

TITLE OF POLICY	Anti-Bullying Policy
COVERAGE	Whole School
FIRST RELEASE DATE	28/01/22
LAST RATIFIED DATE	06/02/2025
DATE FOR NEXT REVIEW	01/02/2026
OWNERS	Primary & Secondary DHTs (Pastoral)
REVIEWER	Primary & Secondary Heads

Anti-Bullying

1. Aim

The aim of the policy is to prevent any kind of bullying and to ensure that everyone can thrive in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. All members of the community, including SLT, teaching and non-teaching staff, students and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is and be familiar with the school policy on bullying. The goal of the policy is to help members of the school community to deal with bullying when it occurs and, even more importantly, to prevent it.

2. Statement of Intent

Our guiding principle in terms of anti-bullying states that, “We are all different yet, all equal”

The ICS Anti-Bullying Policy aligns with procedures in both the Behaviour for Learning Policy and Child Protection & Student Safeguarding Policy, and should also be read and applied in conjunction with the Acceptable Use and Agreement of Digital Technologies Policy, and the Inclusion Policy. The rationale for having a separate Anti-Bullying Policy is to acknowledge the seriousness with which the school views any sort of bullying, whether physical, emotional, and/or psychological.

Bullying is an anti-social behaviour which affects everyone; it is unacceptable and it will not be tolerated. Everyone in the ICS community has a responsibility to report any incident of bullying that comes to their attention and these reports will always be taken seriously.

3. Scope

In line with our Behaviour Policy, we embrace a restorative practice approach which aims to educate our students proactively and frame language in a way that promotes discussion and conflict resolution.

4. Unique Definitions

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, often, but not exclusively, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children,

or perceived differences. It is, therefore, important that we openly discuss and celebrate diversity across our school community.

Bullying can take many forms and it is important that we are aware of this in this fast changing world, seeking to ensure that we remain proactive as we challenge bullying in all forms. Examples of unacceptable bullying behaviour include:

Physical assault a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Verbal abuse, by name calling, threatening, teasing or making offensive remarks

Cyber-bullying, which is defined as the use of ICT by an individual or group in a way that is intended to upset others. The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content with a click.

As a school that embraces learning technologies, it is important to note (in line with our Acceptable Use of IT Policy) that we have a responsibility to seize and search devices if we believe them to be evidence of bullying. Parents and Heads of School will be informed of this immediately and devices will be stored safely and given back to students when appropriate.

Indirect emotional torment by excluding from social groups or spreading malicious rumours

Adult intimidation may be bullying at school, on the way to school or outside of school. If it involves an individual in our school, our involvement is imperative.

Any direct contact between the perpetrator's parents (or any other adult family member or friend of that family) and the victim or his family is strictly forbidden; and any such contact will be viewed in itself as a form of bullying through intimidation. Any such intimidatory behaviour may lead to the permanent exclusion of the student concerned.

We also have a responsibility to safeguard our staff. Intimidatory or hurtful behaviour towards staff from either other staff, parents or students will also not be tolerated and, in line with our Whistle Blowing Policy, will be dealt with accordingly using guidance in this policy as a support.

5. Anti-Bullying Process

Bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals. It can be a barrier to their learning and have serious consequences for their mental health. Bullying which takes place at school does not only affect an individual during childhood but can have a lasting effect on their lives well into adulthood. By effectively preventing and tackling bullying, we aim to help to create safe, disciplined environments where students are able to learn and fulfil their potential.

5.1 Education

At ICS, our response to bullying does not start at the point where an individual is being bullied.

Through a values-based education, our Wellbeing Curriculum and student assemblies, we aim proactively to educate our community as to why bullying is not tolerated. We are also dedicated to ensuring our indoor and outdoor environments reflect our message that bullying is not tolerated and that diversity is celebrated.

Values of respect for staff and other students, an understanding of the value of education, and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others permeate the whole school environment and are reinforced by staff and the Student Voice, who set a good example to the rest.

