



NEW INDIAN MODEL SCHOOL, DUBAI

TEL 2824313, 2824250, 2824441, Fax-2825454

www.nimsuae.com info@nimsdxb.com

ANTI-BULLYING AND BEHAVIOR POLICY

Anti-bullying policy:

New Indian Model School (NIMS) Dubai prevents bullying by establishing and enforcing school rules and policies that clearly describe how students are expected to treat each other in the school premises. Consequences for violations of the rules should be clearly defined as well.

Mission Statement:

New Indian Model School (NIMS) Dubai is committed to each student's success in learning within a caring, responsive, and safe environment that is free of discrimination, violence, and bullying. We work to ensure that all students have the opportunity and support to develop to their fullest potential and share a personal and meaningful bond with people in the school community.

Introduction and Legal Framework:

The role of the school is to provide an appropriate education for all its pupils. A stable, secure learning environment is an essential requirement to achieve this goal. Bullying behavior, by its very nature, undermines and dilutes the quality of education. Research shows that bullying can have short and long-term effects on the physical and mental well-being of pupils, on engagement with school, on self-confidence and on the ability to pursue ambitions and interests.

School-based bullying can be positively and firmly addressed through a range of school-based measures and strategies through which all members of the school community are enabled to act effectively in dealing with this behavior. While it is recognized that home and societal factors play a substantial role both in the cause and in the prevention of bullying, the role of the school in preventative work is also crucial and should not be underestimated. School-based initiatives can either reinforce positive efforts or help counteract unsuccessful attempts of parents to change unacceptable behavior. Parents and pupils have a particularly important role and

responsibility in helping the school to prevent and address school-based bullying behavior and to deal with any negative impact within school of bullying behavior that occurs elsewhere.

International research clearly indicates the crucial importance of the existence of and implementation of a school policy setting out the school's approach to preventing and tackling bullying. An anti-bullying policy, when developed and implemented across the school community can be the cornerstone in countering bullying behavior in school.

Anti-Bullying Procedures for KG, Primary and Post-Primary Schools:

The purpose of these procedures is to give direction and guidance to school authorities and school personnel in preventing and tackling school-based bullying behavior amongst its pupils and in dealing with any negative impact within school of bullying behavior that occurs elsewhere. These procedures apply to all our KG, primary and post-primary sections of our school. School authorities and school personnel are required to adhere to these procedures in dealing with allegations and incidents of bullying.

All Boards of Management have formally adopted and implemented an anti-bullying policy that fully complies with the requirements of these procedures. The school's anti bullying policy have been published in school website (or where none exists, be otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents' Counsel. A copy of the school's anti-bullying policy must be provided to the Department of Inclusive Education.

Definitions and Types of Bullying:

Definition of Bullying: In the context of these procedures, bullying is defined as unwanted negative behavior, verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.

World Health Organization defines Bullying as a multifaceted form of mistreatment, mostly seen in schools and the workplace. It is characterized by the repeated exposure of one person to physical and/or emotional aggression including teasing, name calling, mockery, threats, harassment, taunting, hazing, social exclusion or rumors. Bullying (including cyber-bullying) is unwanted aggressive behavior by another child or groups of children who are neither siblings nor in a romantic relationship with the victim. It involves repeated physical, psychological or

social harm, and often takes place in schools and other settings where children gather, and online.

The following types of bullying behavior are included in this non-exhaustive definition:

- (i). Deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying;
- (ii) cyber-bullying; and
- (iii) identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveller community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs.

In addition, in the context of these procedures placing a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behavior.

Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behavior including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging do not fall within this definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's code of behavior. A single incident can have a serious effect on a pupil and may also constitute harassment which is legally prohibited in school under equality legislation. Harassment is any form of unwanted conduct related to any of the nine discriminatory grounds (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community).

Types of bullying:

The following are some of the types of bullying behavior that can occur amongst pupils:

- ❖ **Physical aggression:** This behavior includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking and tripping people. It may also take the form of severe physical assault. While pupils often engage in fights, they can sometimes be used as a disguise for physical harassment or inflicting pain.
- ❖ **Intimidation:** Some bullying behavior takes the form of intimidation; it may be based on the use of very aggressive body language with the voice being used as a weapon. Particularly upsetting can be a facial expression which conveys aggression and/or dislike.

