



BRIGHT RIDERS SCHOOL ABU DHABI

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

1. Introduction

Bright Riders School is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for all. Bullying in any form is unacceptable as it harms wellbeing, dignity, learning, and peer relationships. The school enforces a zero-tolerance approach and addresses incidents through formal reporting, safeguarding, and restorative action. Equal emphasis is placed on prevention and promoting positive, prosocial behaviours such as empathy, cooperation, respect, and responsible decision-making, supported by shared accountability among staff, students, and parents.

All members of the school community are entitled to:

- **Safety and Protection:** Freedom from bullying, harassment, intimidation, or any behaviour that threatens physical or psychological wellbeing.
- **Dignity and Respect:** Recognition of personal boundaries, individuality, and opinions at all times.
- **Equitable Participation:** Full engagement in educational and extracurricular activities without fear of exclusion, victimization, or retaliation.
- **Access to Support:** Prompt, confidential access to support, guidance, and intervention through the school's established reporting, safeguarding, and restorative procedures.
- **Positive and Inclusive Culture:** Participation in a learning environment that actively fosters prosocial behaviour, empathy, cooperation, and mutual respect.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Promote a culture of kindness, inclusion, and respect.
- Prevent all forms of bullying, whether physical, verbal, social, psychological, or cyber-based.
- Ensure that all incidents of bullying are reported, investigated, and addressed promptly.
- Support both the victim and the perpetrator through appropriate interventions.
- Engage all stakeholders - students, staff, and parents - in maintaining a positive school climate.

3. Definition of Bullying

Bullying is defined as intentional, repeated, and harmful behaviour directed towards an individual or group that causes physical, emotional, or psychological harm. It involves an imbalance of power and can take many forms, including:

- **Physical:** Hitting, pushing, kicking, or damaging personal property.
- **Verbal:** Name-calling, teasing, threats, or offensive remarks.
- **Social/Relational:** Exclusion, spreading rumours, or encouraging others to isolate someone.
- **Cyberbullying:** Use of digital platforms (e.g., social media, messaging apps) to harass, threaten, or embarrass others.

Type of Bullying	Direct	Indirect
Emotional / Relational	Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, manipulating others to cause emotional distress, forming coalitions against someone.	Persuading peers to exclude someone, spreading rumours, social isolation tactics.
Physical	Hitting, kicking, pushing, taking or hiding belongings, using a weapon, throwing objects.	Encouraging another person to assault someone.
Verbal	Name-calling, verbal insults, sarcasm, unfair criticism.	Spreading rumours, persuading others to insult or criticise, anonymous messages or emails.
Gestural / Non-verbal	Threatening or obscene gestures, menacing stares.	Deliberately turning away or averting gaze to ignore someone.
Prejudice-based / Discriminatory	Taunts, gestures, graffiti, or physical abuse targeting racial, faith-based, gendered, or disability characteristics.	Persuading others to exclude or ridicule based on these characteristics, spreading targeted rumours.

4. Levels of Bullying

Bullying incidents are classified according to both the type of behaviour and its severity, to ensure that responses are proportionate, consistent, and effective. Severity is determined by the nature, duration, and frequency of the bullying act.

Low level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involves infrequent or unintentional teasing, name-calling, or minor social exclusion. • May be unpleasant or cause mild distress. • Generally, does not cause physical harm. • Represents the majority of bullying incidents. 	Involves occasional jokes, infrequent name-calling, brief social exclusion, or minor teasing
Moderate level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involves repeated and deliberate harassment over a period of time. • May include continual teasing, ongoing social exclusion, minor threats, or mild physical actions. • Causes emotional distress and begins to noticeably affect the student's wellbeing. 	May include persistent teasing, ongoing social exclusion, minor physical aggression such as pushing or tripping, or repeated verbal threats

<p>High Level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involves sustained and severe harassment over time • May include serious physical assault or persistent non-physical bullying • Causes significant psychological or emotional harm 	<p>May include serious physical harm, repeated verbal abuse, cyber-bullying causing emotional distress, targeted intimidation, or threats to safety</p>
--------------------------	--	---

5. Recognizing Signs of Bullying Risk

All members of the school community - staff, parents, and support staff - share the responsibility for early identification of possible bullying indicators. In line with ADEK student protection and wellbeing, the following observable changes may signal that a student could be experiencing peer victimization or social harm and should be referred through the school's reporting and safeguarding pathway for timely review and support.

A student may be at risk if he or she:

- Frequently presents with damaged personal items such as torn clothing, broken materials, or missing belongings without a clear explanation.
- Shows unexplained physical marks or minor injuries such as cuts, bruises, or scratches.
- Demonstrates ongoing social isolation or reports having limited or no peer connections.
- Displays reluctance or distress related to attending school, traveling to and from school, using school transport, or participating in group or co-curricular activities.
- Shows a sudden decline in academic engagement, classroom participation, or overall performance.
- Appears emotionally distressed after school, including persistent sadness, tearfulness, irritability, or withdrawal.
- Reports repeated psychosomatic complaints (for example headaches or stomach discomfort) without confirmed medical cause.
- Experiences sleep disturbance, frequent nightmares, or fatigue linked to school days.
- Exhibits noticeable changes in eating patterns or appetite.
- Presents increased anxiety, reduced confidence, or negative self-perception.

