakhapatnam, we are committed to provide a caring, friendly and safe environment for students so that they learn in a secure atmosphere.

Bullying of any description is unacceptable at our school and will not be tolerated.

If you suspect that your child is being bullied or is bullying others, please keep the school and staff informed and help us help them.

Only by working together, can these issues be resolved.

## What is *Bullying*?

Bullying involves an imbalance of power which makes it hard for those being bullied to defend themselves. This may be seen or felt physically, online or psychologically, and includes social isolation or intimidation as well as any threats of violence. It is defined as follows: - A behaviour that is harmful to others (as felt from the victim's perspective); and something that is repeated over time.

Our school works hard to ensure that students understand the approach towards bullying and that they are clear about the part they have to play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders. Parents are involved to ensure that they are clear about our school's refusal to tolerate bullying and that they are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being bullied.

## *Bullying* can be

- **Cyberbullying:** The use of electronic communications including email, mobile phones, text/multi-media messaging, photographs/video, online profiling, websites, social networks, and instant messaging; all with the intention to frighten, threaten, embarrass or harass others. This can happen at any time of day with a potentially wider audience and more accessories as people forward on with a simple click.
- **Disability-based:** because of, or focusing on, the issue of disability.
- **Emotional:** being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures).

- **Homophobic or Transphobic:** because of, or focusing on, the issues of sexuality and/or gender identity.
- **Physical:** pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence inflicted on another individual.
- **Racist/Cultural/Religious:** racial, cultural or religious taunts, comments or gestures.
- **Sexual:** sexually abusive taunts, comments or gestures.
- **Verbal:** for example, name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours.

## Why is it important to *respond* to bullying?

### Be a buddy, not a bully!

No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. We believe that students should have the right to feel safe, secure and valued and that creating a safe environment and dealing with bullying is everyone's responsibility.

It is everyone's duty to respond promptly and effectively towards concerns related to bullying.

# Warning *Signs and Symptoms* of Bullying

A student may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should recognize the warning signs as it is an important first step in taking action against bullying and should investigate if a child:

- is frightened from walking to or from school
- incurs unexplainable injuries
- avoids or resists going in school bus
- requests to be driven to school
- frequently changes the regular routine
- has some unexplainable phobia towards attending school
- displays self-destructive behaviour such as running away from home (or) harming themselves
- appears insecure or frightened
- has falling school grades
- becomes aggressive and unreasonable
- has frequent mood swings, anxiety, and anger issues
- has stomach aches or unexplained pain
- is found with missing or damaged belongings or clothes
- changes their sleeping or eating patterns
- prefers being alone often or excluded from friendship groups at school
- asks for extra pocket money or food
- is a frequent target for teasing, mimicking or ridicule
- refuses to talk about what is wrong
- goes to sleep crying at night or has nightmares
- starts stammering

These signs and behaviour could indicate other issues as well. However, bullying should be considered as a possibility and should be investigated actively.

## Actions to Tackle *Bullying*

Prevention is better than cure, so we are vigilant in looking for and recognising signs of bullying and always take any reports of such incidents with utmost seriousness. Our school proactively gathers information about the issues between students that might provoke conflict and develop strategies to prevent the occurrence of bullying in the first place. We talk to students through the curriculum about issues of difference and use events such as special assemblies to discuss issues relating to bullying. We keep lines of communication open, so students feel comfortable and included. The curriculum is used whenever possible through tutorial time and life skills lessons to reinforce the anti-bullying ethos of our school and help students learn and develop strategies to combat bullying.



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