

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

August 2026

1. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

At EIFA International School (“EIFA”, “School”, “we”, “us” or “our”), our community is based upon respect, equality and good manners. We are committed to providing a safe and caring environment that is free from disruption, violence and any form of discrimination or harassment, so that every one of our pupils can develop to his/her full potential. The School prides itself on its respect and mutual tolerance. The school has a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of discrimination and discriminatory language, and a zero tolerance to all forms of harassment and sexual harassment.

We expect our pupils to treat members of staff with courtesy and co-operation so that they can learn in a relaxed, but orderly, atmosphere. All pupils should care for and support each other, inside and outside of School.

Parents/guardians have an important role in supporting the School in maintaining high standards of behaviour. It is essential that there are consistent expectations of behaviour both at School and at home, and that the School and parents cooperate closely together.

This policy is available to parents of pupils and prospective pupils (on our website and on request). It is also communicated to all staff.

Bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination of pupils or staff will not be tolerated by the School. We treat all our pupils and their parents fairly, and with consideration, and we expect them to respect the staff, the School and each other, in return. All forms of bullying are unacceptable at the School, and any instances of bullying will be recorded and, where appropriate, will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the EIFA Behaviour Management Policy.

Bullying may constitute a safeguarding concern. Where bullying or other harmful behaviour raises concerns that a pupil has suffered, or is likely to suffer, harm, or where the behaviour involves abuse, exploitation, sexual harassment or sexual violence, discriminatory abuse, serious violence or other safeguarding concerns, the matter will be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and dealt with in accordance with the School’s Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Bullying may overlap with or form part of child-on-child abuse. The School will consider whether reported behaviour also constitutes physical abuse, sexual harassment or sexual violence, discriminatory abuse, coercive or controlling behaviour, online abuse, initiation or hazing, or other harmful behaviour. Staff must not assume that behaviour is ‘only bullying’ where there are safeguarding concerns

This policy applies to all pupils in the School, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and applies to actions undertaken both inside, and outside of the School.

2. DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Put another way, bullying is the intentional hurting, harming or humiliating of another person or group of persons. It may take many forms, including physical (including any threat of or use of violence of any kind), sexual, verbal (including cyber-bullying via email, social media, gaming, and SMS or other instant messages), and emotional (including by excluding, being sarcastic, name-calling, tormenting or spreading malicious rumours).

Not every harmful incident will meet the School's definition of bullying. A single incident may nevertheless constitute serious misconduct, harassment, discriminatory behaviour, sexual harassment or sexual violence, physical violence, or a safeguarding concern, and will be dealt with under the appropriate School policy.

Bullying can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone, or actions that fall short of direct participation, where someone encourages others to bully, or joins in with laughing at a victim. Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and intimidating and often involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator or perpetrators and the victim whether that be a physical, psychological or intellectual imbalance, or by the perpetrator(s) having the capacity to socially isolate the victim.

Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups and may involve actions or comments regarding a person's race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special education needs or disabilities (SEN), or because of a child's family circumstances, such as they are adopted, in care or that they have caring responsibilities. Bullying may be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. For example, bullying can still be homophobic if directed towards a child that is perceived to be gay, whether or not this is the case.

Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time and can involve anyone - pupils, other young people, staff and parents.

3. THE SCHOOL'S RESPONSE TO BULLYING

At the School, we always treat bullying very seriously. It conflicts with the School's social and moral principles, and potentially with its policy on equal opportunities, and will not be tolerated. When incidents of bullying do occur, they are dealt with quickly and taken seriously. The School will never dismiss bullying as banter or horseplay, and all reported incidents of bullying will be dealt with by staff in accordance with this policy.

The School understands that bullying can be so serious that it may cause physical, emotional and psychological damage, such as eating disorders, self-harm and even suicide. Stopping violence and ensuring the immediate physical safety of pupils is the School's first priority, however, the School acknowledges that emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical bullying, and therefore staff will use their discretion when dealing with an incident of bullying within the parameters of this policy and the EIFA Behaviour Management Policy. The School will consider safeguarding implications in all cases, regardless of whether the reported behaviour meets the School's definition of bullying.

Whilst bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment, sexual violence and assault, upskirting and to violent and threatening behaviour. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying: everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are victims of bullying will be supported. Pupils who have engaged in bullying behaviour will be subject to appropriate disciplinary sanction and will also, where possible, be supported in learning different ways of behaving.

Bullying is classed as a serious misbehaviour and will in some cases require the involvement of the DSLs. The School acknowledges that bullying is harmful to the victim and the perpetrator. Children or young people who harm others may have additional or complex needs (e.g. significant disruption in their lives, exposure to domestic abuse, witnessing or suffering abuse, educational under-achievement, or being involved in crime).

