

Reference number	E10	Policy name	Anti-Bullying Policy
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Person responsible	MWR	Date of next review	March 2027
Policy links	E1, E2, E6, C1, F2		

Vision, mission and values	Our vision as a school is to not only meet its legal and ethical obligations but goes beyond, actively contributing to the well-being, personal growth, and success of every student. Uptown International School aims to be a place where students can thrive and learn in a safe, nurturing and inclusive environment, free from bullying. Anti-bullying is also underpinned in our mission statement and values which puts Wellbeing at the heart of our school.
Rationale	Uptown International School is committed to creating a safe, inclusive, and nurturing environment where students can thrive academically and personally. Bullying, in any form, poses a significant threat to this goal. To ensure the well-being of our students and maintain a conducive learning environment, Uptown International School is implementing this Anti-Bullying Policy. This policy is designed to address the following key points: • To ensure all students feel safe, respected, and supported, both in school and online, so they can engage positively in learning and wellbeing. • To provide a clear, consistent whole-school framework for preventing, identifying, reporting, and responding to bullying. • To promote a positive, inclusive school culture where respectful relationships are modelled and bullying is not tolerated. • To clarify shared responsibilities of students, staff, parents, and leaders in addressing and preventing bullying. • To ensure bullying concerns are identified early, recorded accurately, and addressed proportionately, with safeguarding oversight where required. • To support continuous improvement through regular analysis of bullying data, student voice, and targeted staff training. A school's reputation is closely tied to its culture and how it handles issues like bullying. A proactive approach to anti-bullying not only enhances the reputation of Uptown International School but also contributes to a more positive and respectful school culture, attracting students and staff who value these principles.

WSLT sign off		Date	March 2026
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AIM

All members of the UIS community are valued as individuals and have the right to feel safe and happy within the school environment.

Bullying is not acceptable at both UIS and across the UAE.

UIS aims to quickly raise awareness amongst staff and students of any vulnerable individual who is found to have low self-esteem and who is excluded or humiliated by others, and to promote an ethos which deplores anyone being left out, being unsupported or being humiliated.

CONTEXT

This policy sits alongside the Positive Behaviour Policy. First and foremost, UIS aims to ensure that the positive behaviour structure alongside consistency and clear communication will support the wellbeing of students, their progress, learning, and their achievements. With this in place, the school ensures that bullying is very rare.

With this all members of the community are aware of their responsibilities to proactively prevent bullying by:

The Staff are responsible for:

- Use of positive language
- Showing respect towards others, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity or background
- Consistently implementing the positive behaviour policy
- Creating a positive classroom and school environment
- Modelling positive behaviour
- Ensuring that individual students' behaviour needs are personalised
- Communicating and recording positive and negative behaviour (Positive behaviour Policy)
- Using restorative language when dealing with any incidents
- Strategies agreed are applied by all, as consistency is the key.

Parents are expected to:

- Encourage their child to follow the school rules and behaviour expectations
- Support and promote the school values
- Inform the school if there are any circumstances which may affect their child's behaviour
- Attend any school meetings regarding behaviour
- Follow-up on behaviour concerns at home where needed
- Be respectful towards others, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity or background

Students are expected to:

- Behave appropriately in a learning community and adhere to the policies and procedures established
- Be respectful towards others, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity or background
- Be responsible in class and around the school
- Respect the school and the wider community
- Report any incidents of bullying to a member of staff

1. DEFINING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group **physically or emotionally**, and involves an **imbalance of power**. It is not a one-off incident.

Students, parents, and staff may be perpetrators or victims of bullying.

- Bullying **can occur face-to-face or online**
- Bullying **may involve peers, older students, or adults**

1.1 All members of the UIS community should know that:

- No one has to put up with bullying.
- Bullying can cause psychological damage to victims, in extreme cases, suicide.
- Every person has the right to tell an individual who is bullying that their behaviour is unacceptable.
- Bullying should be reported to a trusted adult or teacher.
- The matter will be dealt with appropriately quickly and such that any possible retaliation is prevented.

