



DUBAI GEM PRIVATE SCHOOL

STRIVE FOR EXCELLENCE



Anti Bullying Policy

RATIONALE

The aim of the anti-bullying policy is to ensure that pupils learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone. We will embed our anti-bullying policy within a school ethos based on mutual respect, fairness and equality and aim to provide support and management strategies that are pragmatic and non-oppressive. This policy links to other key policies (including Safeguarding, Child Protection and the Behaviour Policy) and enables the school to fulfill its responsibilities.

Context Statement

1) Key Principles

- All children have an absolute right to be educated in a safe and secure environment and to be protected from others who may wish to harm, degrade or abuse them.
- There is no justification for bullying behaviour and it should not be tolerated in any form. Differences of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, ability are absolutely repudiated as reasons for bullying.
- Bullying behaviour is a problem for those suffering bullying and should be addressed in positive and constructive ways which provide opportunities for growth and development for those suffering and those responsible for bullying.
- Effective management of bullying is a shared responsibility and strategies should involve school staff; parents/carers and other professionals involved with children who are suffering bullying.
- Information about School's policy and procedures should be readily available in 'user-friendly' form to children and their parents/carers.
- The school will ensure that issues relating to bullying are given a high profile, for example through assemblies, participation in Anti-Bullying Week.
- Students, staff and parents will be consulted with respect to reviewing procedures

2) Aims

- To fulfil the school's statutory responsibility to respect the rights of children and to safeguard and promote their welfare.
- To communicate the school's responsibility for responding to incidents of bullying and to emphasise to staff, pupils and their parents and carers the school's attitude towards bullying behaviour.
- To address the problem of bullying through the implementation of consistent and wide-ranging procedures, promoting an ethos in which each pupil is safe and able to realise their full potential.
- To reassure parents and carers that the school takes their children's welfare seriously and that they are being educated in a safe and secure environment.
- To maintain a supportive environment in which bullying is seen as inappropriate and unacceptable.

- To accurately record all incidents of bullying and to monitor the effectiveness of strategies for bringing it under control.

3) Definition

We define bullying as;

- “The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person by another, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be carried out physically, verbally, emotionally or through cyberspace.”
- Bullying behaviour may be direct or indirect. Direct forms include physical violence and threats; verbal assaults and taunts; the destruction of property; extortion; unwanted sexual interest or contact. Examples of indirect forms of bullying include ignoring and the withdrawal of friendship; isolating; excluding; cyberbullying; malicious gossip and spreading rumour; abusive or oppressive graffiti.
- We recognise that bullying may take place for many reasons or for no apparent reason, although there is usually a real or imagined difference which leads to the bullying, including those relating to appearance, race, health, religion, culture, social class, family circumstances, gender and sexual orientation.
- Bullying may take place between students, between adults or between students and adults.

None of these forms of bullying or intimidation is acceptable.

Examples

Physical – pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.

Verbal – name – calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.

Emotional – being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books)

Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.

Gender - unwanted physical or verbal contact based on gender.

Harassment – threatening or disturbing behaviour inflicted on another.

As a school we take bullying seriously. Students and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported. DGPS has a “zero tolerance” to Bullying. Confidentiality will be maintained where possible.

4) Bullying Outside School

If a child is found to be the victim of bullying outside school then help and support will be offered and advice given on how to avoid further incidents in future. The victim's parents will be informed. If there are more general concerns about children's safety outside school then the local police will be contacted and their help sought in making the area around the school premises more secure. If concerns arise in relation to school transport then the issue will be raised with the Transport manager at the Local Authority and their help sought in dealing with the problem.

5) Prevention

All staff involved in the education and/or supervision of children will be made aware of the issue of bullying and the need to apply the schools policy consistently when episodes of bullying are witnessed or reported. Staff will constantly reinforce the message to children that bullying is unacceptable and will take positive action to prevent and control it.