- ❖ **Isolation/exclusion and other relational bullying:** This occurs where a certain person is deliberately isolated, excluded or ignored by some or the entire class group. This practice is usually initiated by the person engaged in bullying behavior and can be difficult to detect. It may be accompanied by writing insulting remarks about the pupil in public places, by passing around notes about or drawings of the pupil or by whispering insults about them loud enough to be heard. Relational bullying occurs when a person's attempts to socialize and form relationships with peers are repeatedly rejected or undermined. One of the most common forms includes control: "Do this or I won't be your friend anymore" (implied or stated); a group ganging up against one 10 person (girl or boy); non-verbal gesturing; malicious gossip; spreading rumors about a person or giving them the "silent treatment".
- ❖ **Cyber-bullying:** This type of bullying is increasingly common and is continuously evolving. It is bullying carried out through the use of information and communication technologies such as text, social network sites, e-mail, instant messaging (IM), apps, gaming sites, chat-rooms and other online technologies. Being the target of inappropriate or hurtful messages is the most common form of online bullying. As cyber-bullying uses technology to perpetrate bullying behavior and does not require face to face contact, cyber-bullying can occur at any time (day or night). Many forms of bullying can be facilitated through cyber-bullying. For example, a target may be sent homophobic text messages or pictures may be posted with negative comments about a person's sexuality, appearance etc.
- ❖ **Name calling:** Persistent name-calling directed at the same individual(s) who hurts, insults or humiliates should be regarded as a form of bullying behavior. Often name-calling of this type refers to physical appearance, e.g., size or clothes worn. Accent or distinctive voice characteristics may attract negative attention. Academic ability can also provoke name calling. This tends to operate at two extremes. There are those who are singled out for attention because they are perceived to be weak academically. At the other extreme there are those who, because they are perceived as high achievers, are also targeted.
- ❖ **Damage to property:** Personal property can be the focus of attention for bullying behavior. This may result in damage to clothing, mobile phone or other devices, school books and other learning material or interference with a pupil's locker. The contents of school bags and pencil cases may be scattered on the floor. Items of personal property may be defaced, broken, stolen or hidden.

- ❖ **Extortion:** Demands for money may be made, often accompanied by threats (sometimes carried out in the event of the targeted pupil not delivering on the demand). A pupil may also be forced into theft of property for delivery to another who is engaged in bullying behavior.

Impact and Indicators of Bullying Behaviors:

Impacts of bullying behavior:

A]. Pupils who are being bullied may develop feelings of insecurity, humiliation and extreme anxiety and thus may become more vulnerable. Self-confidence may be damaged with a consequent lowering of self-esteem. While they may not talk about what is happening to them, their suffering is indicated through changes in mood and behavior. Extreme cases of bullying may result in suicide. It is, therefore, essential to be alert to changes in behavior as early intervention can be very effective.

B]. Pupils who witness bullying may also be affected and may suffer in similar ways to those who are bullied. For example, pupils who witness identity-based bullying and share that identity can experience anxiety and feel under threat themselves. Pupils can also feel guilt or distress at not being able to help the person being bullied.

C]. There are also consequences for individuals who engage in bullying behavior. Pupils who become involved in such behavior can be at higher risk of depression. Other possible long-term consequences may include an increased risk of developing an anti-social personality, anxiety disorders, a likelihood of substance abuse and law-breaking behavior in adulthood and decreased educational and occupational attainment.

Indicators of bullying behavior:

The following signs and symptoms may suggest that a pupil is being bullied:

- Anxiety about travelling to and from school e.g. requesting parents to drive or collect him/her, changing travel routes, avoiding regular times for travelling to and from school;
- Unwillingness to go to school, refusal to attend, truancy;
- Deterioration in educational performance, loss of concentration and loss of enthusiasm and interest in school;
- Pattern of physical illnesses e.g. headaches, stomach aches; etc.

- Unexplained changes either in mood or behavior which may be particularly noticeable before returning to school after weekends or more especially after longer school holidays;
- Visible signs of anxiety or distress e.g. stammering, withdrawing, nightmares, difficulty in sleeping, crying, not eating, vomiting, bedwetting; etc.
- Spontaneous out-of-character comments about either pupils or teachers;
- Possessions missing or damaged;
- Increased requests for money or stealing money;
- Unexplained bruising or cuts or damaged clothing; and
- Reluctance and/or refusal to say what is troubling him/her.

There may be other signs depending on the individual and his/her circumstances. The above signs do not necessarily mean that a pupil is being bullied but if repeated or occurring in combination, these signs do warrant investigation in order to establish what is affecting the pupil.

Reporting System:

New Indian Model School (NIMS), Dubai establishes clear procedures for reporting rule violations, so that reasonable consequences can be given to students when rules are broken. Reporting systems help track individual incidents and responses as well as trends over time.

Consequences:

The school will take immediate action after fair and non-judgmental investigation of the incident and if the incident stands true, the child will be given TC from the school.

Showkat AG
Inclusion Champion