



Anti-Bullying Policy

Document Control

This document has been approved for operation within	Al Islah Girls High School
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Owner	Al Islah Girls High School

Approved by the full Governing Body

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Police	In an emergency For non-emergency but possible crime	999 101

School Record of Safeguarding Training:

Type of Training:	Date completed:	Next due date:
Whole School Safeguarding Training	August 2023	August 2024
Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) (Due every 2 years)	September 2024	August 2026
Deputy Senior DSL (Due every 2 years)	September 2024	August 2026
Whole School Staff Refresher/updates (Annual)	August 2023	August 2024
Safer Recruitment Training (Due every 3 years)	March 2024	March 2027
Governor Safeguarding Training	March 2024	March 2025
DSL Prevent Training Update (for DSLs to disseminate to ALL staff)	August 2023	August 2026

1. Introduction

This policy operates in conjunction with:

- Al Islah's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Al Islah's Behaviour Policy
- Al Islah's Online Policy (IT Curriculum Policy)
- Al Islah's PHSE/RSE Policy
- Al Islah's Equality & Equal Opportunities Policy

1.1 Legal References

This policy operates within a wider national and local policy framework which includes:

- The Education Act 1996 & 2011
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006 & 2014
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children and Families Act 2014, SEND Regulations 2014 and SEND Code of Practice 2015
- DfE Advice: Preventing and Tackling Bullying 2014
- DfE Advice: Cyberbullying Advice for Headteachers and School Staff 2014
- DfE Guidance on Anti Bullying 2017
- [DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education: for Schools and Colleges 2023](#)
- DfE Working together to Safeguard Children 2018

1.2 Policy Statement

- Our community is based upon respect and good manners. We are committed to providing a supportive, safe and caring environment that is free from disruption, violence and any form of harassment so that all our pupils can develop their full potential within a mutually caring environment between all members of the school community.
- We do not tolerate bullying, harassment, victimisation or discrimination of any kind and work hard to prevent these or to tackle them if they occur.
- Bullying is a whole school issue and we take a whole school approach in response. Any member of the community may bully or be a victim of bullying: we regard all incidences of bullying equally seriously and in turn expect staff, pupils and parents to play their part in preventing and tackling bullying.
- Unkind behaviour may escalate into bullying if allowed to persist. We aim to address small issues immediately to avoid that happening.

1.3 Aims of Policy

This policy aims to:

- Prevent bullying, as far as reasonably practical
- Help staff, pupils and parents deal with bullying when it occurs

2.What do we mean by bullying?

The Department for Education defines bullying as a 'behaviour by an individual or group, that can be a single incident or repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual or groups either physically or emotionally'.

Physical bullying including hitting, kicking, taking or hiding belongings including money.

Verbal bullying including name calling, teasing, insulting, writing unkind notes, sending abusive messages via text, email or social network.

Emotional bullying including being deliberately unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, spreading rumours, photographing, giving looks. Bullying can also be related to a number of specific features:

- Bullying related to race, religion or culture – recent political and social issues appear to be a factor in bullying and harassment. There is research to support the suggestion that where black and minority ethnic children experience bullying, it is more likely to be severe bullying. Children and young people of different faiths and travellers' children can also experience bullying.
- Bullying related to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and those identified as Able, Gifted and Talented (AGT) – research shows that children and young people with SEND are more at risk than their peers. Al Islah Girls High School actively promotes equal opportunities for all dis/abled people and seeks to eliminate all related harassment.
- Bullying related to gender and gender identity – research shows instances of children and young people being bullied because simply because they are a girl/boy and particularly where there is a large gender imbalance. This often takes the form of harassment of a sexual nature. The same applies to (pre) transgender pupils.
- Bullying related to sexual orientation – evidence of homophobic bullying suggests that pupils who are gay or lesbian or (perceived to be) face a higher risk of victimisation than their peers. Homophobic bullying is perhaps the form of bullying least likely to be selfreported, since disclosure carries risk not associated with other forms of bullying. The pupil may not want to report bullying if it means 'coming out' to teachers and parents before they are ready to do so.
- Bullying because a child is fostered, adopted or a carer – evidence suggests that pupils who are fostered, adopted or are carers face a higher risk of being bullied.
- Cyber/online bullying is a method of bullying rather than a type. It includes bullying via text message, instant-messenger services and social network sites, email and images or videos posted on the Internet or spread via mobile phones. Technology can be used to bully for any reasons including race, religion, sexuality and disability.

