

DUBAI COLLEGE

A tradition of quality in education



Anti-Bullying Policy

Dubai College takes seriously its obligation to ensure that pupils and staff enjoy a safe working environment. The College believes that all people in the school community have the right to learn and teach in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of intimidation or being bullied. Every individual in school has the duty to report an incident of bullying whether it happens to themselves or to another person. The College promotes a culture in which students are not afraid to report bullying, actively encouraging the reporting of incidents in order that interventions can be made.

The college strives to be a community in which everybody feels valued and safe and within which individual differences are accepted, tolerated and regarded positively. Every student has the right to enjoy school. Bullying issues form a key part of the college's Rolling Positive Education Programme, along with assemblies, which are underpinned by the UK PSHE curriculum, RSE & HE programme of study and the UAE Moral Education Programme.

At Dubai College everybody has the right:

- To be valued
- To feel safe
- To learn
- To be respected

They also have the following responsibilities:

- To respect self
- To respect others
- To use common sense
- To be supportive towards others

It is an individual's right and responsibility to take a stand on bullying, whether the victim is yourself or somebody else.

What is bullying?

Bullying is any behaviour which hurts, injures, threatens or frightens. This can be:

- a) Physical
- b) Verbal
- c) Relational Aggression/Emotional/ Social
- d) Cyber
- e) Prejudicial
- f) Sexual

a) Physical Bullying

It is the most obvious form of bullying. It occurs when individuals use physical actions to gain power and control over their targets. Physical bullies tend to be bigger, stronger, and more aggressive than their peers.

Examples of physical bullying include kicking, hitting, punching, slapping, shoving, taking and damaging property and other physical attacks.

Unlike other forms of bullying, physical bullying is the easiest to identify. As a result, it is most likely what people think of when they think of bullying.

b) Verbal Bullying

Perpetrators of verbal bullying use words, statements, and name-calling to gain power and control over a target.

Examples of behaviours exhibited by verbal bullies include relentless insults to belittle, mock, ridicule or torment, demean, and hurt another person; this can also be threatening and intimidating. They choose their targets based on the way they look, act, or behave.

It's also common for verbal bullies to target kids with special needs.

Verbal bullying is often very difficult to identify because attacks almost always occur when adults aren't around. As a result, it is often one person's word against another's. Additionally, many adults feel that things kids say don't impact others significantly. As a result, they usually tell the victim of bullying to "ignore it." If verbal bullying is witnessed in any form, it should be taken seriously and always be reported.

c) Relational Aggression/Emotional/Social Bullying

This type of bullying is also known as covert bullying as it is designed to humiliate and damage someone socially. It is a sneaky and insidious type of bullying that often goes unnoticed by parents and teachers. Much of this type of bullying is about social manipulation where individuals try to hurt their peers or sabotage their social standing. The goal of a relationally aggressive bully is to increase their own social standing by controlling or bullying another person.

Examples of behaviours exhibited by relational/emotional/social bullies include:

- Lying, fake rumours and spreading gossip
- Breaking confidences
- Encouraging others to turn against someone
- Leaving someone out constantly and encouraging others to do the same
- Socially excluding someone online, cyberbullying, negative comments on posts and images
- Damaging someone's social reputation or social acceptance
- Using humiliating nicknames and continuing when asked to stop

d) Cyber Bullying

It is bullying that takes place over digital devices like cell phones, computers, and tablets. Cyberbullying can occur through SMS, Text, and apps, or online in social media, forums, or gaming where people can view, participate in, or share content. Cyberbullying includes sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or mean content about someone else. It can include sharing personal or private information about someone else causing embarrassment or humiliation. It can also include harassment or cyberstalking, threats, defamation or vilification, impersonation, unauthorised publication of private images, manipulation or peer rejection.

The pressuring of students to share nude and semi-nude images can also lead to sexual bullying. If a girl sends a photo of herself to a boyfriend, he may share that photo widely if they break up. She becomes the target of sexual bullying as people make fun of her body, call her crude names, and make vulgar comments about her.

Special Concerns about Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying has unique concerns in that it can be:

Persistent – Digital devices offer an ability to immediately and continuously communicate 24 hours a day, so it can be difficult for children experiencing cyberbullying to find relief.

Permanent – Most information communicated electronically is permanent and public, if not reported and removed. A negative online reputation, including for those who bully, can impact university admissions, employment, and other areas of life.

Hard to Notice – Because teachers and parents may not overhear or see cyberbullying taking place, it is harder to recognise.

Breaking the Cybercrime Law – Federal Law No.5. Students need to be aware that any incidences of cyberbullying which contravene the Federal Law of the U.A.E. may be subject immediately to Permanent Exclusion.

There are many different methods by which cyberbullying takes place. The following list is not exhaustive; while the development of information and communications technology is so rapid new styles of cyberbullying are emerging constantly. Moreover, young people are particularly adept at adapting to new technology.

The most common places where cyberbullying occurs are:

- Social Media, such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and Twitter
- SMS (Short Message Service) also known as Text Message sent through devices
- Instant Message (via devices, email provider services, apps, and social media messaging features)
- Email

E-safety courses are built into the Digital Skills programme along with the Positive Education Days and year group assemblies. The topic is explored further by inviting outside experts to school to address students and teachers as well as parent forums.

e) Prejudicial Bullying

Prejudicial bullying is based on prejudices individuals have toward people of different races, religions, or sexual orientation. This type of bullying can encompass all the other types of bullying. When prejudicial bullying occurs, kids are targeting others who are different from them and singling them out.

f) Sexual Bullying

Sexual bullying consists of repeated, harmful, and humiliating actions that target a person sexually. Examples include sexual name-calling, crude comments, vulgar gestures, uninvited touching, sexual propositioning, and inappropriate graphic materials. A bully might make a crude comment about a peer's appearance, attractiveness, sexual development, or sexual activity.