Low-level disruption and the use of offensive language can, in itself, have a significant impact on its target. If left unchallenged or dismissed as banter or horseplay, it can also lead to reluctance to report other behaviour. Early intervention, and the 'coaching conversations' this demands, can help to set clear expectations of the behaviour that is and isn't acceptable and help stop negative behaviours escalating.

Education also extends to after any bullying events have been investigated. Through mentoring and, if applicable, counselling, both the victim and perpetrator of the bullying are supported so that different choices are made, if necessary, when dealing with one another again. This may also involve parents and other key stakeholders.

Involving pupils in this way is compatible with children and young people's rights to participate under

Article 12 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989.

When there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern. Where this is the case, the school staff should discuss with the school's designated safeguarding lead and work with them to take appropriate action.

5.2 What to look for

Students who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting from school. In addition, bullying may manifest itself in attainment or attitudinal (PASS) data, and this should be monitored carefully in this regard.

Members of staff, and all members of the community, must be alert to the signs of bullying, and community members should act promptly and firmly against it, in accordance with the policy.

Surveys have shown that, in the vast majority of bullying incidents, most people knew that what was going on was wrong. Sometimes people, either through lethargy, peer group pressure, or tacit support for what is going on fail to take action. We are committed to educating our children to make the right choices, ground in the values of our school.

5.3 What to do

3.2.1 If you are the victim:

- If you feel able to, confront the bully by verbally making them aware that you think that what they are doing is wrong.
- Share your feelings with someone else. If possible, talk to a member of Staff. This could be your Class Teacher/Form Tutor, or any member of staff with whom you feel comfortable talking. If you would rather not go straight to a member of staff, talk to your friends or any trusted adult. They may well be able to advise on an appropriate course of action, or will be able to involve other people who can.

3.2.2 A witness (student):

- Support the victim by offering your friendship and make it clear that, in your opinion, what is happening to them is wrong.
- Encourage them to speak out on their own behalf by confronting the bully, or with their permission, confront the bully yourself, making sure that you adhere to the school's values at all times.
- Accompany the victim to a trusted adult, or suggest that you see their Class Teacher, Form Tutor, SLT etc.

3.2.3 A witness (staff):

- Reassure and support the pupils involved.
- Advise them that you are required to pass details on to the relevant member of the pastoral team. (Class Teacher, Form Tutor, SLT etc.).
- Inform an appropriate Pastoral Leader, or member of PSLT/SSLT, as soon as possible.

6. Procedure

The victim will be interviewed by the relevant Pastoral Leader, or a member of PSLT/SSLT, on their own, and asked to write an immediate account of events. The process for dealing with bullying will be explained clearly to them. The victim is also given the opportunity to discuss their own reactions and behaviour towards the bully. The victim is given support and advice, and counselling is suggested, if deemed appropriate. Once the investigating member of staff is clear that a bullying offence has been committed, the perpetrator(s) and any others involved will be interviewed individually and asked to write an immediate account of events. The process for dealing with bullying will be explained clearly to them.

In all cases where bullying is proven, both the victim's parents and perpetrator's parents will be asked to attend a meeting with the Head of School, or a member of their leadership team.

Details of the incident may be recorded in a student's files. In the first instance, and depending on the severity of the case, a member of SLT will interview the pupil or pupils whose behaviour has caused distress and agree a consequence. It will be made clear why the behaviour was inappropriate and unacceptable. Support and counselling may be offered.

The perpetrator will be dealt with according to the school's Behaviour Policy.

7. Responsibilities

Members of staff, and all members of the community, must be alert to the signs of bullying, and community members should act promptly and firmly against it, in accordance with the policy.

It will also be made clear to both the perpetrator(s) and their parents that any further incident or discussion about the current incident, will be considered to be further bullying.

Any perpetrator who continues to bully other students, even after support is put in place, may be permanently excluded from the school as per the Ministry of Education's guidelines.

Please note that consequences for bullying will be applied in accordance with the School's Behaviour Policy; Child Protection and Student Safeguarding Policy; and the Acceptable Use of IT & Social Media Policy.

8. Related Information

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
Behaviour for Learning Policy
Digital and Online Safety Policy
Inclusion Policy