1.2 Examples of bullying behaviour:

- **Verbal:** name calling, "put downs", offensive language, "nuisance" phone calls, spreading malicious rumours, tone of voice.
- **Cyber:** offensive posts, sharing sensitive content on social channels, mobile 'phones, text messages, photographs, e-mail etc.
- **Physical:** Pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, hair-pulling and other forms of violence or threats of violence
- **Verbal:** Name-calling and sarcasm, spreading rumors, persistent teasing
- **Emotional:** Excluding, ridicule, humiliation
- **Racist:** Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- **Sexual:** Unwanted physical contact, abusive comments, sending inappropriate images both real or AI generated
- **Individual Needs:** Disability, special educational needs
- Bullying related to protected characteristics is taken particularly seriously.
 - Race, ethnicity, nationality
 - Religion or belief
 - Gender and gender identity
 - Sexual orientation
 - Disability / SEND
 - Appearance or health conditions

2. IDENTIFYING BULLYING

2.1 Possible Victim Behaviours

Victims may often:

- Be late
- Lose belongings

- Under-achieve
- Produce careless work
- Be isolated
- Change behaviour e.g. outburst of temper, withdrawal, illness

2.2 Staff should:

- Listen and try to provide an open, non-judgmental environment for students to talk about the problem.
- Tell them you understand and give them support. Remind them they have the right to feel safe.
- Inform the child that you will follow the school policy and report the incident to the Senior Team for full investigation
- Avoid showing your own emotional response. (See Child Protection Policy for disclosure advice)

2.3 Parents should:

- Listen and try to provide an open, non-judgmental environment for your child to talk about the problem.
- Tell them you understand and give them support. Remind them they have the right to feel safe.
- Suggest your child speaks to a member of the school staff.
- If the problem seems serious, contact should immediately be made with their Home Room Teacher. If there is a delay in response, contact with their Grade Level Leader should be made.
- Try to avoid an angry or emotional response.
- Parents should realise that actions such as phoning the parents of the bully and discussing the matter with other parents can inflame the situation.
- Contact the school straight away if the issue continues to be unresolved.
- Trust the school to carry through actions that will solve the problem.
- Understand that bullies will mostly be given a second chance and the opportunity to reform.

2. 4 Bullying and Safeguarding

Some bullying behaviours may constitute a safeguarding concern. Where bullying involves, the following, the matter will be escalated in line with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

- Sexualised behaviour
- Discriminatory abuse
- Coercion, threats or exploitation
- Significant emotional harm

3. ANTI-BULLYING INITIATIVES

3.1 Initiatives within the school that are designed to prevent bullying:

- Grade specific lessons on bullying and relationships taught within the MSC curriculum and Wellbeing Curriculum on Wellbeing Wednesdays across the school.
- Parental sessions are run by both the academic team and school counsellor to proactively inform parents of strategies and behaviour signs to look out for,
- Students are made aware of the code of conduct and positive behaviour frameworks throughout the year through every day and specific sessions.
- Academic and co-curricular success alike are praised and celebrated through feedback in lessons, awards in assemblies and commendation meetings with Senior staff, which raises self-esteem and helps to create a positive atmosphere.
- The school discourages overt disapproval by staff or any exclusive or unfriendly behaviour.
- Members of staff are discouraged from using sarcasm towards a student or humiliating a student.
- Primary 'Buddy Benches' so students who feel lonely or in need of support. Which are supported by 'Grade 6 Playground Buddies'
- The school encourages staff to use seating plans in lessons, and free choice activities should be limited, e.g. groups or teams should be arbitrarily assigned by the staff member.
- Students are encouraged to confide in their Home Room Teacher/Grade Level Leader or to speak directly to the school counsellor, school nurses/doctor or leadership team.
- An anti-bullying week is held annually to raise awareness.
- A school emphasizes not being a passive bystander. It is an expectation that students report bullying if they see it.
- All new staff take part in an induction programme which makes them aware of the anti-bullying policy and emphasises the importance of identifying and reporting any bullying incident.

3.2 Staff Training and Professional Development

All staff at Uptown International School have a shared responsibility to prevent, identify, and respond effectively to bullying. To ensure a consistent and informed approach, staff receive regular training aligned with this policy and the school's Safeguarding and Positive Behaviour frameworks.

Training expectations include:

- Anti-bullying procedures and reporting pathways as part of staff induction
- Annual safeguarding training, including identifying bullying behaviours that may constitute safeguarding concerns
- Ongoing professional development in restorative practices, positive behaviour management, and inclusive classroom strategies
- Targeted training for pastoral leaders and senior staff on managing complex or repeated bullying incidents

Staff are expected to apply this training consistently, model respectful behaviour at all times, and act promptly on any concerns, in line with school policy and safeguarding procedures.

