



# GEMS WELLINGTON INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

## *Anti-Bullying Policy*

Reviewed by: Heads of School

Date of review: June 2023

Next date of review: June 2024



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## Wellbeing at WIS

GEMS Wellington International School (WIS) is committed to providing a caring, inclusive and safe environment for all our students.

Wellbeing plays a crucial role in our anti-bullying policy. Our goal is to create a safe and inclusive environment for all individuals, promoting their mental, emotional, and physical wellbeing.

## Rationale for the Anti-Bullying Policy

The UN Convention on the Rights of a child (Article 19) states ‘You have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, in body and in mind.’

Being a ‘speak out’ school, anyone that knows bullying is happening is expected to tell a member of WIS staff. Our students. The students know that all staff will take incidents seriously.

This policy affects the entire WIS community - all students, teaching and non-teaching staff, WISPA and parents.

## Aims

- To inform students and parents of our expectations in order to ensure a productive partnership, where each and everyone has a role to play in eradicating bullying;
- To maintain a community in which everyone feels valued and safe and where individual differences are appreciated, understood and accepted
- To promote a secure, inclusive and caring environment where kindness is expected and respected
- To praise and reward positive behaviour which benefits others and the community as a whole
- To teach students to respect themselves and others, promoting crucial self-esteem

As a school we take bullying seriously. Students and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

## Definition of Bullying

Bullying is the unprovoked, intentional, deliberate and **repeated** intimidation taken by one or more children with the deliberate intention of upsetting, intimidating or hurting another child.

In order to be considered bullying, the behaviour must include:

- An Imbalance of Power: Children who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others.
- **Repetition**: Bullying behaviours are behaviours that happen more than once.

Bullying can be direct, in the form of physical or verbal, or indirect, which involves psychological or emotional actions such as being ignored or not spoken to.

## Examples

<b>Physical</b>	pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
<b>Verbal</b>	name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
<b>Emotional</b>	being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books).
<b>Racist</b>	racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
<b>Gender</b>	unwanted physical or verbal contact based on gender
<b>Harassment</b>	threatening or disturbing behaviour inflicted on another
<b>Cyber</b>	all areas of the internet, such as email and internet chat rooms, mobile use, any misuse of associate technology i.e. camera and video facilities. Types of behaviour include: impersonation of others, 'hacking', spamming, video shaming, participating in rumour spreading, subtweeting and vaguebooking. <b>See Cyber Bullying and the UAE Law</b>
<b>SEND</b>	Bullying related to Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND)

## Cyber Bullying

With access to the internet through mobile phones and devices becoming an everyday way of life for children, students will often communicate with peers through the use of Social Media and instant messaging apps. We expect all students to communicate online with Integrity, and demonstrate the WIS Way when communicating in a positive manner. Most Social media apps and instant messaging apps have a recommended age rating of 13+ years. Parents should regularly check their child's device and through a positive open relationship to ensure they are staying safe online.

### Cyber Bullying - the UAE Law

Cyber bullying is generally criminal in nature, and legislations in countries such as the USA, UK, Europe and Australia are changing so that prosecutions can be made.

In the UAE, it is illegal to use an IT system to:

- Offend religious sanctities or encourage sins.
- Slander another person.
- Breach the privacy of another (e.g. by intercepting communications, taking photographs, publishing information, etc.).

If such incidents occur, the school has the right to report these violations to the police.



## *Cyber Bullying - outside of school*

Should your child be a victim of cyber bullying outside of school with another member of our school community we will be able to support students and their families in the context of our school setting. At WIS we expect parents to monitor and support their child in safe and age appropriate use of their mobile phone/device through regular checks.

## Prevention

GEMS Wellington International School will prevent bullying by:

- Raising awareness of what bullying is
- Promoting pro-social behaviour
- Informing and educating students about bullying and providing them with strategies to deal with situations they might encounter
- Identify bullying behaviour at the early stages and working towards behaviour modification before the problem becomes more serious
- Creating and maintaining a culture of mutual respect, free from bullying behaviour

## Reporting Bullying

As a school we will:

- Encourage victims and witnesses to speak up
- Treat all incidents and reports seriously
- Be alert, as a whole staff, to changes in student behaviour, attitude and well-being, reporting these immediately to the appropriate members of staff

## Responding to Bullying

Under no circumstances will WIS tolerate any form of bullying, and all incidents of bullying will be dealt promptly and effectively for the wellbeing of all students. We apply strong discipline measures to students who participate in bullying in order to enable them to learn that the behaviour is wrong. Disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably taking into accounts the individual circumstances of those involved. We also consider the motivations behind the bullying behaviours and to address these too.

As a school we will:

- Take all bullying problems seriously
- Deal with each incident individually and access the needs of each student and situation on an individual basis
- Regard all incidents as potentially serious and investigate them thoroughly
- Ensure that bullies and victims are interviewed separately
- Obtain witness information where required
- Keep a written record of the incident, investigation and outcomes
- The DSL will be informed of all bullying issues where there are safeguarding concerns
- Ensure that action is taken to prevent further incidents. Such action may include:



- Ensuring sanctions as per the Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Obtaining a sincere apology
- Informing parents of both bully and bullied
- Providing support for both the victim and bully

## *Bullying Disciplinary Structure*

<b>Level 1 Bullying Incident</b>	<b>Lead Member of Staff</b>
<p>If a student is beginning to behave in a manner which could develop into or be interpreted as bullying, wherever possible a warning will be given (WIS Level 1). In this way it is hoped that many potentially serious situations will never materialise. However, the warning stage is at the discretion of the school, and a student involved in a serious instance of bullying will bypass this stage and be placed onto the relevant scale of WIS Sanctions Procedures which are detailed in the Behaviour for Learning Policy.</p>	<p>Classroom Teacher or Form Tutor</p>
<b>Level 2 Bullying Incident</b>	<b>Lead Member of Staff</b>
<p>If the bullying continues, arrangements will be made to minimise contact between bully and victim. The bully's parents will be called into school to discuss the situation. The bully will sign a statement promising that the bullying will not be repeated. It is envisaged that in most circumstances these two stages will be sufficient.</p>	<p>Head of Year</p>
<b>Level 3 Bullying Incident</b>	<b>Lead Member of Staff</b>
<p>Where there is no improvement in the bullying behaviour, the bully will be excluded. This may be internal or external depending on the severity of the case along with prior history of such behaviour.</p>	<p>Assistant Head Teacher</p>



## Level 4 Bullying Incident

## Lead Member of Staff

As a last resort, and when it is clear that the bully consistently endangers the welfare of fellow members of the school community, he or she will be permanently excluded from WIS.

Head of School

### How can parents help?

- Show an interest in your child's social life and in school events.
- Encourage your child to have many friends, join clubs and to be tolerant and broad minded towards others.
- Develop your child's self-esteem by emphasising positive features and accepting individual characteristics.
- Do not tell your child that bullying is part of growing up or imply that it is in any way acceptable.
- Encourage your child to report bullying, but do not tell him/her to retaliate either physically or with name calling.
- Show an example by being firm but positive and not aggressive in your approach to discipline.
- Confront the possibility that your child may be a bully. If the school contacts you suggesting that your child may have been involved in bullying, work constructively with the school to find a solution to the problem.