

POLICY TITLE:	Anti-Bullying and Harassment Procedure
Policy Number:	02
Applies to:	Al Karamah Private School – Abu Dhabi
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Author:	Senior Leadership Team
Ratified by:	Al Karamah Executive Leadership Team and Governing Body
Responsible signatory:	School Principal
Outcome:	This procedure aims to make clear what constitutes harassment and bullying. It provides guidance to managers and employees regarding the reporting and investigating of accusations of bullying and harassment.
Reference:	
Cross Reference:	School Behaviour Policy

1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this procedure is to provide staff and volunteers working with children and young people at Al Karamah School with an understanding of their responsibilities in preventing, tackling and responding to incidents of (or alleged) bullying.

It is based on principles of fairness, equality and diversity within Al Karamah School that provide for children and young people regardless of disability, ethnicity, race, gender, age, religious belief.

Bullying could be defined as an intentional act, which inflicts emotional physical harm on another person. By focusing on intentions, this definition helps to avoid labelling some other behaviour (pushing a pupil/student due to hyperactivity/anxiety, removing a personal possession from another pupil/student when there is no understanding of property) as acts of bullying. Bullying involves a person being hurt, distressed, pressured or victimised by repeated intentional attacks by another individual or group. The school will consider that a pupil/student is being bullied or victimised when he or she is exposed repeatedly and over duration of time to harmful actions carried out by one or more of the other pupils/students.

At this school there are some behaviour that if displayed intentionally and over time will be considered to be examples of bullying. Bullying falls under five main categories;

- Physical (causing physical pain or taking belongings)
- Verbal (name calling, insults, taunting)
- Non-verbal (eye-rolling, gesturing, ignoring)
- Indirect (spreading rumours, excluding from social groups)
- Cyberbullying (sending malicious emails, texts or social network messages).

2 BULLYING AND AUTISTIC SPECTRUM DISORDER

Pupils/students with Autistic Spectrum Disorder find it very difficult to understand other people's mental states as well as the causal relationships between behaviours and specific emotional states.

Although simple emotions such as happiness, sadness and anger may be within their understanding, a severe impairment in interpersonal-affective relatedness could constrain the pupil/student's empathic understanding of the emotions other people experience, as a direct consequence of their actions (weak Theory of Mind).

In spite of this, it is sometimes the case that some of the pupil/students attending Al Karamah School will display behaviours, which inflict emotional or physical harm on their peers, and therefore immediate and effective action should be taken.

Signs that a child is being bullied

Pupils who are being bullied may display some of the following common responses:

- Increased anxiety (displayed through increasingly obsessive behaviours, hand movements, repetitive questioning and statement, or short temper)
- Withdrawal
- Aggression
- Seeming over-sensitive or over-reacting to minor occurrences
- Seeking revenge
- Repeatedly exposing him-or herself to the same kind of bullying situation. Although the pupil may know it is negative interaction, they may still consider this better than no interaction at all. It becomes a scenario they are familiar with and which follows a predictable sequence.
- Refusal to come to school

3 STRATEGIES TO DEAL WITH BULLYING

Proactive Strategies

Should be based on the following principles:

- Effective leadership that promotes an open and honest anti-bullying ethos.
- Use of curriculum/learning opportunities can be used to draw out anti-bullying messages.
- Use of opportunities throughout the school/school calendar and at certain times of the day to raise awareness of the negative consequences of bullying (e.g. Anti-Bullying Week of each year; and school assemblies).
- Engaging children and young people in the process of developing the anti-bullying policy and promoting open and honest reporting.
- Reviewing the school environment. In particular looking at staff supervision patterns.
- The student council discuss bullying as a part of their set agenda.

There are several principles derived mainly from research on the development and modification of the problem behaviours concerned, aggressive behaviours that could be used to address bullying when it occurs.

The above principles are translated into several specific strategies to be used at school, class and individual levels.

Teachers and Practitioners should use the 'strategies to deal with bullying' flowchart, when determining the appropriate actions to take. Once all the relevant procedures have been implemented, the bullying form with actions completed should be given to Principal or Vice Principal who will check and then delegate if further actions are required.

The school believes that the most effective approach is to work on all of the three levels:

3.1 School Level

It is important to create a school environment characterised by warmth, positive interest and involvement from adults on the one hand, and firm boundaries to unacceptable behaviours on the other.

Pupils/students who are likely to bully others and pupils/students who are likely to be victimised will be identified by staff and highlighted to the behaviour team.

The Anti Bullying and Harassment Procedure will be reviewed and updated each year by the School Behaviour Team and copies will be distributed among the staff. Each member of staff must read this document; sign the 'Updated Procedure.

Meeting with Parents

Parents will be informed and asked to co-operate with school staff in eradicating bullying behaviours. They may be invited to participate in discussion groups regarding bullying on an individual basis when appropriate.

3.2 Class Level

Class meetings to explain rules against bullying.

Teachers will address the rules and expectations during sessions as well as covering relevant topics during reflection time. The communication of these rules may have to be adapted through the use of pictorial means to enable pupils/students of differing abilities to understand them. Teaching staff are encouraged to identify and raise concerns when noted.

Pupils/students will always be encouraged to speak to their Teacher / mentor, if they are the victims, or witness, a bullying event.

3.3 Individual Level

Teaching of Play and Occupational Skills

Pupils/students who engage in bullying behaviours will need to be redirected towards engaging in constructive activities in their free time. These activities will be planned and provided by teachers and the pupils/students will gain positive reinforcement when they occupy themselves constructively.

