ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Rationale

At Deira Private School we seek to create a climate where bullying behaviours are not accepted by any member of the school community. In our school we believe that every child and adult should be able to work and study in a safe and nurturing environment. Coming to school should be something to look forward to.

Our policy will engage all students, staff and parents to work towards the elimination of any form of bullying. Bullying is wrong and damages the well-being of individual children. We therefore do all we can to prevent it, by developing a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable. If bullying does occur students, staff and parents should feel confident that they can report the behaviour and that swift action will be taken. This policy is implemented in partnership with the school's behaviour policies and serves the entire school.

Definition of bullying

Bullying can take various forms, all of which can have a significant impact on students' well-being, academic performance, and overall school environment. The school strictly prohibits all forms of bullying and is committed to creating a safe and supportive environment for all students. The types of bullying include but are not limited to the following:

1. Physical Bullying

This involves direct bodily harm or intimidation through physical actions. Examples include:

- Hitting, kicking, pushing, or shoving
- Spitting on or tripping someone
- Taking or damaging someone's belongings
- Making threatening physical gestures

2. Verbal Bullying

This includes spoken or written words meant to demean, intimidate, or humiliate. Examples include:

- Name-calling, teasing, or making offensive remarks
- Threats of harm or violence
- Insulting someone's appearance, abilities, or background
- Spreading harmful rumors

3. Social/Relational Bullying

This type of bullying is intended to harm someone's reputation or relationships. Examples include:

- Exclusion from social groups or activities
- Spreading false information to damage someone's social standing

- Encouraging others to ignore or reject someone
- Public embarrassment or humiliation

4. Cyberbullying

This involves using digital platforms to harass, intimidate, or spread harmful content about an individual. Examples include:

- Sending threatening or hurtful messages online
- Posting or sharing embarrassing photos or videos
- Spreading false rumors via social media, emails, or text messages
- Impersonating someone to cause harm or embarrassment

5. Sexual Bullying

This involves unwanted or inappropriate sexual comments, gestures, or actions. Examples include:

- Unwelcome sexual jokes, comments, or gestures
- Spreading sexual rumors
- Sharing inappropriate images or messages
- Pressuring someone for unwanted physical contact

6. Discriminatory Bullying

Bullying based on personal characteristics such as race, religion, gender, disability, or cultural background. Examples include:

- Racial slurs or offensive gestures
- Mocking someone's accent, traditions, or beliefs
- Discriminatory exclusion from activities
- Making offensive comments about gender identity or disabilities

Aims
We aim:
- to use students, staff and parents as positive resources in countering bullying;
- to use the curriculum, including the Moral Education and Islamic Studies Curriculum, to raise awareness of the school's views and as a means of educating students about the school's expectations;
- to give help and ongoing support to victims;
- to ensure that all accessible areas of the school are monitored at breaks;
- to use peer pressure against bullying behaviour;
- to make the unacceptable nature of the behaviour and the consequences of any repetition clear to the bully and his/her parents or carers;
- to help and give support to bullies to change their behaviour;
- to seek the involvement of outside agencies if, or when, necessary.

Location of Bullying

Bullying is most likely to occur:

- in unstructured classroom situations;
- in playgrounds and outside areas;
- in toilets;
- when children are going to and from school;
- School transportation
- during outdoor or extra curricular activities.

However, bullying can occur in any situation and staff must be vigilant, and willing to listen to reports of bullying and to investigate them

Potential Victims

Any child can be bullied, but some children are more likely to be victims and all staff should be aware of this. For example children with physical disabilities are often visibly different from their peers, and may appear more vulnerable and so could become targets. This includes those who wear glasses or hearing aids. Children who have dyslexic tendencies may be targeted by a bully, as could any child with low self esteem. Children already suffering abuse due to neglect may be singled out because of poor hygiene or inadequate clothing. All children who fall into the 'vulnerable' category are more likely to be bullied and need extra vigilance from staff. Children may also be bullied because of their race or religious beliefs.

Effect on Victim

As a result of bullying the victim may:

- develop a fear of school;
- develop a fear of another person;
- develop a fear of being with certain groups;
- suffer emotional problems;
- demonstrate behavioural problems;
- perform poorly in school work;
- practise avoidance tactics.

Guidance for staff

Staff should watch out for early signs of distress. These may be:

- deterioration of work;
- spurious illness;
- isolation or the desire to remain with adults;
- erratic attendance.

This behaviour may be warning of other problems but it may be indicative of bullying.

Strategies to raise awareness

● To have a school wide programme regarding anti-bullying, covering assemblies and PSHE that informs and educates pupils and students about the issues related to bullying and gives them strategies to deal with situations they might encounter

● To help students through advice and counselling, to make the right choices and not succumb to peer pressure;

● To listen to all parties involved in incidents and always take allegations from victims seriously;

● To reassure students that the school will do all in its power to protect and support all parties involved while the issues are being resolved;

● To foster, by example, the values in which we, as a school, believe;

● To investigate all incidents as fully as possible;

● To use a range of strategies which challenge bullying behaviour;

● To include within the curriculum, opportunities to discuss and consider bullying and other forms of anti-social behaviour;

● To identify bullying behaviour at the early stages and work towards behaviour modification before the problem becomes more serious.

Reporting Bullying

As a school we will:

● Encourage victims and witnesses to speak up;

● Treat incidents seriously however trivial they might seem at first;

● Be alert, as a whole staff, to changes in behaviour, attitude and well-being, reporting these immediately to the appropriate members of staff.

Immediate responses to a bullying incident

Take the report of the incident seriously;

● act as quickly as possible;

● do a preliminary investigation;

● record on a Severe Behaviour/Red Card form and take to Head of Pastoral Care or in their absence a member of SLT;

● Head of Pastoral Care/SLT conduct a thorough investigation;

● Administer consequences in line with the step they are on within the behaviour policy

● Parents of the bully are informed in line with the behaviour policy and the incident is logged

● Identify a support plan for the victim

● Parents of the victim are informed of the incident and the next steps

● Identify a support plan for the bully

Follow up steps as appropriate

● Equip the victim with skills to reduce future risks eg assertiveness development, increase self esteem, steps for how to react immediately if an incident occurs again

● Restorative justice – focus on the bully understanding how the incident impacted on the victim

● Support for the bully – circle of friends, nurture/social groups, cause and effect work, anger management etc

● Risk management of key times of day, groupings etc

● All staff aware of risks and how to manage them

● Analysis of bullying data fed to SLT half termly

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