ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

2023-2024

1. Objectives

The primary objectives of this policy are to prevent bullying and to equip staff and students with effective strategies for addressing any incidents that may arise. Beaconhouse Private School (BPS) Al Ain is committed to fostering an environment where students can grow and thrive without fear. Every student has the right to feel safe within a caring and friendly atmosphere, enabling them to learn in a relaxed and secure setting. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable, and students are encouraged to report any incidents to staff, who will respond promptly, seriously, and effectively. This policy works in conjunction with the Safe Guarding Policy.

2. Policy Goals

To achieve these objectives, the school seeks to:

- Ensure students learn in a supportive, caring, and safe environment without fear of bullying.
- Raise awareness among the school community about the nature, types, causes, and effects of bullying.
- Maintain high expectations for student behavior as detailed in the school's behavior policy.
- Utilize students, staff, and parents as positive resources to eliminate bullying, using peer pressure to prevent it.
- Communicate clearly that bullying is totally unacceptable.
- Ensure everyone understands their responsibilities in addressing bullying.
- Provide regular staff training on bullying prevention and response.
- Develop effective strategies to prevent bullying.
- Provide a consistent school response to bullying incidents with clear procedures.
- Offer support for both the victim and the bully.
- Maintain a "zero tolerance" policy towards bullying.

3. Definition

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour by an individual or group that intentionally harms another individual, either physically or emotionally, typically repeated over time, making it difficult for the victim to defend themselves. It can occur both in and out of school and can have a lasting negative impact on the victim's life, affecting their ability to learn and causing emotional distress.

4. Forms of Bullying

Bullying can take various forms, including:

- Racial/Religious/Cultural: Discrimination based on background, culture, or religion.
- Sexual/Sexist: Bullying linked to gender.
- Homophobic: Bullying based on sexual orientation.
- Disability: Exploitation of a child's disability or special educational needs.
- Cyber: Bullying through technology such as the internet, mobile phones, email, social networks, text messages, and photographs.

Examples of bullying behaviour include name-calling, taunting, mocking, offensive comments, physical aggression, taking belongings, inappropriate touching, offensive graffiti, spreading rumours, and social

exclusion. It also includes coercion and harassment that violate a person's dignity or create a hostile environment.

5. Signs and Symptoms

Adults and peers should be aware of signs that may indicate a child is being bullied, including:

- Reluctance to go to school
- Frequent absences
- Unfinished or lost homework
- Changes in routine
- Anxiety, withdrawal, or lack of confidence
- Stammering
- Frequent visits to the nurse's office
- Signs of depression
- Talks of running away, self-harm, or suicide
- Nightmares or crying at night
- Feeling ill in the morning
- Decline in school performance
- Damaged clothes or books
- Missing possessions
- Unexplained injuries
- Changes in eating habits
- Aggressive or disruptive behavior
- Fear of using the internet or mobile phone
- Nervousness when receiving cyber-messages

These signs could indicate other issues, but bullying should be considered a possibility and investigated.

6. Action Against Bullying

All adults in the school community must know what to do if they suspect a child is being bullied. Strategies include:

- Observing and recognizing the signs of bullying.
- Promptly receiving and investigating reports of bullying.
- Incorporating anti-bullying topics into the curriculum.
- Using assemblies, form periods, house meetings, school council, and visiting speakers to address bullying.
- Engaging parents and maintaining close liaison to support the victim and address the bully's behaviour.
- Providing regular staff training on bullying prevention and response.
- Ensuring staff supervise areas where bullying is likely to occur.
- Promoting peer support systems and encouraging older students to mentor younger ones.
- Making the policy available on the school's website.
- Ensuring staff are familiar with and adhere to the policy.
- Raising staff awareness through training and discussions.

7. Procedures

The policy ensures the entire school community understands that bullying is not tolerated and outlines steps for prevention and response. All children have the right to feel safe.

8. Role of the Heads of Department

The Heads will be informed of bullying incidents, ensure thorough investigations, and collaborate with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) for appropriate action. They will also ensure staff receive training on bullying prevention and response.

9. Role of Staff

Staff must:

- Understand and adhere to the anti-bullying policy.
- Keep training up to date.
- Utilize curriculum and school life to address bullying.
- Follow procedures for reporting and addressing bullying incidents.
- Provide appropriate support to all parties involved.
- Liaise with the SLT and parents as necessary.

10. Disciplinary Structures:

Disciplinary measures for bullying behaviour include:

Warning: Issued to prevent potential bullying.

Stage 1: Addressing confirmed bullying behaviour with strategies to protect the victim and raise the bully's self-esteem.

Stage 2: Minimising contact between bully and victim and involving parents.

Stage 3: Temporary suspension for continued bullying.

Stage 4: Permanent exclusion for persistent bullying behaviour.

11. Information for Students

- Students should report bullying incidents to a trusted adult.
- They should support peers in distress and refrain from supporting bullying behaviour.
- Students should aim to be considerate and helpful to others.

12. Information for Parents

- Parents should look for signs of bullying in their children.
- Encourage open communication with your child.
- Reassure your child and work with the school to address bullying.
- Contact school staff for guidance if needed.

Review Date:

24 November 2023

Next Review Date:	September 2024
Principal's Approval:	
Board Of Governors:	