In extreme cases, sexual bullying opens the door to sexual assault. Girls are often the targets of sexual bullying both by boys and by other girls. Boys might touch them inappropriately, make crude comments about their bodies, or proposition them. Girls might call other girls names like "slut" or "tramp," make insulting comments about their appearance or body, and engage in slut-shaming.

Actions for those being bullied.

Who can you turn to if you are bullied?

- Your parents
- Your close friends
- Your form tutor
- A Prefect/Sixth Form Liaison whom you trust
- Your Head of Year/Head of Section
- Any member of the Senior Leadership Team
- Any teacher with whom you feel you have a relationship of trust
- The School Nurse and office staff
- Student Support Services (Mrs Penney, Mr Samways and Mrs Gorman)

What can you yourself do if you are bullied?

- Tell the bully to stop. Make it clear that the behaviour is unwelcome and hurtful.
- Seek help. Talk to someone you trust.
- Report it. Dubai College does not tolerate bullying. Trust the school to deal with any incident in the appropriate manner.

What should you do if you know someone else is being bullied?

- Care enough to take action, whether you are personally involved or not.
- Intervene at an early stage so that the problem is dealt with before it gets out of hand.
- Have the courage to report it.

Preventing Bullying.

What can you do to prevent bullying?

- Respect yourself and others.
- Try to create a relaxed atmosphere in school for everybody.
- Do not follow friends when you disagree with what they are doing.
- Learn to be tolerant and broad minded and to rejoice in individual differences.
- Be aware of the school's anti bullying policy and give it your full support.
- Sometimes bullies exclude people. If you are popular and have a positive peer group, include the victim in your activities.

Assurances about Bullying.

What assurances can the school provide on bullying?

- We take a zero tolerance stance.
- We expect a high standard of behaviour at all times.
- We aim to provide a safe and caring environment for everybody.
- We have a policy for detecting, preventing and dealing with bullying.
- We cover bullying issues in our PSHE programme.
- We have a pastoral care system that provides genuine support to students which includes but is not limited to restorative justice sessions and peer support.
- We will deal immediately with all reported cases of bullying – what we don't know about, we cannot act upon.

What assurances can the teachers provide on bullying?

- If you have been bullied you are not to blame.
- Nobody deserves to be bullied.
- Everyone is entitled to enjoy school.
- Staying silent solves nothing.
- "We are here to help!"

How can parents help?

- Show a real interest in your child's social life and in school events.
- Encourage your child to have friends round, to join clubs and to be tolerant and broad minded towards others.
- Build up your child's self-esteem by emphasising positive features and accepting individual characteristics.
- Discuss the school's anti-bullying policy with your child and suggest positive strategies if his/her rights are abused.
- 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 take action on 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, try not to go on the defensive or to find excuses for the bullying behaviour. Work constructively with the school to find a solution to the problem.
- **If your child is being bullied, please report it; the school can then take action.**

What disciplinary structures exist to deal with incidents of bullying?

DC Level 1 – Lower Level Misbehaviour (Class Teacher/Form Tutor/HOY) Warning for first minor offence

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 sanctioned according to DC 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 Dubai College Sanctions Procedures which are also detailed in the Student Planner.

DC Level 2 – Lower Level Misbehaviour (Form Tutor/HOY)

If, after an initial warning, a student exhibits overt bullying behaviour, they will be sanctioned according to DC Level 2. This stage may be bypassed even on a first offence, depending on the severity & type of the bullying behaviour.

DC Level 3 – Mid Level Misbehaviour (HOY)

Where, after due investigations, the school is satisfied that bullying has occurred, it will be explained to the bully why his/her behaviour is unacceptable, and positive strategies will be pursued to raise his/her self-esteem as well as to protect the victim. The bully's parents will be informed by letter. Removal from stage 1 may be possible only when the following criteria have been met:

- There is no evidence that the student has continued to use bullying behaviours in any form
- There is evidence of the positive support of the anti-bullying policy in the new behaviours that the student is exhibiting

However, this is entirely at the discretion of the school, and any student previously on DC Level 3 Mid Level who is involved in a further instance of bullying will be placed directly on to DC Level 4 Higher Level.

DC Level 4 – Higher Level Misbehaviour (SLT)

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 will not be possible to be removed from Level 2 or any subsequent stage.

It is envisaged that in most circumstances these stages will be sufficient.

DC Levels 5 & 6 (Internal Reflection Day/External Exclusion) (Deputy Head: Pastoral)

Where there is no improvement in the bullying or the bullying is severe in nature, the bully will be excluded (temporarily suspended) from the school for up to at least a week. This may be internal or external depending on the severity of the case along with prior history of such behaviour.

DC Level 6 (Permanent Exclusion) (Headmaster)

As a last resort, and when it is clear that the bully consistently endangers the welfare of fellow members of the school community or they have contravened the UAE Cybercrime Laws to the extent of warranting prosecution, he or she will be permanently excluded from Dubai College.

Review of Policy

The bullying policy is monitored by SLT and reviewed on an annual basis.

Policy Details	
Version date	August 2021
Last review	September 2020
Next review	September 2022
Responsible SLT	Deputy Head - Pastoral