

Whole School Anti-Bullying Policy

1 Reasons for and scope of an anti-bullying policy

The International School of Modena has an agreed anti-bullying policy to ensure that all school stakeholders (students, parents, staff and administration) understand what the common definition of bullying is and the collective community response to it is. The anti-bullying policy must cover all aspects of school life and all stakeholders without exception to ensure that all those who work in the school do so in a safe, positive learning environment. The anti-bullying policy is linked directly to the ISM core values and in particular:

- ***Creating a Community based on Respect***
- ***Encouraging Action, Service and Personal Responsibility***

Therefore, it is essential that all members of the school community understand and abide by the policy, and model respectful behaviour in all situations. This encourages and empowers all stakeholders to be proactive in creating a positive sense of community and responsibility so that the opportunities for bullying to exist are minimalised.

2 Definition of bullying

Bullying is intentional, hurtful aggressive behaviour, repeated over a period of time and where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. Bullying can be both physical or mental, undertaken by individuals or a group, and results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be any one of the following:

- Emotional
- Being unfriendly, excluding or tormenting
- Physical
- Pushing, kicking or any use of violence
- Racist
- Racial taunts, graffiti or gestures
- Sexual
- Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic

- Abusive comments
- Verbal
- Name calling
- Cyber bullying (use of the internet, text messages, chat rooms, blogs, forums etc)
- Exclusion from social groups
- Personal (cultural, style, appearance, clothing etc)
- Use of language

Students who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, for example unusual absences from school, shyness or withdrawal, nervousness, seeking adult company or feigning illness. This can also be evident in changes in work such as lack of concentration, truancy or different work patterns.

3 School community's response

The school has to have a coordinated and consistent response to bullying in the school. There should also be a zero tolerance to bullying of any kind and the immediate implementation of an organized procedure to deal with the incident. This will include support for those being bullied and, where appropriate, both support and sanctions for those perpetrating the bullying. This will enable all stakeholders to feel secure in being able to visit, work and learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment.

No incident where bullying is suspected should be ignored and knowledge of what has happened and why is critical in both dealing with and understanding the incident.

4 Places and areas of concern in the school

Areas of the school that need close observation, particularly wherever or whenever an adult is not immediately and directly available:

- Playground
- Group work areas
- Toilets
- Corridors
- Lunchroom

Language and its use, especially in an international school, is also an area that needs a close watch.

5 Procedure

The following steps will be taken when dealing with an incident of bullying in the school:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, then the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached;
- It is preferable that the class teacher deals with the incident initially, though in serious cases it should go straight to the School Manager;
- A clear and detailed account of the incident will be recorded
- The School Manager will be informed
- The teacher and School Manager will interview each of those involved and will record the incident and what is said;
- Class and specialist teachers of those involved will be informed;
- Parents will be informed of what has happened and told of the consequences and action that will occur;
- A plan (time managed) will be constructed for monitoring those involved with follow up procedures to ensure that the incident does not happen again; parents, staff and students should be kept informed of this;
- If the bullying continues then the parents will be asked in and the School Manager will discuss more serious sanctions such as limited suspension.

6 Sanctions and levels of discipline

The level of sanctions should reflect whether it is an initial incident, repeat offence or continued bullying behaviour. These sanctions should be site specific and are in order of seriousness with the final possibility being permanent expulsion from the school:

- Break time withdrawal
- Parents called in
- Official warning sent to parents
- Exclusion from certain areas of school premises
- Requirement to take psychological tests

- Minor fixed term exclusion
- Major fixed term exclusion
- Permanent expulsion

7 Support

There will be support for those who have been bullied, and those who bully.

For those who have been bullied:

- Opportunity to discuss what has happened with the class teacher or a member of staff of their choice;
- Time given to listening to the student and reassurance;
- Continuous support and monitoring of those involved;
- Restoring of self-esteem and confidence.

For those who have bullied:

- Opportunity to discuss what has happened with member of staff;
- Discussion of why the incident has happened;
- Informing parents of a need to monitor the student and change their attitude and behaviour.

8 Ways of educating about bullying through the curriculum, learner profile and PYP

The curriculum of the school, the IB programmes and the Learner Profile are all mediums to raise awareness of the nature and causes of bullying and how it impacts on individuals and communities. Within the programme of inquiry there are also specific units of inquiry that develop an understanding of respect, for others and the environment, and taking responsibility. The three aspects of bullied, bully and bystanders are important to look at, where the students and community intervene as bystanders to demonstrate that bullying has zero tolerance. PSE, class or group social awareness initiatives such as circle time, and specialist lessons can also have a focus on anti-bullying. It is important that bullying is addressed directly in the school and proactively throughout the school's curriculum. All class teachers and specialists need to work on this area of pastoral care.

9 Resources

The following resources and website locations can be used to support the policy:

Websites

- <http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>
- <http://www.bullyonline.org/index.htm>
- <http://www.bullyonline.org/schoolbully/index.htm>
- <http://www.bullying.co.uk/index.php/schools/general/bullying-policies.html>
- http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/parents/life/health_happiness/health/bullying.shtml
- <http://www.childline.org.uk/explore/bullying/pages/bullying.aspx>
- http://www.oecdobserver.org/news/fullstory.php/aid/434/Bullying_at_school:_tackling_the_problem.html
- http://www.kzoo.edu/psych/stop_bullying/resources/websites.html