The issue of bullying will be given a high profile and will be raised with students at a number of levels including:

- Whole school level, for example through assemblies when children will be informed of the school's policy and the consequences of bullying. The School Student Council will be involved in discussions relating to bullying and how it can best be tackled. In addition, posters and displays will be used to heighten awareness
- Classroom level, for example during tutor periods and PHSE; ME & Class talks.
- Individual level, for example children who are felt to be at risk of bullying (or who have suffered from bullying in the past) will be offered additional support and guidance. Children will be encouraged to come forward and discuss bullying-related issues through a variety of channels (eg: form tutors, Pastoral Support Managers, "drop-ins" with the school nurse). In these circumstances staff will respond positively, take the expression of concern seriously and ensure that the matter is fully investigated. Children who have been responsible for bullying will be given advice and support and taught strategies to enable them to bring their unacceptable behaviour under control and to prevent further incidents.
- Participation in campaigns to raise awareness, including Anti-Bullying Week The school recognises that there are particular times when children may be more vulnerable to bullying – lunch and break times and the beginning and end of the school day. Arrangements will be made to ensure that at such times there is proper supervision available to reduce the risk of bullying incidents.

6) Parental involvement

- The school is firmly committed to working in partnership with parents and believes that the best outcomes emerge when professionals and parents/carers are able to work together when bullying occurs.
- All parents will be kept informed of our procedures in relation to bullying (for example through the Parent Information Booklet, the school web-site and newsletters). Parents will also be provided with a copy of the school's Anti-Bullying Charter which has been drawn up in association with the Student Council.
- Parents who believe their children are suffering from bullying should share their concerns with school at the earliest opportunity and be prepared to work with school to keep their children safe in future. All expressions of concern relating to bullying will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly.
- If a child is involved in a serious incident of bullying or there is evidence that the same child is involved repeatedly involved in less serious incidents (either as a victim or a perpetrator) school will inform parents and invite them to become involved in

the management of the problem and the prevention of further incidents. Isolated and less serious incidents will be managed by school staff and parents informed.

7) Implementation

DGPS is committed to creating a bully-free environment and we will not tolerate bullying in any form. Towards this end we will ensure that the anti-bullying policy and procedures are applied rigorously. All staff involved in the teaching and/or supervision of students will take responsibility for addressing incidents which fall with the school's definition of bullying and ensure that the victim receives what support is required; the person responsible for bullying is informed of the unacceptability of his/her behaviour and a record is made of the Incident Referral Form. All students need to be aware that staff wants to be informed of any incidents or concerns and that action will be taken when bullying is reported.

8) Incident Management and Procedures

All reports of bullying will be addressed and the priority will be to support those being bullied and to stop the bullying.

The school will take firm and decisive action to deal with any incident of bullying which is witnessed by or reported to, any member of staff. It is the responsibility of the school Counsellors' and SLT to assess the seriousness of the bullying and to determine the appropriate action that should be taken.

We will work to help and support those responsible for the bullying to understand the impact of bullying and to change their behaviour.

When a member of staff receives information, either directly or indirectly, that a child may have been the victim of a bullying incident, this report will be taken seriously and investigated. All incidents reported to staff will be passed on to the appropriate Leadership member in the first instance, who will then decide on the most appropriate course of action, in consultation with the School Counsellor Senior Leadership Team if necessary.

The school will offer a proactive, sympathetic and supportive response to children who are the victims of bullying. The exact nature of the response will be determined by the particular child's individual needs and may include:

- Immediate action to stop the incident and secure the child's safety.
- Positive reinforcement that reporting the incident was the correct thing to do.
- Reassurance that those suffering bullying are not responsible for the behaviour of those responsible for bullying.
- Strategies to prevent further incidents.
- Extra supervision/monitoring.
- Informing/involving parents.
- Adult mediation between those responsible and those suffering bullying.
- Arrangements to review progress.

Procedure in DGPS

Incident of bullying is reported to a member of staff.



The member of staff will decide on the level of need for the reported incident.



