

# ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

2020-2021



**HABITAT SCHOOL**  
AL JURF, AJMAN

Creation Date: 20/9/2016

Last Amendment Date: 12/4/2020

Next Review Date: April 2022

## Members of the committee

- Mr. Wasim Yousuf Bhat (Dean)
- Mr. Bala Reddy Ambati (Principal)
- Mr. Suresh Sukumar (Vice Principal)
- Mr. Hamza Kollath (Administrative Officer)
- Ms. Margina Selvaraj (Supervisor Grade 9-12-Girls)
- Ms. Sasneem Sanoop (Head of the Counselling Department)
- Ms. Ligi K (School Counsellor)

*"I promise to be a buddy, NOT a bully!"*

### **PLEDGE**

We the students of the School, agree to join together to eliminate bullying in our school.

We believe that each of our classmates deserves to be treated equally in a safe and accepting environment in this school. Forms of bullying that will not be tolerated include but are not limited to: hitting, shoving, making fun of, laughing, or excluding anyone.

By taking this pledge, we agree to value and treat others with respect, report incidents of bullying to an adult if we see it, be a good role model to others, and be a good friend to others.

We will not be bullies to other students in this school and will try to help stop bullying not only in the classroom, but in the entire school as well.

## Rationale

The school is committed to providing a warm, caring and safe environment for all our children so that they can learn and play in a relaxed and secure environment. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in our school. The school prides itself on its respect and mutual tolerance. Parents have an important role in supporting school in maintaining high standards of behaviour. It is essential that school and homes have consistent expectations of behaviour and that they cooperate closely together.

We expect our students to treat members of staff with courtesy and co-operation so that they can learn in a relaxed, but orderly, atmosphere. All students should care for and support each other. This framework endeavors to provide a set of guiding principles to promote a safe, caring and happy learning environment for all members of our school community. This policy will be made available to all staff, parents and students on our website.

## Definition of Bullying

Bullying is unacceptable behaviour used by an individual or group, usually repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. In other words, bullying is considered to be, “unacceptable behaviour which occurs ‘lots of times, on purpose’.” Bullying can be short term or continuous over long periods of time.

Bullying involves a person being hurt, distressed, pressured or victimized by repeated intentional attacks by another individual or group. Bullies abuse less powerful individuals by intimidation and/or harassment. Bullying may involve physical, verbal, textual, psychological or social behaviour. For example: -

## Different kinds of school bullying

### **PHYSICAL**

- Hitting
- Pushing
- Punching
- Beating
- Tripping
- Kicking
- Shoving

### **VERBAL**

- Excessive and malicious teasing
- Insulting remarks
- Name calling
- Embracing jokes
- Revealing intimate information
- Cursing
- Crude and inappropriate comments
- Treats and taunting

### **SOCIAL**

- Ignoring a certain person
- Casting them out of a group
- Making them feel left out
- Spreading rumors about them

## Cyber-Bullying

Threats and inappropriate comments and photographs via social media, texting, email and chat rooms.

### **SIGNS OF BULLYING**

Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is being bullied include:

- Unwillingness to return to School;
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet;
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually poor work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others;
- Books, bags, money and other belongings suddenly go "missing", or are damaged;
- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary);
- Diminished levels of self confidence
- Frequent visits to the Medical Centre with symptoms which may relate to stress or anxiety, such as stomach pains or headaches;
- Unexplained cuts and bruises;
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance or late arrival to class;
- Choosing the company of adults rather than peers;
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact;
- Difficulty in sleeping or experiencing nightmares; or
- Talking of suicide or running away from home or school.

## Student Responsibilities

- show respect for all members of the school community
- speak out against bullying and report it when you see it
- support students who are bullied
- respect and support school rules and regulations
- support the student council and disciplinary committee to assist with anti-bullying suggestions.

### **To prevent Bullying, students need to:**

- work to create a happy school environment for all
- respect themselves and others
- learn to tolerate and accept individual differences
- stand up against bullying behaviour
- support the school policy on bullying

### **If you are Bullied YOU need to:**

- tell the bully to stop
- seek help and talk about it to someone you trust
- report it to a teacher
- try not to show you are upset- this is hard but a bully thrives on someone's fear
- stay with a group of friends/people- there is safety in numbers
- don't fight back as it may make matters worse, however, if you decide to fight back, talk to a teacher or parent first

