

The English College, Dubai



Anti-Bullying Policy

2020-2021

Anti-Bullying Policy

As a community we respect the supreme dignity of each individual and so challenge any form of bullying, as this denies a right to which we are all entitled. The English College aims to create an atmosphere in which every student has a sense of involvement and in which s/he can develop as an individual with a strong sense of moral values and integrity. 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 tutor programme which is taught in all Key Stages. The college promotes a culture in which students are not afraid to report and tackle bullying

It is the right of every student at The English College:

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

They also have the following responsibilities:

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

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 in any form will not be tolerated. Bullying is defined as a form of aggressive behavior that occurs in an intentional and repeated manner causing another child to feel hurt. Bullying can take multiple forms, including spreading rumours, threatening, physical or verbal assault, engaging in insidious practices such as excluding a child from a group to hurt him/her, or any other gestures or actions that occur in a less visible manner.

Some of the most common are listed below:

- Picking on somebody
- Physical violence; punching, hitting and pushing
- Mocking, ridiculing or tormenting somebody
- Offensive, discriminatory comments as well as obviously hurtful names
- Gossiping and spreading rumours
- Exclusion, deliberately ignoring someone and encouraging others to do the same
- Insulting someone
- Threatening behaviour
- Taking and damaging property

- Offensive school emails
- Inappropriate use of social networking and messaging websites where harm is intended to others – this is a criminal offence and should be reported to the Police as we do not condone the use of WhatsApp and social media in school
- Certain social media sites have a legal age requirement therefore in our Bring your Own Device Policy we clearly state that no student needs to create a WhatsApp group other than the school email address

Who can you turn to if you are bullied?

- Your parents
- Your close friends
- Your class teacher or form tutor
- Pastoral Mentor
- An older student
- Prefect
- The Deputy Heads, Head of School, Head of Pastoral
- Any teacher whom you feel you have a relationship of trust
- The School Nurse and office staff
- Child Protection Team

What can you yourself do if you are bullied?

- Tell the bully to stop both clearly and firmly. Make it clear that the behaviour is unwelcome and hurtful
- Seek help. Talk to someone you trust
- Report it. The English 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

What can you do to prevent bullying?

- Abide by the school values
- Respect yourself and others
- Try to create an inclusive 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. be mindful of those students who may not be as popular or as confident; include the victim in your activities

What assurances can the school provide on bullying?

- We expect a high standard of behaviour at all times

- We expect all students to abide by the five school values of Respect, Responsibility, Aspiration, Excellence and Collaboration.
- 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 Moral Education lessons, Assemblies, Digital Safeguarding lessons, tutor programmes.
- We have a pastoral care system that provides genuine support to students
- The assigning of pastoral mentors to support students

What assurances can the teachers provide on bullying?

- You are not to blame
- Nobody deserves to be bullied
- Everyone is entitled to enjoy school
- By speaking out, you stop yourself from being the victim

How can parents help?

- Show a real interest in your child's social life and in school events
- Monitor your child's usage of social media, and have open dialogue regarding subject matter and content being shared
- Be mindful that children under the age of 13- should not be accessing certain Social Media sites, and you can add restrictions to your child's mobile settings which may ensure protection
- Encourage your child to communicate solely through the The English College email network as this ensures safety and a digital trail
- 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 emphasizing positive features and accepting individual characteristics
- Discuss the College'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 College can then take action

There are several tell-tale signs that may indicate bullying

- Unwillingness to go to school

- Frequent illnesses such as headaches and sore throats
- Falling away in their academic progress
- Damaged uniform and regular loss of personal items
- Loss of confidence and sudden, unexpected mood swings
- Sudden, prolonged periods of quietness
- Anonymous telephone calls
- Night terrors
- Bed wetting
- Loss of appetite
- Unwillingness to socialise, tendency to want to be alone

The College deals with bullying instantly. The following sanctions are in place to eradicate it from our community

If a student is beginning to behave in a manner which could develop into or be interpreted as bullying, **a warning** will be given. A talk with the **Class Teacher/Form Tutor** or **Deputy Head of School** is often all that is necessary to prevent the incident. In this way it is hoped that many potentially serious situations will never materialise. However, the warning stage is at the discretion of the College, and a student involved in a serious instance of bullying will bypass this stage and be placed onto student concern list, **TLC-** List on the Inclusion Register.

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 in a Restorative Behaviour meeting (see Positive Behaviour Policy) and positive strategies will be pursued to raise both their self-esteem and to protect the victim. The bully's parents will be informed by telephone and letter. The written communication will be placed in the student's file. If it is deemed necessary, a detention will be issued in line with the Positive Behaviour Policy document. It is possible that, after a considerable period of time during which the student has not only totally desisted from bullying has also given evidence of positive support of and participation in the anti-bullying policy, that student will be removed from the Student of Concern list. However, this is entirely at the discretion of the College, and any student previously on here who is involved in a further instance of bullying will be moved up the levels of discipline sanction according to the Positive Behaviour Policy.

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 again with the aim of restorative practice that identifies reasons for the behaviour, measures to stop the behaviour and appropriate sanctions where necessary (again see Positive Behaviour Policy). The bully will sign a statement promising that the bullying will not be repeated. It is envisaged that in most circumstances the above forms of intervention will be sufficient to stop the bullying.

Where there is no improvement in the bullying, the bully will be suspended (internally or externally) from the school for up to 3 days depending on the severity of the case.

As a last resort, and when it is clear that the bully consistently endangers the welfare of fellow members of the college community, the college will contact KHDA and request that he or she is permanently excluded from The English College.

Cyber safety information

The use of technology such as mobile phones and the Internet to intimidate others is an increasing trend. 'Happy slapping', bullying by text, e-mail, phone call or on social networking sites often leave no physical scars but can be highly intrusive and hurtful. The College will enforce strictly its policies with regard to the use of mobile phones and the Internet. Therefore, any form of cyber bullying affecting another student in the College can be either dealt with by the College or, the College can reserve the right not to be involved and allow the incident to be referred by the parent to the Police. Students must be aware that some forms and levels of cyber bullying are illegal. We discourage the use of social media sites in school, unless for educational purposes as directed by the teacher. We discourage WhatsApp groups, as research (World Health Organisation, Royal Society of Public Health) shows that this social platform breeds cyberbullying, and it is challenging for the school and parents to monitor. The school cannot be held responsible for online bullying outside of school between groups or individuals as a result of parents allowing their child to join social media groups or online chat rooms. However, the school will take steps via the Positive Behaviour Policy and Digital Safeguarding Policy if relationships between students deteriorate in school as a consequence of 'outside school' behaviours.