



ST. JOSEPH'S SCHOOL – ABU DHABI

Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy should be read as part of our Discipline and Behaviour policy and elaborates on the aspects of bullying contained in that document.

Policy Statement

Bullying is the pre-meditated dominance of one person over another. It is a pattern of deliberately hurtful behaviour, physical, psychological, or indirect, rather than an isolated incident. It may be difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. Victims of bullying often feel ashamed they have been picked on and may have been threatened not to tell anyone. Bullying is totally unacceptable and will not be tolerated. The school will act as early as possible should bullying occur.

Aims

- To reduce and attempt to eradicate all incidents of bullying.
- To encourage all members of the school community to take responsibility for the care and safety of others.
- To develop the sense of right and wrong in our school community.
- To be alert to the signs of bullying and harassment and to report any incidents as appropriate.

Equal Opportunities

We believe it is the right of all students, regardless of their gender, ethnicity, physical ability, linguistic, cultural or home background, to have access to quality learning experiences in a safe, secure and supportive environment. We recognize that certain groups and individuals may be discriminated against and therefore are strongly committed to positive action to remove and challenge discrimination in all aspects of the school and its work. We recognize that adults may have preconceived expectations of students' behaviour and we are committed to challenging discrimination and stereotypes.

Implementation

Bullying will not be tolerated in our school. It is everyone's responsibility to prevent it happening. The school will respond promptly when bullying is identified.

Detection

The following are some types of behaviour, which could help to detect if a student is being bullied. He/she:

- has a sudden dislike of certain places or journeys
- starts having nightmares or interrupted sleep
- becomes withdrawn and anxious
- school performance starts to suffer
- feels ill at certain times of the week
- 'loses' valuable possessions
- has unexplained bruises or cuts
- cries in secret
- asks for extra pocket money, sweets etc.
- is unwilling to go to school
- refuses to say what is wrong.

This type of behaviour can be brought about by a whole range of worries, so having identified the existence of a problem, it should be investigated further.

Strategies to address bullying

The school reinforces positive behaviour regularly through:

- regular discussions between the Class Teacher and her class to reflect on playground behaviour or other issues concerning the younger students.
- reminders of our school rules and what is acceptable behaviour.
- celebration of achievement and a use of praise in which positive behaviour is recognised at all times, in class and during whole school assemblies
- teaching students not to tolerate bullying
- helping students to develop positive strategies and assertion.

The strategies used depend on the particular circumstances and students involved. A combination of strategies is essential to reduce incidents of bullying. The school will

respond in a way which will encourage learning of improved behaviour. It is important to encourage disclosure and confidence that effective action will be taken.

Procedures to be taken following disclosures of bullying

If a student comes to a member of staff with concerns about bullying, the matter should be tackled immediately. It is important that the school is seen to be proactive in dealing with concerns, whoever they are raised by.

Strategies and procedures should follow this pattern:

- stay calm and calm the victim
- find somewhere quiet to talk
- talk with the 'victim' about their feelings - it is important to listen carefully and take what is said seriously and to reassure the 'victim'
- talk to the perpetrator(s) about their actions and the feelings of the 'victim'
- talk with others involved - this will include bystanders/colluders who joined in but did not initiate any bullying
- explain the problem to the students involved, talking about the way the victim feels and drawing attention to the distress caused - details should not be given or blame allocated
- help the group to understand that they are responsible and can do something about it
- ask each member of the group to suggest a way in which the victim could be helped to feel happier
- ask all of the group to take responsibility and arrange to see them later to find out how things are going
- talk to all members of the group including the victim, at least one week later
- inform the Assistant Vice Principal and record the incident in the school record book

Parents of both parties may be informed and invited to discuss the matter with a senior member of staff. Persistent bullying may result in exclusion from school.

Advice to students

The school council will be actively involved in helping to promote Anti-Bullying. They will be expected to canvass the views of other students and contribute to the development of policy and procedures. The school will train peer mediators to be available to talk with students who appear unhappy or who turn to them with concerns about bullying.

Students themselves will be encouraged to:

- say 'please stop, I don't like it'
- walk away and try to ignore the bully
- tell an adult at school
- if you cannot tell someone at school tell your parents who will then tell us
- if you know someone is being bullied tell an adult
- remember that no one deserves to be bullied.

Advice to parents

Do not keep your child away from school if you think they are being bullied. Bring your child into our notice so we can support your child and overcome the difficulties. Please never confront other students or their parents/careers as it only makes the situation worse. Watch out for signs such as an unwillingness to attend school, illnesses etc. If you think your child is being bullied, inform the school immediately and ask for an appointment with a member of staff. If you are not happy with the outcome, make an appointment with the principal. If you are still dissatisfied, speak to a governor about your problem. It is everyone's responsibility. Please allow the school time to investigate the problem. What has taken weeks to develop cannot be resolved in a day.

Management Arrangements

The Assistant vice Principal is responsible for overall monitoring of the behavior policy. Any incidents will be brought to her attention. The Assistant Vice-Principal is responsible for monitoring the incident log. Any incidents of bullying and the outcome should be reported to Senior Leadership Team meetings. The overall effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying policy will be reviewed at least once per year and amendments made after consultation with all members of staff and students.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies.

Date of Review: 31st March 2024

Prestina Rocha

Sr. Suranjana (Prestina Rocha)

Principal