Bullying which occurs on School trips or outside of the School's premises will not be tolerated any more than bullying on School premises. Teachers will, where appropriate, discipline pupils for misbehaviour outside School premises and outside School hours.

4. SIGNS OF BULLYING

Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is being bullied include:

- Unwillingness to return to school
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually poor work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others
- Books, bags, money and other belongings suddenly go "missing", or are damaged
- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary)
- Diminished levels of self-confidence
- Frequent complaints of symptoms which may relate to stress or anxiety, such as stomach pains or headaches
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance or late arrival to class
- Choosing the company of adults rather than peers
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact
- Difficulty in sleeping or experiencing nightmares; or
- Talking of suicide or running away from home or school.

Although there may be other causes of some of the above symptoms, a repetition or combination of these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents and teachers and reported/recorded, as appropriate, in accordance with this policy.

5. BULLYING - PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

The School's response to bullying does not start at the point at which a pupil has been bullied. We take the following preventative measures in order to create an environment that prevents bullying from becoming a problem at the School in the first place:

Pupils

- The School promotes an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat each other with respect at all times, inside and outside of School
- The pupils actively engage in promoting good behaviour and are taught to report bullying or negative behaviour to their teachers
- All new pupils (including Early Years pupils) are briefed thoroughly on the School's expected standards of behaviour. They are told what to do if they encounter bullying. We guarantee that those who report bullying in good faith will not be punished and will be supported
- We use appropriate assemblies to explain the School's policy on bullying. Our Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) programme is structured to give pupils an awareness of their social and moral responsibilities as they progress through the School. Our programme is structured to enforce messages about community involvement and taking care of each other. It focuses on the importance of equality and diversity and pupils are encouraged to avoid prejudicial and exclusionary language
- Other lessons highlight the issue of bullying and reinforce this message by developing social skills and by teaching moral and spiritual values that show bullying to be unacceptable
- All our pupils are encouraged to tell any member of staff at once if they are being bullied, or if they know or suspect that bullying is taking place
- The School buildings have displays of information on where pupils can seek help
- The School does not tolerate peer-group "initiation ceremonies" or hazing rituals designed to cause pain, anxiety or humiliation to pupils, and all staff remain alert to such actions.

Staff

- The School will ensure that all School staff understand the principles of the School's policy, the School's legal responsibilities, actions to be taken to resolve and prevent incidents of bullying from arising or escalating and also details of sources of further support
- The School recognises that certain children may be more at risk of bullying than others and may require additional support when dealing with an incident of bullying, for example children with SEND and LGBT pupils. The School will ensure that staff receive appropriate training to be able to understand the specific needs of our pupils, and to enable all staff to provide an inclusive environment for all pupils
- All reported incidents are recorded and investigated at once. We always monitor reported incidents. Records of any incidents are kept securely on CPOMS by the Pastoral Lead, in order that patterns of behaviour can be identified and monitored
- Our pastoral team gives support and guidance to other staff on handling and reporting incidents, and on the follow-up work with both victims and bullies.
- The School has the right, and duty, to investigate incidents of bullying involving our pupils which take place outside School hours, on School visits and trips, or that otherwise occur outside of School. The School has the right to take disciplinary measures in respect of such incidents. Disciplinary measures will be taken in accordance with the EIFA Behaviour Management Policy and will be applied in a fair, consistent and reasonable manner, taking into account the needs of SEN and vulnerable pupils; and
- Staff will always consider the motive behind bullying behaviour and whether it raises any concerns for the welfare of the perpetrator. If staff reasonably suspect that a pupil may be suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, they should follow the procedures set out in the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and discuss their concerns with the School's Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) without delay.

Parents

- This policy is readily available on the School's website, Parent Portal or in hard copy on request, so that parents/guardians are clear on the School's approach to bullying and what to do if their child experiences bullying
- We encourage close contact between the School and parents/guardians, and will always make contact if we are worried about a pupil's wellbeing
- If parents know or suspect that their child, or another pupil, is being bullied, they should contact the School without delay. All concerns will be taken seriously; and
- We welcome feedback from parents and guardians on the effectiveness of our preventative measures and all other aspects and implementation of this anti-bullying policy.

6. PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH REPORTED BULLYING

The School ensures that all instances of, or concerns about bullying and cyber-bullying, both on and away from School premises are easy to report and that they are recorded properly. Records of instances of bullying and allegations of bullying will be kept file by the Pastoral Lead. Records will also be kept on files relating to safeguarding where appropriate, in order to enable the School to identify patterns of behaviour and to evaluate the effectiveness of this anti-bullying policy.