How does bullying differ from unkindness?

Sometimes pupils can feel hurt or upset because they have been ill-treated or have fallen out with a friend. This is not the same as bullying.

Bullying:

- Is deliberately intended to hurt or humiliate.
- Involves a power imbalance that makes it hard for the victim to defend themselves
- Is usually persistent, however it can be a single incident
- Often involves no remorse or acknowledgment of the victim's feelings School staff are ready to help and support pupils who have fallen out with friends but such situations will not be treated in the same way as a case of bullying. However, the strategies we use may well be similar because we acknowledge that over a period of time the impact on the student may be the same and the situation could become bullying if it escalates.

Every pupil has the right to be safe and happy in school and to be protected from feeling vulnerable. Staff and volunteers also have the right to work in an environment free from bullying and to feel able to raise the matter with and seek support from the school.

To this end Al Islah Girls High School:

- Is proactive in ensuring that all pupils are well informed via assemblies, PSHE/RSE, Art, English Literature, History and current affairs that bullying is unacceptable.
- Actively supports National Anti-bullying week (Nov) where assemblies and other pupil centred activities are predominant.
- Makes pupils aware that bullying is seen as a serious disciplinary offence and strong sanctions such as exclusion or suspension may be necessary in cases of severe and persistent bullying.
- Encourages discussion and celebration of differences between people and stressing the importance of avoiding prejudice-based language.
- Works to prevent incidents of bullying by maintaining a disciplined atmosphere and remaining alert to the importance of friendships and the development of social and emotional competencies.
- Ensures pupils are clear about the roles they can take in preventing bullying.
- Celebrates success to reinforce a positive school environment.
- Ensures staff are trained and kept updated so that they are able to identify signs of bullying.
- Ensures staff are vigilant as bullying can occur before and after school, at break times, lunchtimes and as pupils travel between lessons and as they travel to and from school. Particular locations around the school are more likely to promote bullying including toilets and corridors. All staff and particularly those on duty are expected to monitor these areas frequently and carefully.
- Investigates thoroughly all incidents of bullying and treats them with equal seriousness whether reported by a parent, a member of staff or a pupil.

- Ensures a bullying incident will be treated as a child protection and safeguarding concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a pupil is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

3. Role of Staff and Volunteers

Everyone in the school community takes all forms of bullying seriously, and will intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. All staff should have an awareness that bullying which may be a safeguarding issue can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. All staff should be clear as to the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures with regards to peer on peer abuse laid out in the Safeguarding Policy, Sept 2018.

3.1 Role of Senior Leadership and Governors

- To develop school policies that are in line with current regulations
- To promote a school climate where bullying and violence are not tolerated and cannot flourish
- To ensure a review of all school policies every year and, as a result, the policy and procedures are updated as necessary
- To provide curriculum opportunities to address bullying
- To ensure pupil support systems are in place to prevent and respond to bullying
- To address school site issues and promote safe play areas
- To have a filtering and monitoring system and a policy in place to help detect signs of cyberbullying within school
- To be responsible for preventing and responding to bullying
- To be aware of the importance of modelling positive relationships
- To work in partnership with parents, other schools and with children's services and community partners to promote safe communities

3.2 Role of parents

- The school is highly proactive in communicating with parents. Parents are clear that the school does not tolerate bullying and will follow the antibullying policy.
- Parents have a responsibility to support the School's policies and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school.
- Parents are encouraged to express and share any concerns about bullying by approaching the class/form teacher, whether that be as a parent of a pupil or a bystander in a situation.
- They are aware of procedures to use if they are concerned their child is being bullied or does not feel safe to learn, including the school's complaints procedure.
- They have confidence that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously and investigate/resolve as necessary, and that the school systems will deal with the bullying in a way that protects their child.

3.3 Signs and Symptoms

A pupil may indicate that they are being bullied if she:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to come to school (school phobic)
- Begins to truant
- Becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- Becomes isolated from their peers during the school day • Starts stammering
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- Feels ill in the morning
- Begins to do poorly in school work
- Has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- Starts stealing money
- Has monies continually "lost"
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what's wrong
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Is nervous when a cyber-message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems and this list is not exhaustive, but bullying should be considered a possibility and must be investigated.