3.3 Preventing Bullying Behaviors

Tracking, Monitoring and Analysis of Bullying Incidents

At Uptown International School, all reported bullying incidents are recorded systematically through iSAMS to ensure comprehensive tracking and monitoring. This enables the Safeguarding and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to identify patterns, trends, and potential areas of concern across the school community. In addition to incident reporting, regular analysis of student survey results and PASS (Pupil Attitudes to Self and School) data is conducted to help identify any previously unknown bullying-related issues, including perceptions of safety, peer relationships, and emotional wellbeing.

Monitoring, Analysis and Strategic Oversight

Bullying incidents at Uptown International School are systematically recorded and monitored to ensure timely intervention and ongoing improvement. An annual review of bullying data is conducted by the Senior Leadership Team and the Safeguarding Team to evaluate the effectiveness of prevention strategies and responses.

This review draws on:

- Recorded bullying incidents and outcomes
- Safeguarding logs and case reviews
- Student voice surveys and PASS data
- Feedback from parents and staff

Findings from the annual review are used to:

- Identify trends, risk areas, or emerging concerns
- Inform staff training priorities and curriculum planning
- Strengthen preventative measures and pastoral support
- Ensure the policy remains responsive and effective

Outcomes of the review are shared with relevant leaders and inform whole-school safeguarding and wellbeing planning.

Data collected from iSAMS, youHQ, surveys, and PASS assessments are reviewed at safeguarding meetings, where appropriate actions and interventions are planned. A full analysis of PASS and youHQ data is also carried out by the Wellbeing Team and School Counsellor and interventions planned based on the results – on an individual, group or year group level. This proactive approach ensures that emerging concerns are addressed swiftly, supports ongoing safeguarding practices, and allows the school to tailor pastoral and wellbeing initiatives to the needs of the students. The school is committed to using data-driven strategies to promote a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment for all learners.

4. PROCEDURE TO DEAL WITH BULLYING

- 4.1 All reported incidents will be treated seriously and fully investigated; all parties will be heard and given appropriate support.
- 4.2 If a member of staff witnesses bullying, the incident should immediately be reported to the Grade Level Leader who will then investigate by interviewing all the parties concerned and documenting the incident. If the incident is of a serious nature or repeated, this will be reported to the Deputy Head in Primary / Secondary. Records of all proceedings will be recorded iSams under Stage 4/5 behaviour (See Positive Behaviour Policy).

Any incident involving members of staff should be reported directly to the Principal. Taaleem Central Office and HR will then support a full investigation.

- 4.3 When bullying is found to have occurred appropriate action will be taken to:
- Ensure the immediate safety and well-being of those involved – this might involve immediate internal isolation as the investigation takes place.
 - Provide ongoing support and counselling for the individual being bullied.
 - Inform the individual who has been responsible for the bullying that this behaviour is unacceptable.
 - Counsel the individual to understand the implications of bullying.
 - Establish whether further support and/or counselling are required to rectify behaviour.
 - Advise the individual of the consequences of further bullying.
 - Apply an appropriate sanction for the offender, in line with the Positive Conduct Framework.
 - Inform the parents.
 - Follow up with the individuals to provide any necessary support.

5. DISCIPLINARY MEASURES AND EDUCATION / REMEDIAL ACTION

Upon investigation of the incident, statements are examined from the perpetrator, victim, and any available bystanders. Interviews are documented and a sanction decided upon based on the school Positive Behaviour Policy. This is communicated to the perpetrator and his/her family.

Usually, parents will be invited in, and appropriate action will be taken. Disciplinary sanctions may include formal warnings and contracts of good behaviour, restorative conversations, community service or suspension, and there may also be a requirement that the bully has specialist counselling. Restorative Conversations and a positive behaviour approach is a key part of all sanctions, to enable growth, learning and positive outcomes are moved forward with by all parties involved.

In serious or repeated incidents, the outcome may recommend suspension or expulsion from school. (Stage 4 or 5 of the Positive Behaviour Policy). Sanctions and interventions will be applied in line with the Positive Behaviour Policy and relevant phase-specific conduct frameworks.

In most bullying cases, the bully will be asked to spend a sequence of sessions with the counselor, discussing the motivation behind what they have done and learn different strategies to move forward.

