ANTI BULLYING POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to protect students from bullying and to respond appropriately when bullying does occur.

SCOPE

Students, parents and employees, including full-time, part-time, permanent, fixed-term and casual employees, as well as contractors, volunteers and people undertaking work experience or vocational placements

REFERENCES
- *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulations 2001 (Qld)*
- *Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth)*
- *Australian Education Regulations 2013 (Cth)*
- Australian international Islamic College Behaviour Management Policy
- Australian International Islamic College Child Protection Policy
- Australian International Islamic College Students With Disability Policy
- Australian International Islamic College Student Code of Conduct

POINT OF CONTACT

Principal

Coordinators

Approved By: College Principal	**Status:** Approved
Contact: PRINCIPAL	**Reviewed** | Bi-annually
Date Approved: May 2020	**Next Review Due:** April 2022

This policy may be updated or revised from time to time. The College will not notify you each time the Policy is changed.

POLICY STATEMENT

Australia International Islamic College has a zero-tolerance approach to bullying.

Australia International Islamic College is committed to taking action to protect students from bullying and to respond appropriately when bullying does occur.

In order to prevent bullying from occurring, Australian International Islamic College will implement the following actions:

- Raise awareness of the school community's shared understanding of what bullying is, how it impacts on people and how bullying is responded to at the school
- Develop and promote effective social skills and positive relationships amongst students

In order to respond appropriately to any incidences of bullying, Australian International Islamic College will:

- Develop an appropriate mechanism for students and parents to report bullying
- Educate students and parents on how to respond, in the first instance, to incidences of bullying, and how to then report all incidences of bullying
- Educate employees on how to appropriately respond to reports of bullying
- Investigate and act upon all reports of bullying
- Take appropriate action, which might include support for targets of bullying and perpetrators and/or disciplinary measures.

Australian International Islamic College's Student Bullying Reporting and Response Procedures explains the bullying reporting mechanism for students and parents, and details how employees will respond to reports, including that all reports will be investigated and acted upon, with appropriate support and consequences implemented.

DEFINITIONS

- **Bullying**: is a systematic and repeated abuse of power. In general bullying may be defined as:
    - o dominating or hurting someone
    - o unfair action by the perpetrator(s) and an imbalance of power
    - o a lack of adequate defense by the target and feelings of oppression and humiliation

  It can occur at any age, across cultures, genders and socioeconomic groups. It can happen in the playground, toilet areas, to and from school or in the classroom.

- **Physical bullying**: this is when a person (or group of people) uses physical actions to bully, such as hitting, poking, tripping or pushing. Repeatedly and intentionally damaging someone's belongings is also physical bullying
- **Verbal bullying**: repeated or systematic name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks and verbal abuse
- **Covert bullying**: such as lying about someone, spreading rumours, playing a nasty joke that make the person feel humiliated or powerless, mimicking or deliberately excluding someone
- **Psychological bullying**: for example, threatening, manipulating or stalking someone
- **Cyber bullying**: using technology, such as email, mobile phones, chat rooms, social networking sites to bully verbally, socially or psychologically

If bullying amounts to harm as referred to in the school's Child Protection Policy, then the matter must be dealt with under the Child Protection Policy.

WHAT BULLYING IS NOT

Bullying is different from ordinary teasing, rough-and-tumble or school yard fights. What makes it different is that the incidents are ongoing, and there is usually an imbalance of size, strength and power between the students involved. In formulating an effective approach to dealing with bullying it is helpful to note what bullying is **not.**

Bullying is not:

- **Mutual conflict** where there is an argument or disagreement between students but not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the problem. However, unresolved mutual conflict sometimes develops into a bullying situation with one person becoming targeted repeatedly for 'retaliation' in a one-sided way.
- **Social rejection or dislike**– It is not feasible to think that every student must like every other student. Refusing to play with a particular child or, for example, not inviting them to a birthday party is not bullying, provided social rejection is not directed towards someone specific and involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.
- **Single episode acts of nastiness or meanness, or random acts of aggression or intimidation.** A single episode of nastiness, physical aggression, verbal abuse or an occasional push or shove is not bullying, neither is nastiness or physical aggression directed towards many different students. The difference it that bullying is, by definition, action that happens on **more than one occasion.** However, since schools have a duty of care to provide a student with a safe and supportive school environment, single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression should not be ignored or condoned.

RESPONSIBILITIES

School Responsibilities

Australian International Islamic College acknowledges its responsibility to:

- Raise awareness of bullying and how the school will respond to it
- Take action to help prevent bullying
- Implement a reporting mechanism for students and parents
- Educate students and parents on how to respond to bullying and how to report it
- Educate employees on how to appropriately respond to bullying
- Ensure all staff are familiar with the school's anti-bullying policy and provide appropriate professional development on a regular basis, including at the time of induction of new staff members
- Ensure that all accessible areas of the school are patrolled thoroughly
- Investigate and act upon all reports of bullying, including providing appropriate support and consequences

Employee Responsibilities

At Australian International Islamic College employees have a responsibility to:

- Uphold and consistently apply this Policy
- Respond appropriately to reports of bullying, including by investigating and acting upon reports of bullying, and by providing appropriate support and consequences in accordance with the Behaviour Management Policy
- Watch for early signs of distress in students, which can be evident in <u>any</u> aspect of school life
- Educate all students regarding their responsibilities as bystanders to a bullying incident
- Ensure they do not model bullying behaviour in interactions they have with students, parents or other staff members.