If deemed a necessary course of action, the reported bullying incident is forwarded to the Counsellor, the Form tutor and Key Stage Leader.

With respect to those involved in or responsible for bullying, the school will respond to incidents in a proportionate way – the more serious the cause for concern the more serious the response. When sanctions are felt to be necessary they will be applied consistently and fairly. The following options will be considered:

- Immediate action to stop an incident of bullying in progress.
- Engagement with the person responsible for bullying to reinforce the message that their behaviour is a breach of school rules and is unacceptable.
- Use of “behaviour agreement contracts” and report cards to monitor progress.
- Sanctions including loss of lunch/ break-time privileges, detention, removal from class or group, isolation and fixed period exclusions in extreme cases.
- Informing and involving parents.
- Adult mediation between those responsible and those suffering bullying (provided this is safe for the victim).

In all cases there will be subsequent monitoring to ensure the bullying is not repeated.

9) Monitoring and evaluating

Each incident of bullying falling within the school definition will be recorded. Senior staff and Governors will evaluate the effectiveness of the policy and agree adjustments that may be necessary to address any ongoing concerns. These will be shared with staff, parents/carers and students.

Where necessary, and in agreement with those involved, we will refer individual cases to other agencies and designated mediation services that are qualified and experienced in providing a programme of support. This is of paramount importance where it is felt that there are child protection issues associated with the bullying, in which case advice will be sought from the Local Child Protection Authority and where necessary the police.

Outcomes/Sanctions

The Counsellors/Key Stage Leaders will decide on an appropriate sanction, depending on the seriousness and frequency of the incidents.

Sanctions include

- Reflection and apologizing.
- Loss of social time – break and lunchtimes.
- After school detention - time used researching bullying (Maybe a project to complete).
- Prevention of bullying behaviours contract completed.
- Exclusion.
- In all cases parents are to be informed and in serious cases parents are requested to come in to discuss the problem

Bullying log book

Incidents of bullying and the actions taken are recorded on a bullying log kept by the Key Stage leader/Counsellors.

Warning signs that a student may be a target of ANY bullying:

- Decreased interest or quality of work.
- Erratic school attendance.
- Going to break late and returning early.
- Avoiding breaks, choosing areas where adults are.
- Going to the nurse's office regularly.
- Avoiding after-school activities.
- Difficulty concentrating in class.
- Sudden mood or behavioural changes.
- Seems isolated, withdrawn, anxious, fearful, self-blaming.
- Uses 'target' body language – hunched shoulders, head down, avoids eye contact.
- Lack of sense of humour or uses inappropriate humour.
- Poor or few social skills.
- Few or no friends.
- Suddenly starts to bully others.
- Frequent illnesses or unexplained injuries.
- Low self-esteem.
- Physical signs such as weight loss.
- Tearful.
- Depressive signs.
- Talks about running away, committing suicide, self-harming.

Staff needs to appreciate how difficult it is for students to come forward with bullying issues – they often fear retribution or have concerns they may not be taken seriously, so it is important that staff:

- Listen to them without interruption.
- Maintain eye contact and demonstrate attentive body language.
- Encourage them to tell their story.
- Ask questions for clarification.
- Involve them in the actions that need to be taken, and agree with them that you will follow up with them within a short timescale.
- Reassure the student that you care and they were absolutely right to come and talk to you.
- Send a clear message that the bullying is not their fault.
- Make sure they know not to retaliate or return the message.
- DO NOT act as if the bullying is no big deal.

COMBATTING BULLYING IN THE LONG TERM

Dubai Gem Private School will combat bullying in the long term by:

- (a) Raising awareness of what bullying is and discussing with children an agreed list of unacceptable behaviour (all the evidence shows that raising awareness reduces, not increases bullying).
- (b) Promoting positive behaviour.

Both (a) and (b) can be discussed in group sessions on a regular basis, or dealt with whenever an opportunity presents itself in normal class teaching time.

