

ANTI-BULLYING AT SCHOOL POLICY

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1. Responsibility of the DISD

The guiding principle of the German International School Dubai is that each individual from the school community recognises the basic principles of respectful and peaceful togetherness and assumes responsibility for this in his or her area. Particularly in view of the intercultural environment it is indispensable that tolerance is shown in terms of ethnic origin, religion, social background, talents, sex, etc. in order to create a positive and harmonious school climate.

The DISD creates a caring, friendly and safe environment for the entire school community so that the pupils are able to learn in a relaxed and safe atmosphere. We are of the opinion that it is the indispensable personal right of each person to feel safe at school and be protected against repeated degradations and humiliations through bullying.

Our school rejects any form of bullying. However, should cases of bullying become apparent, all those concerned should know that the school will react to such incidents promptly and effectively. Our school will not turn a blind eye. We expect that each individual who becomes aware of bullying shall report this to the teaching staff.

2. The aim of this statute is:

1. To prevent all kinds of unacceptable behaviour such as bullying and to prevent this continuing from the very beginning.
2. To resolutely counteract unacceptable behavior. Broken rules will result in clear consequences.
3. To protect the victim and to offer the victim support.

4. To correct the misconduct of the culprit with pedagogical, educational and ultimately proper educational measures.

3. Definition

Bullying means verbal abuse, wearing people down, systematically tormenting and victimising other people in institutions such as schools or in the workplace. The following traits are examples of bullying:

- A conflict between two or more pupils has become entrenched.
- There is an imbalance of strengths between the victim and the culprit (or the group of culprits) that could refer to physical or mental strengths. The victimised pupil has a weaker position in the overall structure of the group. It is not bullying when two equally strong pupils have a dispute with each other.
- The victim is systematically and consciously attacked, mentally or physically, by individual group members over a longer period. The victim receives no help and cannot solve the problematic situation alone.

The passive mental bullying acts include:

- Ignore the victims.
- Speak badly about the victim, behind their backs.
- Spread rumours and lies about the victim.
- Unfriendly behaviour towards the victim.
- Squealing on the victims to teachers and parents.
- Threat of violence.

Active physical bullying activities include:

- Physical violence in varying degrees.
- Blackmailing protection money.
- Theft or damage of objects belonging to the victim.

Bullying also include cases such as:

- **Cyber bullying:** hostile hateful slogans are sent via various media. The aim is often to slur the reputation of the person concerned. Provocative comments and image materials are put on websites.
- **Racist and religious bullying:** a child is excluded and marginalised by the group due to his or her skin colour, ethnic background, culture, relation or country of origin.
- **Disabled bullying:** children with a physical or mental disability or children with learning difficulties are insulted, avoided, made fun of or shoved around.

4. Anti-bullying rules

1. *We do not bully anybody else. We do not accept bullying and do not tolerate any aggressive behaviour.*
2. *We try to help everybody who is being bullied.*
3. *We try to integrate everybody who has been excluded.*
4. *If we are aware of somebody being bullied, we tell an adult at school or at home about this.*

5. Prevention

The school's mission statement, according to which each individual from the school community recognises the basic principles of respect and peaceful togetherness and assumes responsibility for this in his or her area, will be continuously communicated and its full adherence demanded. A positive school climate is based on the basic values of tolerance and respect and should be reflected in all school activities.

All adults in the school environment hold positions of authority. It is therefore expected of them that they behave like positive examples. They are actively involved in guaranteeing a pleasant school environment for the pupils.

The entire teaching staff is very vigilant in the classroom and during supervision to detect signs of bullying at an early stage. The entire teaching staff is called upon to address cases of bullying directly and not to ignore them.

The class teachers and subject teachers shall create an environment that enables the pupils to speak openly or individually about bullying. They shall react sensitively to potential bullying. They are open for confidential discussions with the children and young people.

The orientation lesson or project days can help to bring about discussions and work through topics like conflict management, dealing with attacks and tolerance. Through role-play or theatre, film, literature and graphic images, the topic of bullying can be dealt with and illustrated. In IT lessons the topic of the safer use of the Internet and misuse of social networks such as Facebook can be made a topic of discussion for bullying attacks.

The school management and the board shall assume the superordinate responsibility for the bullying guidelines and their implementation.

In the school year 2019-2020 Antibullying Team was formed in DISD. The school psychologist is responsible for the team and its tasks. It consists of students of Grades 10,11 and 12. The peers in the team are there so that the students can talk to them if they have problems with some other student in the school.

Antibullying Team is there to show empathy and support to the students with a problem and to report the case to the further instance.