Student Responsibilities

At Australian International Islamic College students have a responsibility to:

- Not engage in bullying behaviour towards others
- Report bullying occurring to them or others
- Take steps to stop bullying as directed under this policy and Behaviour Management Policy

Parent Responsibilities

Parents should:

- Watch for signs of distress in their child, such as, unwillingness to attend school, a pattern of headaches or stomach aches, equipment that has gone missing, request for extra pocket money, damaged clothing or bruising. Early contact is essential at this point.
- Take an active interest in their child's social life
- Report to the school staff if they know, or think their child is being bullies
- Keep a written record if the bullying persists: Who, What, Where and When?
- Advise their child that there is nothing wrong with them
- NOT encourage their child to hit back or respond verbally
- Ensure they do not model bullying behaviour in interactions they have with the school staff and administration

IMPLEMENTATION

The policy of the AIIC is to take a proactive approach to bullying by establishing processes to educate and inform students about bullying and procedures to follow if a student is being bullied.

All students upon entry to the AIIC and all on-going students will be educated about the College's anti-bullying guidelines as follows:

1. Year 1 and Year 7 students will be taken through a formal workshop including activities and discussions on the issue of bullying.
2. Education for all other year levels will occur through the College's Pastoral Care program and at Year Level assemblies throughout the year.

In addition:

- Parents will be included in the education process. e.g. Parents and Friends evenings and Newsletter.
- all teaching staff will be continually educated regarding bullying at our school and more importantly, what their responsibilities are; and
- a bullying audit will be conducted as necessary in Years 7 & 8, and, at least, once every two years.

The school has a 'no-blame' approach to bullying. That is, its main aim is to stop the bullying, rather than punish the perpetrator, although that does not preclude punishment if bullying persists.

For any incidents of bullying, a member of staff/senior student will deal with the problem on the spot, in order to defuse the immediate conflict. Once the immediate issues have been dealt with, the following steps should be taken:

1. *Identification.*

A student, parent or staff member reports bullying incidents/problem to a staff member or senior student who notifies a member of staff identified as a Bullying Contact Person to implement the anti-bullying program.

2. *Initial interview.*

The Contact Person interviews the victim and bully separately and records the details of the incident in writing on a standard proforma. The interviewer makes both parties aware of the bullying strategy and policy and discusses the issues surrounding the incident. The interviewer works with the students to devise strategies for conflict resolution. The interviewer attempts to reach a position where both parties are satisfied with the outcome, i.e. the victim feels secure and the bully is prepared to modify his/her behaviour in future. The victim understands that any further bullying must be reported immediately.

The strategy at this stage is not to apportion blame, or to punish; but to support the victim and make the perpetrator aware of the school policy and of the consequences if behaviour does not change.

3. *Follow-up Interview*

If the incident is repeated or the problem continues - both parties record the incident/problem in writing on a standard proforma. The Contact staff member interviews the victim and bully together and discusses the problem; makes the bully aware of the feelings of the other person and the effects the conflict may be having; and makes suggestions of strategies for the resolution of the conflict. The Contact Person may seek help from a qualified counsellor at any stage.

The Contact Person sends a letter to both sets of parents explaining the situation, outlining the strategies that have been determined and reinforcing the consequences that may flow from a repeat of bullying.

If a solution to a problem is not found, the school may consider the use of an outside person, such as a trained mediator, to assist in reaching a resolution.

4. *Reinforce (as above), employ sanctions*
If repeated counselling by the Contact Person, or others, does not stop the bullying, sanctions may be imposed. These could include, but are not confined to:
- Official warnings to cease offending
- Detention
- Exclusion from certain areas of the school premises
- Internal Suspension
- Major fixed term suspension
- Seek help from qualified counsellor
- Permanent exclusion

COMPLIANCE and MONITORING

The school will:

- Involve students, staff and parents in the development and review of its Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Identify one or more members of staff as a Bullying Contact Person.
- Ensure all staff are familiar with the school's anti-bullying policy and provide appropriate professional development on a regular basis, including at the time of induction of new staff members.
- Establish and train student Peer Buddies to whom victims of bullying can report, and/or approach for support.
- Ensure that all accessible areas of the school are patrolled thoroughly.
- Establish, and widely publicise an e-mail address for students/parents to anonymously report bullying.

Staff members will:

- Watch for early signs of distress in students. This could be evident in <u>any</u> aspect of school life.
- Ensure they are familiar with the school's anti-bullying policy.
- Where bullying is observed, intervene immediately to stop the bullying.
- Offer the victim immediate support and help and outline what will now happen.
- Educate all students with regard to their responsibilities as bystanders to a bullying incident.

- Ensure they do not model bullying behaviour in interactions they have with students, parents or other staff members.