The School recognises that pupils are likely to report bullying to someone they trust: this could be any member of staff. All staff will be trained in handling an allegation Staff will listen to the pupil, avoid leading questions, make a clear and contemporaneous record of the concern, and consider whether the matter raises safeguarding concerns. Any safeguarding concern will be referred to the DSL without delay in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Staff will be aware that they must listen to the pupil, not ask leading questions and make a written record of the allegation to the best of their ability.

If an incident of bullying is reported, the following procedure will be adopted:

1. The member of staff to whom the incident was reported, or who first discovers the situation, will control the situation (the "Case Handler"), and will reassure and support the pupils involved, without promising absolute confidentiality
2. The Case Handler will inform an appropriate member of the School's senior leadership about the bullying allegation as soon as possible
3. The victim and the alleged perpetrator/s will each be interviewed individually by the Case Handler on his/ her own (or, if appropriate, with a suitable person present for support)
4. Where the Case Handler considers that the reported bullying behaviour may be criminal, or considers that there may be a risk of harm to someone, the Case Handler will discuss this with the Head of School, and will report the matter to the Police without delay if considered necessary
5. The incident(s) should be recorded on CPOMS by the Case Handler. It should then be given to the Pastoral Lead who is responsible for securely storing all records of bullying and other serious disciplinary offences. If it is not practicable to use the incident form, the incident must still be written down, signed and dated by the Case Handler, and held securely by the Pastoral Lead
6. The Pastoral Lead will inform the class teachers/form tutors of both the alleged perpetrator(s) and the victim(s) as soon as possible. In very serious incidents, the Head of School should be informed; The DSLs may also be informed.
7. The victim will be interviewed again at a later stage by a member of the pastoral team, separately from the alleged perpetrator(s). He/ she will be offered support to develop a strategy to help him or herself. It will be made clear to him/ her why revenge or retaliation is inappropriate
8. The perpetrator(s) will be interviewed again at a later stage by a member of the pastoral team, or the DSL, separately from the victim, and it will be made clear why his/ her behaviour was inappropriate and caused distress. He/ she will be offered guidance on modifying his or her behaviour. The EIFA Behaviour Management Policy may also be invoked. Sanctions under the EIFA Behaviour Policy might include, for example, detention and withdrawal of privileges. The School may exclude a pupil, either temporarily or permanently, in cases of serious or persistent bullying, or in the event that the support put in place for the perpetrator(s) does not result in the modification of behaviour to an acceptable level; the DSL may make a referral to the Local authority if the bullying meets their thresholds
9. The parents/guardians of all parties will be informed and may be invited into School to discuss the matter, and the appropriate sanctions under the EIFA Behaviour Policy. The parents' support will be sought in respect of preventative measures, and any concerns of either party will be addressed
10. A way forward, including where appropriate disciplinary sanctions and support for the perpetrator(s), should be determined, and where possible agreed with all parties. This should recognise that suitable support may be needed by the pupils who are being bullied, and also by the pupils who bully others, as well as dealing with disciplinary measures in accordance with the EIFA Behaviour Policy if appropriate
11. As part of this process, a meeting involving all the parties, with close staff supervision, may be convened to help develop a strategy which enables all concerned to close the episode
12. A monitoring and review strategy will be put in place and put on record
13. In very serious cases, and only after the Head of School has been involved, it may be necessary to make a report to the Police, the DSL or to Children's Services. However, in many cases it will be possible to resolve such issues internally under this policy and the EIFA Behaviour Policy.

7. CYBER-BULLYING

Cyberbullying is bullying or other harmful behaviour carried out through digital technologies, including online platforms, social media, messaging services, gaming platforms, email and the sharing of images, videos or other digital content. Cyberbullying may take place inside or outside School and at any time of day.

Cyberbullying may involve texts, instant messages, calls, social media, gaming platforms, online communities, email, image or video-sharing services, or other digital platforms. It may include threatening, abusive, discriminatory, sexual, offensive or humiliating communications; impersonation; exclusion; publication of private information or images; or encouraging others to participate in harmful behaviour.”

The School acknowledges that cyber-bullying may take many different forms including: cyber-stalking, exclusion or peer rejection, impersonation, unauthorised publication of private information or images, encouraging derogatory comments on online platforms, upskirting and sexting.

The School has regard to current Department for Education guidance and statutory safeguarding requirements relating to online safety and will provide pupils with the knowledge and behaviours needed to use digital technologies safely and responsibly.