Reorganisation of the Environment

Specific pupils/students who have the tendency to display inappropriate behaviours may be asked to work individually and programmes may be devised to motivate the pupil/student to work in groups appropriately.

Group activities may be organised in such a way that the pupil/student who engages in bullying is seated near an assertive pupil/student or the teacher.

Reward Systems

Specific behaviours incompatible to bullying will be encouraged and reinforced consistently by school staff. The pupil/student may use a token system whereby he/she can have extra rewards for the display of appropriate behaviours; these tokens can be used by pupils to "buy" goods which they can purchase within the school.

High levels of staffing and near constant supervision mean that it is difficult for pupils/students to be out of line of sight for extended periods, minimising opportunities for bullying to take place.

Assertiveness

Pupils/students who have been victims of bullying will be taught strategies to protect themselves from those acts. Possible strategies may include:

- Social stories to promote positive attitudes to behaviour and strategies on how to recognise and deal with bullying
- Talking to teacher / Keyworker
- Learning to avoid confrontational situations
- Learning to say 'No'
- Sharing concerns with staff

4 PROGRAMMES OF BEHAVIOUR MODIFICATION

See section on management of behaviour in Behaviour Policy.

Counselling

Pupils/students who have communication skills and have been victims of bullying will have the opportunity to talk about their own feelings, their worries and strategies for protecting themselves in the future.

The Principal/Vice Principal and therapy team will be available for consultations on a sessional basis.

Recording of Bullying

Bullying incidents will be recorded in an Incident Report Forms where appropriate. Please see chart below. The Principal/Vice Principal receives all Bullying Forms to check what actions have been taken and to ensure oversight of the issues. The Principal/Vice Principal gives the therapy team the forms which they collate in a file, logging all incidents and actions. The therapy team report to the SLT on incidents. The SLT discuss cases where the situation has not been resolved and therefore, further action is required.

Key Points

Schools are required by law to take measures to prevent and act on bullying and to make sure that people with a disability are not discriminated against.

School staff play a vital role in promoting understanding and tolerance of difference.

Training in ASDs can help staff to recognise why pupils with ASD behave in certain ways, detect when they've been bullied, and help to prevent bullying situations from occurring in the first place.

Appendix 1

ADEK Policy 65: Protection from Dangers of the Global Information Network (the Internet) Corresponding to Article (70) of the Organising Regulation

DEFINITION(S):

For the purposes of this policy, protection from dangers of the global information network includes the measures taken by Schools to:

- Protect students from exposure to online harmful materials, communications and behaviours, by means that shall include the use of a reliable filtering system that alerts the School's Principal and teachers to inappropriate Internet usage by students and prevents students from gaining access to offensive and other unsuitable websites.
- Prevent unauthorised persons from gaining access to School data.

Cyber-bullying is defined as the use of electronic and information devices, such as email, instant messages, text messages, mobile phones and websites to send or post messages or images that may harm an individual or a group.

PURPOSE(S):

- To set out the Council's requirement that students are protected from morally offensive, inappropriate or other undesirable content on the Internet and preventing access to websites that contain such materials.
- To educate students on the proper use of the Internet and sharing of personal information.
- To promote good practices in using secure Internet systems.

POLICY:

The School shall use a filtering system for websites in order to monitor students' usage and to ensure that they are protected from morally and socially inappropriate materials. In this regard, Principals shall prepare, implement and regularly review an Internet Security Policy which includes, for example, the following points:

- Installing an Internet filtering and security system in order to monitor students' Internet use and to ensure their protection from online materials that are not consistent with morality, decency or public order.
- Prohibiting the viewing or downloading of any inappropriate material (offensive or immoral remarks, jokes or any other comments that may offend someone based on their physical or mental disability, age, religion, social status, political affiliations, and ethnicity).
- Monitoring Internet usage by the School's IT department.
- Having teachers and IT staff take an active role in protecting students from the dangers of the Internet and monitoring websites accessed by students as well

as monitoring students during a School trip in case they have access to electronic devices that are connected to the Internet.

Appendix 2

CYBERBULLYING

Cyberbullying (online bullying) refers to bullying by electronic media and includes sending, posting or sharing negative, harmful, false or mean content about someone else. It can include sharing personal or private information about someone else causing embarrassment or humiliation.

The most common places where cyberbullying occurs are:

- Social media sites, such as Facebook, Snapchat, TikTok, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube etc. (including hijacking/cloning and catfishing)
- Text messaging and messaging through apps/instant messaging/chats
- Online forums, chat rooms and message boards
- Email
- Online gaming communities
- The use of mobile phone cameras to cause distress, fear or humiliation

Warning Signs a Child is Being Cyberbullied or is Cyberbullying Others

Many of the warning signs that cyberbullying is occurring happen around a child's use of their device. Some of the warning signs that a child may be involved in cyberbullying are:

- Noticeable increases or decreases in device use, including texting.
- A child exhibits emotional responses (laughter, anger, upset) to what is happening on their device.
- A child hides their screen or device when others are near and avoids discussion about what they are doing on their device.
- Social media accounts are shut down or new ones appear.
- A child starts to avoid social situations, even those that were enjoyed in the past.
- A child becomes withdrawn or depressed or loses interest in people and activities.

STRATEGIES TO DEAL WITH BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

Appendix 3

