



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Date of last review: June 2024
Date of next review: July 2025

Rationale

Everyone at Dar-ul-Madinah has the right to feel welcome, be secure and happy. Only if this is the case, will all members of the community be able to achieve their maximum potential. Bullying of any sort inhibits this being able to happen and prevents equality of opportunity. It is everyone's responsibility to prevent this happening and this policy contains guidelines to support this ethos. Where bullying exists, the victims must feel confident to activate anti bullying systems within the organisation, to end the bullying it is our aim to challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour, increase understanding of bullied pupils and help build an anti-bullying ethos within the organisation.

This document outlines how we make this possible at Dar-ul-Madinah.

Definitions of bullying

Bullying can be described as: "the use of power by one or more people intentionally to harm, hurt or adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others." ('Bully Off' by Kevin Brown). There are other definitions which all amount to the same meaning: bullying is when a stronger, more powerful person, or persons, deliberately hurts or frightens another person. It can take various forms: physical, verbal, emotional intimidation, racist and sexual taunts. It can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online. It's usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child both physically and emotionally. Bullying that happens online, using social networks, games and mobile phones, including the use of images and videos is often called cyberbullying. The use of the internet and related technologies can be used to harm other people, in a deliberate, repeated, and hostile manner. A child can feel like there's no escape because it can happen wherever they are, at any time of day or night.

It is often defined as repeated acts of aggression, which we do not accept. If a single act of bullying takes place it is essential that we take action to stop it.

Strong people do not bully, yet bullying is done as much by adults as by children. It is aggressive and not an inherent part of human nature: it is learned behaviour that can be unlearned. It will not go away by ignoring it. It is something to do with everyone. Moaning about it will not achieve anything and maybe that is why some situations fail to improve.

Bullying can often happen without young children being aware they are doing it and, as such, becomes part of the educational process for everyone in increasing individuals' awareness of themselves in relation to others. Bullying is part of wider relationships and cannot be seen or dealt with in isolation.

Every adult in school has a responsibility to be vigilant in observing relationships and children's mental state.

Actions to Tackle Bullying

Prevention is better than cure so at Dar-ul-Madinah we will be vigilant for signs of bullying and always take reports of incidents seriously. We will use the curriculum wherever possible to reinforce the ethos of the school and help pupils to develop strategies to combat bullying type behaviour. Pupils are told that they must report any incident of bullying to an adult within our school and that when another pupil tells them that they are being bullied or if they see bullying taking place it is their responsibility to report their knowledge to a member of staff.

All reported incidents of bullying will be investigated and taken seriously by staff members. The Class teacher of the victim will be responsible for this and will be required to give a copy of the report and the action taken to the Head teacher. Older students may be asked to write a report themselves. In order to ensure effective monitoring of such occurrences and to facilitate coordinated action, all proven incidents should be reported to the Head teacher.

Upon discovery of an incident of bullying, we will discuss with the children the issues appropriate to the incident and to their age and level of understanding. If the incident is not too serious, a problem-solving approach may help. The adult will try to remain neutral and deliberately avoid direct, closed questioning which may be interpreted as accusatory or interrogational in style. Each student must be given an opportunity to talk and the discussion should remain focused on finding the solution to the problem and stop the bullying recurring.

Parents

Our Aims, Values and Beliefs are explained to new parents on their introduction to school and throughout their time with us we repeatedly illustrate how they are the basis for all relationships and for any conflict resolution. It is key that parents understand what the term 'bully' means so that it is not used inappropriately.

New parents are also requested to 'complain', to encourage a culture where parents feel happy to report any anxieties to the school. Parents are informed that it is their responsibility to ensure their child's education works and they must let school know about any worries as soon as possible.

Parents are also regularly informed that the school expects to work in partnership with them to resolve any unpleasantness and to help educate children about how to live in harmony and respect for one other.

As adults who play a crucial part in the upbringing of our children, we are each expected to model behaviour that reflects our stated aims and values.