APPENDIX: Roles and Responsibilities

Everyone involved in the life of the school must take responsibility for promoting a common anti-bullying approach by being supportive of each other, providing positive role models and conveying a clear understanding that we disapprove of unacceptable behaviour and by being clear that we all follow the school code of conduct. The prime responsibility for all members of the school community is to report incidents of bullying, and concerns they may have that someone is being bullied.

a) Governors

The Governing Body is responsible for the Anti-Bullying Policy, and for ensuring that it is regularly monitored and reviewed. The Governing Body will:

- Support the Principal and the staff in the implementation of this policy.
- Be fully informed on matters concerning anti-bullying.
- Regularly monitor incident reports and actions taken to be aware of the effectiveness of this policy.

b) The Principal and School Leadership Team

The Principal is responsible for implementing the Anti-Bullying Policy and will implement the KHDA guidelines.

The Principal will ensure that:

- bullying behaviour is addressed in the school's Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- bullying is addressed as an issue in the curriculum
- all staff receive training that addresses bullying behaviour
- the Governing Body is provided with information regarding issues concerning behaviour management including bullying
- a senior staff member is appointed to be responsible for the monitoring of the policy and anti-bullying strategies.

c) All Staff

Staff have a vital role to play as they are at the forefront of behaviour management and supporting children's sense of personal safety and well-being in school. They have the closest knowledge of the children in their care and should build up a relationship involving mutual support, trust and respect. All members of staff will:

- Provide children with a good role model.
- Provide children with a framework of behaviour including class rules which supports the whole school policy.
- Emphasise and behave in a respectful and caring manner to students and colleagues, to set a good tone and help create a positive atmosphere.
- Always be aware and take action when there are concerns about bullying.
- Report and record all allegations of bullying following the school's procedures.
- Ensure that students, and where appropriate parents / carers, are given regular feedback on the action been taken.

The School Counsellors will act as the first point of contact in the case of bullying issues being identified and reported. They will initiate responses to tackle the concerns raised.

d) Parents/Carers

We expect that parents/carers will understand and be engaged in everything that is being done to make sure their child enjoys and is safe at school and that they will support us in

helping us meet our aims. We want them to feel confident that everything is being done to make sure their child is happy and safe at school. We expect parents / carers to:

- keep the school informed about and fully involved in any aspect of their child's behaviour
- contact the school immediately they know or suspect that their child is being bullied, even if their child has asked for "secrecy", and work in partnership with the school to bring an end to the bullying
- contact the school if they know or suspect that their child is bullying another pupil
- share with the school any suspicions they have that bullying is taking place even when it does not directly involve their child
- When a parent/carer has concerns relating to bullying they should report them to the appropriate KSL/ Counsellor in the first instance

e) Students

Without the support of our students we will not be able to prevent bullying. That is why our students will be consulted and will participate in the development, monitoring and review of anti-bullying policy and strategies. We want our students to feel confident that everything is being done to make school a safe and secure environment for them to achieve and learn. We also want our students to feel that they are supported in reporting incidents of bullying and reassured that action regarding bullying will take place.

We expect that students:

- will support the Principal and staff in the implementation of the policy
- will not bully anyone else, or encourage and support bullying by others
- will tell an adult if they are being bullied, usually either a member of staff or parent (could suggest alternatives)
- will act to prevent and stop bullying, usually this is through telling an adult if they know or suspect that someone else is being bullied
- Students must recognise that being a "bystander" is not acceptable, and understand how their silence supports bullying and makes them in part responsible for what happens to the victim of bullying

10) Policy review

The effectiveness of the school's anti-bullying policy and practice will be monitored by the School Counsellors and the School Leadership Team and it will be reviewed and evaluated on an annual basis, with a report produced during the summer term to enable any amendments to be implemented for the start of the next academic year.

Consultation with students, staff and parents will form a part of the review process as will an analysis of data relating to bullying incidents and the effectiveness of the actions taken.

Reviewed: September 2021