Any such indicators must be documented and escalated to the designated safeguarding lead or pastoral care team. Concerns should be addressed through established anti-bullying reporting, investigation, protection, and restorative response procedures.

6. Reporting Bullying

All members of the school community are encouraged to report bullying. Reports can be made:

- Directly to a **teacher, school counsellor, or section head**.
- Through **anonymous reporting boxes**
- By **parents** via communication through the school portal or direct contact.

All reports will be taken seriously, documented, and investigated confidentially and sensitively.

Investigation Process

Once a bullying incident is reported:

1. The school counsellor or assigned staff member will conduct a preliminary review.
2. Statements will be gathered from the victim, the alleged perpetrator, and any witnesses.
3. The matter will be assessed according to the **severity and frequency** of the behaviour.
4. Parents of both parties will be informed (where appropriate), and a plan of action will be implemented based **on the Behaviour policy**.

Disciplinary and Support Measures

For Students Found Engaging in Bullying:

- Verbal warning and counselling
- Parent meeting and behaviour contract
- Loss of privileges or participation in school events
- Detention or internal suspension
- In severe or repeated cases, external suspension or escalation in line with the School Student behaviour Policy

For Victims of Bullying:

- Counselling and emotional support
- Safe space and supervision during breaks (if needed)
- Ongoing monitoring and follow-up by staff

Restorative Practices:

Where appropriate, restorative approaches will be used to rebuild relationships and foster understanding between students.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is treated with the same level of seriousness as in-person bullying. The school will:

- Educate students on **digital citizenship** and safe online behaviour.
- Monitor and address online behaviour that impacts students' wellbeing or the school environment.
- Take necessary disciplinary action in line with the **Digital Policy and School Student Behaviour Policy**.

7. Prevention and Education

Bright Riders School takes a proactive approach to bullying prevention through the following measures:

- **Awareness Programs:** Regular assemblies, workshops, and activities that promote empathy, respect, and kindness.
- **Social and Emotional Learning (SEL):** Integration of SEL into the curriculum to help students build emotional intelligence and conflict resolution skills.
- **Student Pledges and Campaigns:** Initiatives such as Anti-Bullying Week and student-led pledges against bullying.

- **Parental Engagement:** Information sessions and resources provided to parents to raise awareness and foster open communication at home.
- **Staff Training:** Regular training for teachers and staff on identifying signs of bullying and responding appropriately.

8. Roles & Responsibilities

Role of Students

- Demonstrate respectful, responsible, and cooperative behaviour at all times.
- Use healthy and constructive ways to handle disagreements and conflicts.
- Actively engage in well-being activities, moral education, and other school programmes that build empathy, kindness, responsibility, and resilience.
- Refrain completely from any behaviour that may be considered bullying in any form.
- Reach out to a trusted adult and/or the school counsellor whenever there is a concern or uncomfortable situation.

If You Are Being Bullied: The High 5 Approach

Students are encouraged to respond to bullying using the High 5 strategy, which provides simple, safe, and effective steps:

1. **Ignore** – Stay calm and do not respond to the bully's remarks or actions.
2. **Walk Away** – Remove yourself from the situation to stay safe.
3. **Talk Friendly** – Use polite, non-confrontational words if you choose to speak.
4. **Talk Firmly** – Clearly tell the person to stop in a confident and respectful way.
5. **Report** – Inform a teacher, counselor, or another trusted adult so that support can be provided.

Remember: It is never your fault if someone bullies you, and asking for help is always the right choice.

If You Witness Bullying

- Do not participate in or encourage the behaviour by watching or reacting. Seek help.
- Do not spread stories or rumours - stop the chain.
- Support the targeted student if it is safe to do so.
- Inform a teacher or school adult so timely action can be taken.
- Encourage the affected student to report the incident; offer to accompany them.
- Show care and check in - simple support can make a significant difference.

Role of the School

- Promote positive peer relationships and explicitly teach constructive conflict-resolution skills.
- Implement and consistently apply clear anti-bullying guidelines and response protocols.
- Reinforce a zero-tolerance stance toward bullying through campaigns, awareness drives, workshops, and student programmes.

Procedure for Teachers and School Administrators

- Create a classroom culture built on safety, trust, and mutual respect.
- Treat every report or indication of bullying seriously and intervene early. Maintain documented anecdotal records of concerns.
- Report incidents to the Discipline Officer, Head of Phase, and School Counsellor.
- Inform parents of both the affected student and the student displaying bullying behaviour.
- The counsellor works with the student responsible for bullying to build insight, accountability, and empathy, while supporting and empowering the affected student.

Role of Parents

- Teach children to resolve conflicts peacefully and respectfully.
- Build confidence and self-worth so children can speak up appropriately.
- Maintain regular, open conversations about school life, friendships, and concerns.
- Treat any sign of bullying seriously and respond promptly.
- Intervene and report when bullying behaviour is observed, regardless of who is involved.
- Encourage helping behaviours, kindness, and social responsibility.
- Take a balanced approach - neither overprotect nor leave the child to manage alone.
- Actively support the school's anti-bullying initiatives and programmes.

Review and Compliance

This policy will be reviewed annually or as needed, in line with ADEK updates or school community feedback. Non-compliance with this policy will be subject to disciplinary measures as per **Federal Law** and **ADEK regulations**.

Approved By:

Rachna Prakash
Principal
Bright Riders School- Abu Dhabi

Next Review: AY 2026-2027