Teachers

The relationship between staff and children should be characterised by mutual respect and trust so that the children feel able to tell teachers if they are being bullied or if they witness bullying.

Teachers should be mindful of the fact that children sometimes model their behaviour on the behaviour of adults they admire. All staff are expected to behave in a professional manner and bullying of any nature is never appropriate and will not be tolerated.

Emphasis should be placed on praising good behaviour rather than on the use of sanctions and there should be positive expectations of pupil behaviour.

As part of our professional responsibilities we must be sensitive when observing children and assessing how they relate to others. Any issues should be resolved between the teacher and the child but staff should recognise a professional trust between themselves and the school to inform others where they feel this to be appropriate. All staff will be supported to find the best solution for any child experiencing difficulty.

Bullying should never be tolerated and action should always be taken immediately. Every incident should be dealt with in accordance with our Aims and Values, and dignity and respect accorded to individuals in a climate of justice and fairness. We should always find out details before reaching conclusions.

Children will have 'one off' confrontations, which need not necessarily be equated with bullying but should raise sensitivity to individuals' behaviour.

Opportunities should be made through assemblies, lessons or pupil attitude surveys to allow children the chance to inform school about any such worries and to participate in forming school policy about behaviour. Teachers should arrange lessons which encourage children to talk and identify what bullying is and anti-bullying should be actively promoted within the school. Children will also learn about cyber bullying, what it is and the dangers of using the internet. Cyber bullying will also be actively promoted in the school through lessons and especially ICT lessons.

Playground

Teachers, Learning Support Assistants and Lunchtime Supervisors are instructed to report any concerns to the appropriate person regarding playground behaviour. These will always be acted upon.

All staff are expected to be vigilant regarding such issues on the playground.

Children are encouraged through lessons and assemblies to 'tell' an adult if they feel that bullying is occurring during break times.

Resolution

If the teacher can deal with the incident immediately and satisfactorily this is appropriate. The Head teacher must be informed immediately if bullying is suspected.

Opportunities should be made to discuss issues with the whole class and will always be part of our PSHE and SMSC programmes.

We should be 'inclusive' at all times and must not 'reject' the child. It is the *behavior* that warrants rejection, *not* the child.

Where appropriate the Head teacher will discuss the matter with parents. The matter will be pursued until resolution. Any sanctions will be discussed with teachers and all incidents of bullying and follow-up actions will be recorded as appropriate.

Sanctions

- Incidents are to be reported to the Head teacher immediately.
- We listen to victims', witnesses', perpetrators' version of events, individually, in order to establish what happened.
- If a child has bullied another, (s)he must apologise and demonstrate a certain empathy and understanding of what the victim has been subjected to and how (s)he is feeling. The apology can be verbal or written.
- The perpetrator will be expected to make amends for the unacceptable behaviour, for example, anything damaged or destroyed must be repaired/replaced; any money/property taken will be paid back/replaced.
- The perpetrator may be required to write a letter home explaining what (s)he has done.
- There will be a zero tolerance approach to behaviour of a bullying nature. Parents will be notified and asked to meet the Head to discuss the issues, in the child's presence, as appropriate.
- Future behaviour will be closely monitored and may be recorded.
- A further appearance in the Head's office for repeated bullying will entail parents being asked to come in immediately to establish that all understand that a serious undertaking, in writing, must now be made by parents and child to ensure the child's continued attendance at school.
- If no such agreement can be reached after all evidence has been presented, parents may be asked to take their child home until such time as these conditions are accepted and undertaken.

Conclusion

We all want Dar ul Madinah to be a place where adults and children are free to learn and be, without fear. Although the school is generally orderly, we must always be vigilant and concerned for the safety and security of all our children.

For some children it will take many years of love and education before they are able to completely internalise the need to be sensitive and kind to all. We work as a whole school to improve behaviour. This means staff increase their understanding and knowledge of how to deal with a variety of issues and children and such development should be central to the improvement of all.