

Anti-Bullying Policy (including Cyberbullying)

British
Guardianship



Anti-Bullying Policy (including Cyberbullying)

1. Policy statement (zero tolerance)

British Guardianship is committed to providing a **safe, respectful and inclusive** environment for every student. **Bullying of any kind—offline or online—is not tolerated.** All concerns are treated as **safeguarding matters** and managed in line with our **Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy**. This policy applies to all staff, local coordinators, contractors, homestay providers, partner drivers, volunteers, students and parents.

Purpose: This policy ensures that all bullying concerns are identified early, responded to appropriately, and managed as safeguarding matters to protect every student's wellbeing and safety.

2. Scope

This policy applies:

- **At all times** when a student is under British Guardianship's care or supervision (including homestays, travel, and activities), and
- **At any other time** where behaviour affects a British Guardianship student's safety or welfare (including conduct online).

It should be read with: **Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy, Online Safety Policy, Student Code of Conduct, Whistleblowing Policy, Complaints Policy, Missing Student Policy.**

3. Definitions

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another person, and involves an imbalance of power. It can be **physical, verbal, emotional, social exclusion** or take other forms (e.g., misuse of images, threats, intimidation).

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place **online or via digital devices** (e.g., social media, messaging apps, gaming platforms). Examples include **threatening/abusive messages, posting/sharing embarrassing images or videos, creating fake accounts, identity hijacking, pressuring someone to share sexual images, or targeted harassment.**

Bullying can be **prejudice based**, including behaviour related to **protected characteristics** (e.g., disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment).

Note: A one off incident may still be serious and **require safeguarding action** if there is significant harm or risk.

4. Legal and standards framework

This policy is informed by:

- **AEGIS Quality Standards** – Section 6 (Safeguarding, Child Protection & Welfare), including **6.9 Anti-Bullying** and **6.10 Online Safety requirements** for clear expectations, reporting routes and responses.
- **DfE:** Preventing and Tackling Bullying – definitions, prevention, response, equality duties.
- **KCSIE (DfE statutory guidance)** – safeguarding duties, child on child abuse, DSL responsibilities and information sharing.

5. Roles and responsibilities

- **All adults (staff, local coordinators, drivers, contractors, homestays):** promote positive behaviour; **challenge** bullying; **report concerns immediately to the DSL**; keep accurate records.
- **DSL (Poliane Costa):** lead and coordinate responses; assess risk; liaise with schools/parents;

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refer to LADO/Children's Social Care/police where appropriate; maintain secure records; deliver/arrange training.

- **Deputy DSL (Tannaz Fatoorehchi)**: act when DSL unavailable.
- **Students & Parents**: follow the **Student Code of Conduct**; report concerns promptly.

6. Prevention (education, culture & environment)

We will:

1. **Set clear expectations** (Code of Conduct; student induction; homestay guidelines) and model respectful behaviour.
2. **Provide information** to students on bullying, cyberbullying and reporting routes (Handbook/ Online Safety).
3. **Train** staff and homestays to identify and respond to bullying, including cyberbullying indicators and prejudice based bullying.
4. **Promote safe online behaviour** and link to our Online Safety Policy.
5. **Use proportionate supervision** and risk assessment during homestays, travel and activities.

7. Recognising bullying and cyberbullying

Indicators may include **unexplained injuries, damaged belongings, withdrawal, fearfulness, changes in mood, sleep or appetite, missing curfews, school avoidance, or digital distress** (e.g., secrecy with devices, sudden account changes).

8. Reporting routes (how to raise a concern)

Anyone (student, parent, homestay, staff) can report concerns by contacting:

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Poliane Costa

Office: **+44(0)1273 72 55 77** / Mobile/WhatsApp: **+44(0)7841 611 284**

Email: **polly@britishguardianship.com**

Deputy DSL: Tannaz Fatoorehchi

Office: **+44(0)1273 72 55 77** / WhatsApp: **+44(0)7935 646 492**

Email: **tannaz@britishguardianship.com**

24/7 Emergency: +44(0)7841 611 284 / +44(0)7969 688 294 (British Guardianship)

Police 999 (immediate danger) / **101** (non emergency) / **NSPCC 0800 800 5000** (advice)

We encourage **early reporting** and **do not require proof**—we will listen, take it seriously and act proportionately.

