

Anti-Bullying Policy

POLICY ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Title:	(Anti-Bullying Policy)
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Date of Last Review:	(June 2023)
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Committee:	(Leadership)
Leadership Lead:	Assistant Principals - Elementary and Secondary (Student Support & Welfare)
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RATIONALE

At Gems World Academy (GWA) we aim to create a caring, safe and nurturing environment that promotes mutual respect and trust. We recognize that all forms of bullying, especially if left unaddressed can have a devastating effect on individuals, can create barriers to learning and have serious consequences on mental wellbeing. By effectively preventing and tackling bullying we can help to create a safe and disciplined environment where students are able to learn and fulfill their potential.

This policy applies to all forms of bullying and outlines the ways we will aim to keep the students at GWA safe, secure and successful. This is done by:

- Protecting students from bullying to provide a caring, safe and nurturing environment;
- Identify all signs of bullying and taking pre-emptive, prompt and appropriate action to stop it;
- Implementing clear and robust systems for responding to any incidents of bullying;
- Developing confidence in students to stand up against bullying and to report any incidents.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through deliberate, repeated and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others. It can happen face to face or online. Bullying is not single episodes of social rejection or dislike; single acts of nastiness; random acts of aggression or intimidation; disagreements or fights. These actions can cause great distress; however, they do not fit the definition of bullying unless they are being deliberately and repeatedly done.

Bullying can include name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments; kicking; hitting; taking belongings; producing offensive graffiti; gossiping; excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours. This includes the same unacceptable behaviours expressed online, referred to as cyberbullying. This can include: sending offensive, upsetting and inappropriate messages by phone, text, instant messenger, through gaming, websites, social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading photos or videos.

Bullying is recognised by the school as being a form of peer on peer abuse. It can be emotionally abusive and can cause severe and adverse effects on children's emotional development. Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types and forms of bullying including:

- Bullying related to physical appearance;
- Bullying related to physical/mental health conditions/Special Education Needs or Disabilities;
- Physical bullying;
- Emotional bullying;
- Bullying via technology, known as online or cyberbullying;
- Prejudicial bullying.

CYBERBULLYING

Cyberbullying (online bullying) refers to bullying by electronic media and included sending, posting or sharing negative, headful, false or mean content about someone else. It can include sharing personal or private information about someone else causing embarrassment or humiliation.

The most common places where cyberbullying occurs are:

- Social media sites, such as Facebook, Snapchat, TikTok, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube etc. (including hijacking/cloning and catfishing)

- Text messaging and messaging through apps/instant messaging/chats
- Online forums, chat rooms and message boards
- Email
- Online gaming communities
- The use of mobile phone cameras to cause distress, fear or humiliation

Cyberbullying can include:

- Intimidation and threats
- Harassment and stalking
- Vilification or defamation
- Exclusion/ peer rejection
- Impersonation
- Doxing (posting personal information about online without their permission)

While technology does not cause bullying, it may be used by people who would not necessarily bully others face to face. The perceived anonymity of some online activities, or rude or offensive behaviours due to the physical and emotional distance between people using technology, may mean that the person bullying will do things that they would not do in person. If you believe you or someone else is the victim of cyberbullying, you must speak to an adult as soon as possible. Students should never respond to messages or posts that are suggestive, indecent, aggressive, threatening or make them feel uncomfortable. These messages should be reported to the relevant Grade Leader or a member of SLT. It is vital that parents and GWA work together to ensure that all pupils are aware of the serious consequences of getting involved in anything that might be seen to be cyberbullying.

RESPONDING TO BULLYING

Under no circumstances will we tolerate any form of bullying and all incidents of bullying will be dealt promptly and effectively for the wellbeing of all students. We apply strong discipline measures to students who participate in bullying in order to show clearly that the behaviour is wrong. Disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably taking into accounts the individual circumstances of those involved. It is also important to consider the motivations behind the bullying behaviours and address these too.

Some of the following steps may be taken when dealing with allegations and incidents of bullying, including those inside and outside of the school hours/building:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be fully investigated and dealt with immediately by the relevant Grade Leader and Counsellor under the supervision of the Assistant Principal/Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL);
- The DSL will be informed of all bullying issues where there are safeguarding concerns;
- Appropriate support is provided to the student being bullied to work on restoring self-esteem and confidence (with the student support network of Advisor, Grade Leader and Counsellor);
- The school will speak with and inform other members of staff (if appropriate) to inform them and to be vigilant of any recurrences;
- Disciplinary outcomes and action taken (in line with GWA's behaviour policy) will be communicated to the parents/caregivers that is in line with child protection and confidentiality guidelines;
- If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved;
- Collaboration with other schools if bullying cross schools;

- Clear and precise accounts of all bullying allegations and incidents are recorded and stored on student files;
- Appropriate restorative actions are provided to repair the damage between students and help the bully learn from their mistakes and change their attitudes to prevent repeat behaviour.

PREVENTING BULLYING

The whole school community will:

- Create and support an inclusive environment that promotes culture of mutual respect, consideration and care for others
- Recognize that bullying can be carried out or experienced by anyone;
- Recognize that some students may be vulnerable to bullying and have strategies and interventions in place to protect;
- Actively create “safe spaces” for vulnerable students;
- Implement appropriate disciplinary sanctions; the consequences of bullying will reflect the seriousness of the incident, so that others see that bullying is unacceptable;
- Use a variety of techniques to resolve the issues between those who bully, and those who have been bullied;
- Train all staff, including: teaching staff, support staff (e.g. administration staff, lunchtime support staff and site support staff) and pastoral staff, to identify all forms of bullying and take;
- Integrate a range of opportunities and approaches for addressing bullying throughout the curriculum and other activities, such as: Advisory curriculum, through displays, assemblies, peer support, the student Grade council, Guest Speakers and workshops;
- Ensure Anti-Bullying has a high profile throughout the year, reinforced through key opportunities such as Anti-Bullying week and through student Anti-Bullying Ambassadors
- Provide systematic opportunities to develop pupils’ social and emotional skills, including building their resilience and self-esteem.
- Consistent approach to monitoring bullying incidents to identify and target any patterns emerging.

INVOLVEMENT OF STUDENTS

Students will be consulted during policy writing and decision making, to ensure that they understand the school’s approach and are clear about the role they play in preventing bullying. Their views on the extent of bullying will be collated to ensure we always have an updated understanding of the extent and scope of bullying and to ensure that students are aware how they can express their anxieties. It is important that students are aware of the strict sanctions that may be applied against those engaging in bullying and take an active role in learning from any poor choices to prevent repeat occurrences. All students are expected to participate in Anti-Bullying campaigns and the opportunities offered throughout the Advisory curriculum.

INVOLVEMENT AND LIAISON WITH PARENTS/CAREGIVERS

Parents and caregivers have a large part to play in working together to support our Zero Tolerance expectations regarding all forms of bullying and will be given opportunities to be involved in developing policies and procedures. Key information about bullying (including policies and named

points of contact) is available to parents/caregivers in a variety of formats with the relevant points of contact to raise concerns.

MONITORING AND REVIEW: PUTTING POLICY INTO PRACTICE

At GWA we will ensure that we regularly monitor and evaluate our strategies and systems to ensure that the policy is being consistently applied and any issues will be incorporated into the school's action planning. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be informed of all bullying concerns and oversee the investigations and outcomes.