Prevention of cyber-bullying

For the prevention of cyber-bullying, in addition to the measures described above, the School:

- Expects all pupils to adhere to its Acceptable use of IT and Social Media Policy. Certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and our IT Department monitors pupils' use
- May impose disciplinary sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse, of the internet
- Issues all Middle School pupils with their own personal School email address and discourages the use of personal email sites from School computers and tablets inside the School
- Offers guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and cyber-bullying in PSHE lessons, which covers blocking, removing contacts from "friend" lists and sharing their personal data
- Ensures its pupils are aware of the various forms in which cyber-bullying can take place, that it can have severe and distressing consequences, and that participation in cyber-bullying will not be tolerated
- Offers guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details private and secure
- Does not allow the use of mobile phones in classrooms, public areas of the School, or where they may cause annoyance, humiliation or distress to others
- Does not allow the use of cameras/ mobile phone cameras in toilets, washing and changing areas.

Procedures for dealing with cyber-bullying

The School will follow the procedures set out in this policy and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, where relevant, for incidents of cyber-bullying. The School will take such disciplinary action that is considered reasonable in the circumstances, with a view to regulating pupil conduct and protecting the reputation of the School, and the welfare of its pupils.

Although cyber-bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws that may apply to communications of a harassing or threatening manner or the unauthorised publication of private images, upskirting and sexting. Where the School considers that a reported incident of cyber-bullying may amount to a criminal offence, it will inform the Police.

Electronic devices

Where an allegation of cyberbullying involves an electronic device, the School may search, confiscate or examine the device, where permitted by law and in accordance with the EIFA Behaviour Management Policy and applicable Department for Education guidance. Any search or examination will be carried out only where there are appropriate grounds and by an authorised member of staff. The School will keep an appropriate record of searches and any action taken.

If, following a search, the member of staff determines that the device does not contain any evidence in relation to an offence, or are advised by the Police following a report to them that they will not take any further action to investigate an alleged offence, the School can decide whether it is appropriate to delete any files or data from the device, and may retain the device as evidence of a breach of this policy. The School may then take steps to discipline the pupil in accordance with the EIFA Behaviour Management Policy, where appropriate.

In the event that the search highlights a safeguarding concern in respect of any pupil, the School will follow the procedures set out in the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

The School will keep a record of all searches carried out, including the results of any search, and the actions taken following that search.

8. EARLY YEARS CHILDREN

The School's youngest children are also encouraged to behave towards each other with kindness and consideration. They are encouraged to learn to look after their own possessions and to respect others' possessions. We expect them to be honest, helpful and polite, and to work hard and to listen to others. They should respect everyone and learn to value differences and diversity. The Director of Studies, Early Years is in charge of the management of behaviour in the Early Years setting.

We explain to our Early Years children why some forms of behaviour are unacceptable and hurtful to others. Behaviour in the Early Years setting will be managed in an age- and developmentally appropriate manner. Staff will explain why behaviour is hurtful or unacceptable, support children to develop appropriate ways of interacting with others and take proportionate action where necessary. Where behaviour is repeated, serious or raises safeguarding concerns, the matter will be discussed with the Head of Early Years and, where appropriate, the DSL, and parents/carers will be involved.

Parents are always informed when any sanction or reproof is needed towards their child, and in cases of repeated instances of hurtful or inappropriate behaviour, parents will be invited into the School to discuss the situation with the child's teacher and the Director of Studies, Early Years, to agree on a joint way of handling the difficulty.

9. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Parents and pupils are encouraged to use our Complaints Procedure (which is published on our website) if they feel that any concerns about bullying (or anything else) are not being addressed properly. Parents of Early Years children should be aware that they have the right to refer a complaint directly to Ofsted, if they are unhappy with the way in which their complaint has been handled (the Complaints Procedure explains how to complain to Ofsted).

10. MONITORING AND REVIEW

The School will record all reported bullying incidents and relevant allegations in accordance with this policy. Records will be reviewed to identify patterns and trends, including repeat incidents, locations, times, year groups, types of bullying, online and offline behaviour, protected characteristics, SEND and vulnerability, and repeat involvement of particular pupils.

The Head of School or a designated member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will review all incidents of reported bullying to help identify patterns of behaviour, so that the School can take appropriate steps to address bullying behaviours within the School. The review will also consider the effectiveness of preventative measures, interventions and support provided, and whether changes are required to supervision, staff training, curriculum provision, pastoral support or other School arrangements.”

Records of bullying incidents will also be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the School's anti-bullying procedures, and to highlight any necessary amendments.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where required by changes in legislation, statutory guidance, inspection requirements or School practice. The review will take account of incident data, identified patterns and trends, pupil voice, staff feedback and, where appropriate, parent/carers feedback.