



THE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF PORT OF SPAIN

Anti-Bullying Policy v2

ISPS is committed to providing all members of its community with a safe and respectful school environment that is conducive to teaching and learning. The School therefore prohibits acts of bullying, harassment, and other forms of aggression and violence whether in the classroom, on school premises, when a student is travelling to or from school, or at a school-sponsored event. The scope of this policy also extends to any incident which results in a substantial disruption of the school learning environment for one or more persons and/or the orderly operations of the school.

Definition

Bullying is a form of aggression which involves unwanted, negative and hurtful actions by one or more students against another who feels unable to prevent it or make it stop. It involves a real or perceived imbalance of power and is intentional and often repeated. This applies whether online or in a physical school environment.

Types – can be categorized as **Direct** (face-to-face) or **Indirect** (behind someone's back)

- Physical e.g. hitting, spitting, throwing objects, kicking, shoving, use of weapons, tripping
- Verbal e.g. teasing, name-calling, discriminatory jokes, offensive remarks, spreading rumors
- Written e.g. letters, notes, ridicule through drawings, threats
- Damage to property e.g. Theft of bags, clothes, money, ripping books, tearing clothes
- Social/emotional e.g. exclusion, refusal to work with, rejection, prevent others from befriending
- Intimidation e.g. threatening, encouraging others to bully, extortion
- Cyberbullying e.g. willful and repeated harm through electronic devices e.g. texting, email, social media

Process

The reduction and elimination of harassment and bullying requires prompt, firm and consistent prevention, identification and intervention.

At ISPS, we:

Prevent - by establishing a school wide communication on definition, procedure and consequences, having firm, clear limits about unacceptable behavior, teaching prosocial behaviors.

Identify - by having clear alert signs, by taking reports seriously and considering all the facts and surrounding circumstances before making a decision.

Intervene - by being available for support, both alleged offender and alleged target, using a standard response process when receiving reports and by implementing appropriate, consistent consequences based on the due process of a proper investigation.

In order to intervene effectively, bullying must be distinguished from other forms of peer behaviors and mistreatment. Although they still need to be addressed, not all hurtful or distressing behavior among schoolchildren constitutes bullying. Therefore, each reported or observed incident will be assessed on a case-by-case basis according to our Anti-bullying policy, procedures and practices.



The following factors, at a minimum, shall be given full consideration by school administrators in the development of the procedures for determining appropriate consequences and remedial measures.

- Age, development, and maturity levels of the parties involved
- Degree of harm (physical and/or emotional distress)
- Nature and severity of the behavior(s)
- Incidences of past or continuing pattern(s) of behavior
- Context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred

Consequences

All matters will be dealt with according to uniform and clear expectations for behavior that outline fair, predictable and escalating consequences that apply school wide. Serious incidents may result in exclusion from certain activities, suspension and expulsion.

- **Retaliation** or intimidating conduct against any individual who has made a bullying complaint or who has assisted or participated in an investigation is specifically prohibited and shall be treated as another incidence of bullying.
- **Mischievous/ Malicious Allegations**
ISPS considers allegations of bullying and harassment to be an issue of utmost seriousness. Therefore, allegations of a mischievous or malicious nature where someone knowingly makes a false report of harassment or bullying, will result in appropriate action being taken against the individual making the allegation in line with the schools General Disciplinary Procedures (See Parent/ Student Handbook).

Confidentiality

All complaints will be treated as confidential and identities will be protected to the greatest extent possible but absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. The obligation to investigate and take corrective action may supersede an individual's right to privacy. It must be understood that in almost every case, the alleged offender and the relevant teacher(s) will need to be informed as part of the investigation. The School reserves the right to bring any complaint to the attention of parents or guardians of students at any time.

Education & Awareness

The school will ensure that during each school year, sessions will be held to give staff, parents and students the tools and skills they need for preventing, identifying, investigating and intervening in acts of intimidation, harassment and bullying. Parents are urged to support school efforts by discussing this policy with their children and to seek clarification from the Administration if needed.

Roles

ISPS recognizes that anti-bullying strategies are most effective when they involve committed school-wide support.

- **Board**
Supports the Director in the implementation of the Anti-Bullying Policy.
Reviews the Policy on an annual basis in collaboration with the School Director.



- **ISPS Director**

Assumes responsibility for ensuring the effective implementation of the Policy.

Ensures all staff have access to training and development to support the implementation of the policy.

Ensures that accurate records of incidents are kept, reviewed and acted upon appropriately.

Reports to the Board on the effectiveness of the Policy and recommends adjustments where necessary.

- **ISPS staff**

All ISPS teaching, non-teaching, security and ancillary staff are responsible for the rigorous application of the Anti-Bullying Policy.

All staff will receive regular training and development in support of this role and will be asked for input into the review of the application of the Policy at the end of the school year.

- **Student Involvement**

Students should support each other to achieve a happy and safe school environment. This means treating other students and staff with care and respect in line with the school's Honor Code. Students are encouraged to resolve issues informally where appropriate, seek help when required, and give feedback on the Anti-Bullying Policy at the end of the school year.

The appropriate Student Councils will play an important role in the implementation and review of the Anti-Bullying Policy.

- **Parental Involvement**

ISPS is firmly committed to working in partnership with parents and guardians to ensure the best possible outcomes when dealing with allegations of harassment and bullying. Their support and involvement are critical when their child is involved in allegations of bullying and harassment, either as a target or as an offender.

To this end, parents and guardians are asked to familiarize themselves with the school's Honor Code and this Policy and support their child and the school in implementing them. Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, should contact the school immediately.