At AIGHS, since the bullying situation can be multi-layered and complex, a variety of approaches to solve the problem (including short term strategies) may be adopted to help the pupils involved.

4. **Dealing with Bullying**

4.1 School Actions

- Pupil being bullied – we will help them to:
- Be confident in the School's ability to deal with the bullying
- Take steps to feel safe again
- Rebuild confidence and resilience
- Utilise and build up stronger friendship bonds and wider support networks

Pupils acting as a bully – we will help them to:

- Realise that their behaviour is having a harmful and hurtful effect on another, also the potential consequences of their behaviour to themselves.
- Acknowledge that they themselves have a problem.
- Overcome their problem by talking through situations which have led them to behave in this way with others.

- Know that sanctions hold them to account for their behaviour and help them to face up to the harm they have caused.
- Learn to behave in ways that do not cause harm in future because they have developed their emotional skills and knowledge.
- Learn how they can take steps to repair the harm they have caused.

5. Anti-bullying Procedure

Any member of the Al Islah community who has witnessed or has been informed of an incident of bullying must alert the form teacher or the Headteacher.

The class teacher or tutor will normally deal with incidents in the first instance. The relevant member of staff dealing with the incident will consult parents as necessary. Parents should always be informed of a bullying situation which is causing on-going concern to a pupil unless there is a good valid reason for not doing so, and also if their child is the one accused of being the bully in this type of situation.

5.1 Steps in dealing with an incident:

- **Listen** very carefully to the pupil who feels bullied.
- **Find out the facts** and how the pupil is affected by what is happening.
- **Record the facts** including date, time of incidents and witnesses written account on ENGAGE.
- **Who to tell** discuss with relevant parties as indicated above - decide who needs to know including parents of both parties.

Allow the pupil to decide how they want to proceed in the matter.

The pupil being bullied may decide that talking to their class teacher, tutor or peer supporter and gaining a feeling of support is enough and no further action is taken or needed at that time.

The pupil being bullied may decide that they want staff to take the matter further. Sometimes staff will feel that it is in the pupil's best interests for the incident to be taken further. This will involve collecting information from a range of people so that the wider picture is understood. Different approaches may be used. It may be that the situation is best dealt with as a disciplinary issue with the bully being confronted and questioned. Refer to the Behaviour Policy.

An alternative approach is to call together a group of pupils, (Restorative Justice) which include the bully/bullies and members of the peer group who have the respect of others. This group will discuss how the bullying behaviour causes distress, explore ways of improving the situation and making the pupil being bullied feel happier and ultimately be sure that the bullying behaviour stops.

In cases which involve physical harm or serious mental pain then the pupil will need protecting and the decisions about action passed to all relevant staff and parents. Bullying is not necessarily a disciplinary issue. If a pupil who is found to be acting as a bully acknowledges the distress caused by their actions and accepts responsibility for setting the matter right, then in some cases disciplinary action may not be

deemed necessary. If this is not the case then the matter is dealt with using an appropriate sanction. Refer to the School's Behaviour Policy.

Whether a disciplinary line or a pastoral supportive line is appropriate, bullying is always serious and should be dealt with promptly. Strong sanctions, such as exclusion, may be necessary in cases of severe and persistent bullying. The Head should be kept aware although his intervention may not be appropriate at an early stage.

It may be helpful for the bullied person or bully to access a councillor, to discuss any underlying problems or difficulties further, this may be arranged through the school or the family's own GP.

When the problem has been resolved then staff should check after a suitable interval that it has not re-occurred.

6. Further points

Al Islah Girls High School regularly evaluates and updates the bullying procedure to take account of advancements in technology.

Bullying is an issue, which attracts considerable focus. Helping pupils, parents and staff to develop a balanced view of a situation is crucial.

Action will be taken for any bullying incidents that occur outside of the school day as appropriate.

Other useful websites and documents include:

- Education and Inspection Act 2006 Section 89
- The Equality Act 2010
- Anti-bullying Alliance (ABA)
- Childline
- Childnet
- CEOP