In most bullying cases, a reconciliation meeting will be held between the bully and the victim, mediated by a trained member of staff. In this meeting, both students will be given the chance to speak and air their views. The meeting will be drawn to a close through a formal apology, either verbally or in writing.

6. CYBER BULLYING

All UIS community members have the right to feel safe and happy within the school environment, and this extends to the virtual environment. The abuse of cyber space is deemed as serious as all other forms of bullying. Mechanisms are put in place to prevent, recognise and respond to cases of cyber-bullying.

Definition

Cyber-bullying refers to inappropriate text messaging or emailing and inappropriate use of societal network sites, as well as sending offensive imaging (real/non-real/AI) by phone, internet or email.

Methods of cyber-bullying

- Mobile phones
- Instant messenger
- Chat rooms and message boards
- Email
- Webcams
- Social network sites
- Video hosting sites
- VLEs
- Gaming sites, consoles and virtual worlds
- **Creation, possession, or sharing** of AI-generated harmful content is treated the same as real imagery.
- **Out-of-school online behaviour**, where it impacts school safety, will be dealt with in-school policy.

All the above media involve transferring and / or sharing personal, abusive, nasty, threatening, intimidating, harassing, embarrassing, inappropriate or humiliating messages and / or images.

Identifying a victim of cyber-bullying

Be alert to a child being upset after using a mobile phone. This might involve subtle comments or changes in relationships with friends. They might be unwilling to talk or secretive about their online activities and mobile phone use.

What a child should do

- Always respect others – be careful about what is said online and what images are sent.
- Think before sending – could what is sent be made public very quickly and could it stay online forever?
- Only give passwords, personal website addresses, or mobile numbers to trusted friends.
- Report bullying immediately to a member of staff.
- Do not retaliate or reply.
- Save evidence of cyber-bullying – learn how to keep records of offending messages, pictures or online conversations.
- If cyber-bullying is seen going on with someone else, support the victim and report it to a member of staff.

What staff and parents should do:

- Be aware of a change in a child's behaviour after using their mobile phone or being on the internet.
- Talk to children and understand the ways they are using the internet and mobile phones.
- Use the tools on the service and turn on in-built internet safety features.
- Remind children not to retaliate.
- Keep evidence of offending emails, text messages, and online conversations.
- Report cyber-bullying to the HM so that the school can take appropriate action.

School-wide preventative initiatives:

- Understanding and talking about cyber-bullying through taught lessons, assemblies and guest speakers.
- Making reporting cyber-bullying easier, e.g. peer or anonymous reporting.
- Providing and publicising different ways of reporting cyber-bullying in the school.
- Regulating and managing the use of personal cyber technology.
- Recording and monitoring incidents of cyber-bullying and using this to inform preventative techniques.
- Updating and evaluating the impact of prevention activities.
- Regular reviews by staff, students, and parents are held to make sure policies are working and up to date.

When cyber-bullying is found to have occurred, appropriate action will be taken to:

1. Support the victim

- Reassurance is given that the person has done the right thing by telling someone.
- Make sure the person knows not to retaliate.
- Ask the person to think about what information they have on the public domain.
- Help the person keep relevant evidence for any investigation.
- Check the person understands simple ways to prevent it happening again.
- Take action to contain the incident when content has been circulated:
- If possible, have the perpetrator remove the content.
- Contact the host and make a report to get the content taken down.

- Confiscate phones that are being used to cyber-bully. Ask the student to tell you who they have sent messages to.

2. Investigate the incident and apply appropriate sanctions

- All bullying incidents should be properly recorded and investigated.
- Advise staff to try to keep a record of the bullying as evidence.
- Take steps to identify the bully, including looking at school systems, identifying and interviewing possible witnesses, and contacting the service provider, as necessary.
- In cases of illegal content, contact the relevant authority, who can determine what needs to be kept for evidential purposes.

7. POLICY REVIEW AND EVALUATION

This Anti-Bullying Policy is reviewed annually to ensure it remains effective, compliant with current guidance, and reflective of the needs of the Uptown International School community.

The review process considers:

- Patterns and trends identified through recorded bullying incidents
- Student, staff, and parent feedback
- Updates to KHDA, UAE, and international best-practice guidance
- Outcomes of safeguarding audits and internal reviews

In addition to the annual review, this policy may be reviewed and updated in response to serious incidents, changes in statutory guidance, or identified areas for improvement. All updates are approved by the Whole School Leadership Team (WSLT) and communicated to staff, students, and parents as appropriate.