6. Approach

Teachers and other authorised persons are expected to report any kind of bullying or aggressive behaviour to the class teacher, the school counsellor or the principal (in accordance with the Appendix to the School Regulations II).

If clear information is available on the victim and culprit, the DISD will apply the "Farsta Method". The sequence of steps is described in detail here:

1. If the school becomes aware of an incident of bullying, a joint school workgroup will discuss about how to intervene. Has there been a case of bullying and who is the culprit? Who will work on the case? Initial information shall be collected from the informer.
2. **The contact with the person being bullied will be made through teachers or informers**, attention is to be paid to observing anonymity, nobody is allowed to find out about the subsequent discussion in order to protect the victim and to avoid giving advance warning to the bullying pupils. In the initial talk the exact occurrence will be carefully reconstructed:
 - What happened? How often did it happen? Who did what when and where?
 - Who is the victim and who is the culprit? Who are the hangers-on?
 - Possibly have the victim keep a bullying diary, if necessary.

The victim is to be given assurance and safety.

The colleagues working on the case shall subsequently decide whether and how the parents should be involved (e.g. imperative in cases of repeat offenders, arrange consultation meetings)

3. **An appointment for the meetings with the culprits will be arranged**, at which all bullies in the school should be present. The subject teachers from whose lesson the pupils were taken have to be informed.

The culprits will be surprisingly taken out of the lesson individually without prior announcement. The meeting will last only five to ten minutes and should be conducted calmly and objectively without moralising or asking why (minutes sheet). The culprits will be told that the school is aware of them bullying, that this is viewed seriously, that the school will not tolerate their behaviour and that the bullying must stop.

It will also be announced that the meetings will be continued on the following day. The culprits trying to justify their behaviour will be ignored.

4. The meetings of only five to ten minutes will be continued. Gradually they will be about how the victim can be helped to improve his or her social situation. The aim is therefore, going beyond ending the harassment, for the bullies to learn to work together with the current victims.

The culprits are to be recruited as cooperation partners for preventative and intervening work. The culprits will be granted a probation period.

When they return to the classroom they do not need to say anything as to why they were taken to the meeting. The contents of the meeting are unknown, reintegration is therefore not prevented.

In addition, there will be a further meeting with the victim of bullying, increased supervision of the concerned class and observation as to whether the victim can be reintegrated.

After a few weeks there will be a final meeting.

If the bullying has not stopped, the school management invites the parents of the bullying to a meeting. Together they are looking for a solution to end the bullying. Part of the solution could be counselling sessions of the bullying person/s with the school management or a change of the bullying person/s into the parallel class.

In addition, the DISD offers school counselling for affected pupils and parents: help in restoring the victim's self-confidence and assuring the pupil that he or she is protected at school. Helping the victim dealing with bullying situations. Supporting the bully in reflecting on the cause of his or her behaviour. Helping the parents regarding educational issues.

Sources for the Farsta method:

- Horst Kasper: "Schülermobbing - tun wir was dagegen!" AOL-publisher (Bullying pupils – let's do something about it!)
- Mustafa Jannan: Das Anti-Mobbing-Buch, Beltz publisher 2010 (The anti-bullying book)
- http://www.berlin.de/imperia/md/content/senbildung/hilfe_und_praevention/gewaltpraevention/anti_mobbing_fibel.pdf

The German text shall prevail in case of ambiguities or in other cases where there is doubt or where there are problems of interpretation.

Discussion sheet on the Farsta method

Name of the person questioned: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Do you know what we want to speak to you about?

(Wait and don't be fooled.)

_____ has "difficulties". Do you know what about?

(Name of the victim)

(Use small insecurities and keep digging, remain purposeful.)

Leaf through papers and confront:

We know that you are involved. On you did the following:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

(Don't permit any discussion! Don't accept any justifications!)

That sounds bad. Nevertheless: What you are doing is intentionally attacking the mental health of

This is no longer harmless, this is BULLYING! And we do not tolerate anything like this! Not today and not in the future either!"

What can you contribute towards stoppingbeing bullied?

(ask about own responsibility, obtain and record concessions.)

What can you do when you see somebody else bullying?

(Note and convey the attitude that you would like to recruit the culprit as a cooperation partner.)

We will observe you _____ for a long time. We will also speak with the others who are involved. (period)

Then we will have a discussion once again with you all.

Are you in agreement with this?

The culprit must not say in the class why he or she had to go to a meeting.

Source: Bettina Schubert: Verlässliches Miteinander, BIL 2000, S.17ff (Reliable Togetherness)