### **In cyber bullying YOU need to:**

- tell a trusted adult about the bullying
- don't open or read messages from cyber bullies
- tell a teacher/Counsellor at your school if school related
- don't erase the messages- they may be used to take action
- protect yourself- never agree to meet face to face with anyone you meet online
- block bullies on 'chat or instant' messaging websites
- always make sure your privacy settings are tight

### **If you know someone who is being bullied, YOU need to:**

- care enough to do something about it, whether it affects you personally or not
- step in early and try to defuse the situation before it gets out of hand
- report it to a teacher or parent - take a friend with you if you want
- don't be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully
- don't be tempted to forward cyber messages on
- don't join a cyber-group just to find out 'what is going on'

## **Bullying of students with Special Education Needs**

The school provides a secure, accepting, safe and stimulating environment where everyone is valued for who they are. We have some children who have learning disabilities and/or communication difficulties. Everyone involved in the school is very aware that these children can be especially vulnerable to bullying and we are therefore particularly vigilant at all times.

High attainers, gifted or talented pupils can also be affected by bullying. Staff will treat this type of bullying seriously and in the same way as any other type of bullying.



## Reporting Bullying: Procedure

- Teacher
- Class Teacher
- Supervisor
- Vice Principal
- Principal
- Counsellor

The class teacher, supervisor and counsellor should maintain a file for the student who bully others and clearly mention the observation and actions undertaken with date.

## Procedure for taking action against bullying

Teachers will respond to all episodes of bullying in order to send a clear message that it is unacceptable. Different responses may be appropriate depending on the nature and degree of the bullying. The questions identified below, will be used initially to determine if the incident is primarily bullying or if it falls into another sanctions category.

The teacher will ask the student the following types of questions:

*Was there teasing or aggressive words said or actions?*

*Was the bullying unprovoked?*

*Did the bullying intend to hurt, harm or frighten?*

If the answer is **'yes'** to all of the above, then it is bullying and the sanction steps will be followed.

## **Response Procedures**

1. All bullying incidents should be reported immediately to the class teacher.
2. Class teacher will record all reported bullying incidents and may share them with the supervisor and later to counselors, vice principal and principal depending upon the severity of the incident.
3. Parents of both victim and perpetrator may be informed and summoned to the school for a meeting about the problem.
4. The bullying behaviour or threats will be investigated quickly and fully, with both victim and perpetrator informed that the behavior will/must stop immediately.
5. The bullying perpetrator may meet with the school counsellors, discipline head and (if they are willing to cooperate) his/her parents to understand the seriousness of his/her actions (to include placing themselves in the victim's shoes to appreciate the undesirable effects of the behaviour), and to learn appropriate means of changing behaviour.
6. The bully may be asked to genuinely apologize to the victim and/or, if the victim prefers, will sign a letter promising to avoid all future contact with the victim. The bully, then, should sign the MOE disciplinary form and the same should be filed by the Counsellor.
7. After the incident has been thoroughly investigated and dealt with, the class teacher and counsellor will monitor and evaluate both students (including regular "check-ins") to ensure that bullying does not resume or reoccur.

There may be a range of punitive responses up to suspension/dismissal for the perpetrator in very serious cases, after thorough investigation by a team. Final decision is made by the Principal in consultation with the school team and if need be school Governing body representatives.

## Strategies for prevention and reduction of bullying

Whole school initiatives and proactive teaching strategies will be used throughout the school to develop a positive learning environment with the aim of reducing the opportunities for bullying to occur.

These can include:

- Involving the whole school community in writing and reviewing the policy
- Undertaking regular questionnaires and surveys to monitor the extent of bullying in
- The school and the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy
- Implementing “Problem Solving Box” in school where children can write and post their concerns and ideas
- Each class agreeing on their own set of class rules
- Awareness raising through regular anti-bullying assemblies
- Setting up of a circle of friends support network where a small group of children volunteer to help and support individuals experiencing difficulties.
- School will conduct awareness programmes/campaigns initiated by the student council against bullying and also organize special assemblies.
- Creation of an anti-bullying school notice board in the school library
- Prominently displaying anti-bullying posters produced by the children around the School
- Using praise and rewards to reinforce good behaviour

## Monitoring and evaluation of the policy

To ensure this policy is effective, it will be regularly monitored and evaluated. Questionnaires completed by the whole school community, together with surveys, focus groups, children's and parents'/guardians' comments posted in the "problem solving" box and bullying incident forms will be used to gauge the effectiveness of the policy. Following an annual review any amendments will be made to the policy and everyone informed.

## Complaint Procedure

Parents and pupils may bring issues to the notice of the Principal and school team as described.

***This policy is linked with all the other policies of the School.***