9. How we respond (procedure)

1. **Immediate safety & listening**: Ensure the student is safe; listen without judgment; explain we **cannot keep secrets** where safety is involved.
2. **Report to DSL**: The receiving adult informs the DSL **immediately** (or Deputy DSL if DSL unavailable).
3. **Record**: Complete a **Record of Concern** with factual detail (who/what/when/where; evidence such as screenshots/URLs) and store securely.

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4. **Assessment:** DSL assesses **risk and threshold** (considering nature, frequency, harm, power imbalance, prejudice based elements, online/offline mix). May liaise with the student's school DSL to coordinate.

5. **Action & support:**

- **Lower level/early:** restorative work, boundaries, monitoring, pastoral support, homestay adjustments, online safety controls.
- **Serious/persistent/harmful:** formal behaviour sanctions (per Code of Conduct), escalate to **school, LADO/Children's Social Care** if abuse is suspected or if an adult/host is implicated; **police** if a crime may have been committed. Formal consequences for bullying may include the sanctions set out in the British Guardianship Student Code of Conduct.
- Where an allegation of bullying involves a member of staff or a homestay provider, the concern will be managed under our Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy, including the Allegations Against Adults procedures, and escalated to the LADO where required.

6. **Parents informed** (unless doing so increases risk) and given advice on supporting the child.

7. **Follow up & review:** agree a plan, check ins, and review outcomes; consider further measures (e.g., change of homestay) if needed.

10. Managing cyberbullying specifics

- **Preserve evidence** (screenshots, URLs, handles); avoid deleting messages until advised.
- **Reporting & takedown:** encourage in app reporting; consider platform takedowns.
- **Safety controls:** privacy settings, blocking, muting, secure device use; consider temporary device limits to protect wellbeing.
- **Criminal concerns:** escalate to **police** (e.g., hate crime, threats to kill, non consensual sharing of sexual images).

Cyberbullying is addressed **together with** our **Online Safety Policy**.

11. Support for children who experience bullying

We will provide **practical and emotional support**, which may include: a trusted adult check in, wellbeing plan, liaison with school pastoral teams, signposting to counselling or **Childline (0800 1111)**. We will also support students who have engaged in bullying to change behaviour safely and appropriately. We ensure that children are listened to, their views are taken seriously, and they are involved in decisions about the support they receive.

12. Students with additional vulnerabilities

We recognise that some pupils (e.g., **SEND**, recent arrivals, EAL, care experienced, or minoritised groups) may be **at higher risk** and may require tailored support and proactive monitoring.

13. Expectations for homestay providers

Homestays must:

- Promote respectful behaviour; set **clear household rules**; supervise appropriately (age appropriate freedoms/curfews).
- **Report concerns immediately** to the DSL and record key facts.
- Support safe device use in the home and **cooperate** with any safeguarding plan.

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14. Training, communication & awareness

- **Annual** safeguarding/anti-bullying training for staff and homestays, with refreshers and updates as needed.
- Policy availability: website/handbook/onboarding packs; alternative formats on request.
- Regular **student facing reminders** (e.g., induction, visits).

15. Recording, data protection & monitoring

- All records kept **securely and separately** from the main student file; shared on a **need to know** basis under UK GDPR/Data Protection Act.
- Trends are **monitored** termly to inform prevention.
- We cooperate with schools and statutory agencies on information sharing in line with safeguarding law and guidance.

16. Linked policies & documents

- **Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy** (core procedures; LADO/police)
- **Online Safety Policy** (device/internet rules and cyberbullying detail)
- **Student Code of Conduct** (behaviour standards & sanctions)
- **Whistleblowing Policy, Complaints Policy, Missing Student Policy** (escalation routes)

17. Key contacts (at a glance)

DSL – Poliane Costa

T: +44(0)1273 72 55 77 / **Mobile/WhatsApp**: +44 (0)7841 611 284

E: polly@britishguardianship.com

Deputy DSL – Tannaz Fatoorehchi

T: +44(0)1273 72 55 77 / **WhatsApp**: +44(0)7935 646 492

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Police: 999 (emergency) / 101 (non emergency) / **NSPCC**: 0808 800 5000

18. Review and sign off

This policy will be **reviewed annually** or following any incident, regulatory update, or AEGIS guidance change.