

# ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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## Anti-Bullying AICS Philosophy

The term bullying describes a wide range of behaviors that can have an impact on a person's property, body, feelings, relationships, reputation, and social status. Bullying is a form of overt and aggressive behavior that is intentional, hurtful, and persistent (repeated). Bullied people are teased, harassed, socially rejected, threatened, belittled, and assaulted or attacked (verbally, physically, psychologically) by one or more individuals. There are unequal levels of affect (that is, the victim is upset and distressed while the bully is calm) and often an imbalance of strength (power and dominance). This imbalance of power can be physical or psychological, or the person may simply be outnumbered.

There are times that bullying can be considered violent. All bullying is serious, but when it is intense and lasts for a significant period, it is very serious—it is violent. In fact, bullying is the most common form of school violence. It is violence because it is so destructive to the well-being of the person and can lead people to harm themselves and to harm others.

Some of the key words in our definition of bullying are intentional, hurtful, persistent, and imbalance of strength. Thus behavior such as teasing that is not intended to hurt and is not persistent is not considered bullying. However, even playful teasing can easily escalate into a bullying situation. Those who have power over the person may repeatedly use the teasing comments to hurt him/her.

AICS strives to achieve a culture of mutual respect and minimise bullying by:

- a) having a set of clear, inclusive values that are understood and lived by all members of the school community;
- b) having a behaviour policy that is explicit about the way in which people should treat each other and the messages are consistently reiterated and reinforced;
- c) ensuring that staff consistently model positive behaviour in their interactions with each other, with parents and carers, and with people;
- d) ensuring that people and staff understand the importance of using inclusive and non-derogatory language;
- e) helping people to understand the difference between banter and interactions that can threaten or hurt;
- f) providing appropriate and regular training to give all staff the knowledge, skills and confidence to teach people about diversity and the effects of bullying;
- g) ensuring that staff consistently and firmly challenge inappropriate interactions, including prejudice-based and aggressive language.

### 1. Actions for the people behaving in negative ways

The aim is to hold up the mirror to the person so that they can see what they are doing and 'feel' the immediate impact of their actions on others:

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- 1.1 Dealing openly with incidents as close to the moment as possible.
- 1.2 Training people to hear what their peers are saying back to them e.g. Stop! You are making me feel bad. Why are you asking me to be your friend again? Why did you ask me not to be your friend just now?
- 1.3 1 to 1 mentor (Approaches to Learning for example) to talk through the incident log for the previous week and strategies for controlling impulses and impact on others. This is done individually.
- 1.4 Recognition of the positive attributes of the person and focus on how those traits can be beneficial to leadership and friendships.
- 1.5 Teaching the empowerment of positive leadership and positive relationships on own wellbeing and personal happiness.

### 2. Actions for the targeted people

The aim is to provide people with the support and a network of understanding peers and adults.

- 2.1 Encouraging people to talk about the incidents that happen to them to someone they know. The incident must be recorded in a log book by a mentor, class teacher, confidentiality person, peer coach, or line manager.
- 2.2 Helping people to understand the tangle of emotions and the sense of isolation that the negative behaviors may have.
- 2.3 Creating a support network amongst the targets so that they know they are not alone and can stand up for each other as required.
- 2.4 Developing and empowering positive role models that can be approached in the playground, gym and corridors to support any person in need of a friend.
- 2.5 Group Assembly where the key aspects of bullying are identified and made recognizable for the person.
- 2.6 Scheduled workshops on anti-bullying behavior for primary and secondary. Counselling for a person that has become withdrawn /depressed/ isolated by longer term bullying.
- 2.7 All named adults in vicinity of the group where bullying has been flashed up are aware of the issues and are on the active lookout for negative dialogue, subtle intimidation and overt issues. There is an active presence of named adults at: break time, lunchtime, transportation, PE Changing rooms, classroom, world café, staffrooms, toilets.
- 2.8 The positive attributes of the targets are celebrated and the students self esteem preserved as much as possible.

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### 3. Actions to prevent bullying

AICS' response to bullying should not start at the point at which a person has been bullied. We develop a more sophisticated approach in which staff proactively gather intelligence about issues between people which might provoke conflict and develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place. This might involve talking to people about issues of difference, perhaps in lessons, through dedicated events or projects, or through assemblies. Staff themselves will be able to determine what will work best for their pupils, depending on the particular issues they need to address.

AICS tackles bullying by creating an ethos of good behavior where people treat one another and the school staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave. Values of respect for staff and other people, an understanding of the value of education, and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others permeate the whole school environment and are reinforced by staff and older people who set a good example to the rest.

### 4. Interventions to tackle bullying

The AICS applies disciplinary measures to people who bully in order to show clearly that their behavior is wrong. Disciplinary measures must be applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable people. It is also important to consider the motivations behind bullying behavior and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator. Where this is the case the child engaging in bullying may need support themselves.

We also:-

- 4.1 involve parents to ensure that they are clear that the school does not tolerate bullying and are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that the person is being bullied. Parents feel confident that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issue in a way that protects the person and they reinforce the value of good behavior at home;
- 4.2 involve people, all people understand the school's approach and are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders;
- 4.3 regularly evaluate and update our approach to take account of developments in technology, for instance updating 'acceptable use' policies for computers;
- 4.4 implement disciplinary sanctions. The consequences of bullying reflect the seriousness of the incident so that others see that bullying is unacceptable;

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- 4.5 openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexuality. Also children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities. Schools can also teach people that using any prejudice based language is unacceptable;
- 4.6 use specific organisation's or resources for help with particular problems. Schools can draw on the experience and expertise of anti-bullying organisations with a proven track record and/or specialised expertise in dealing with certain forms of bullying;
- 4.7 provide effective staff training. Anti-bullying policies are most effective when all school staff understand the principles and purpose of the school's policy, its legal responsibilities regarding bullying, how to resolve problems, and where to seek support. Schools can invest in specialised skills to help their staff understand the needs of their pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disability and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGB&T) people;
- 4.8 work with the wider community such as the police and children's services where bullying is particularly serious or persistent and where a criminal offence may have been committed. Successful schools also work with other agencies and the wider community to tackle bullying that is happening outside school;
- 4.9 make it easy for person to report bullying so that they are assured that they will be listened to and incidents acted on. People should feel that they can report bullying which may have occurred outside school including cyber-bullying;
- 4.10 create an inclusive environment. Schools should create a safe environment where people can openly discuss the cause of their bullying, without fear of further bullying or discrimination;
- 4.11 celebrate success. Celebrating success is an important way of creating a positive school ethos around the issue.