

Anti-Bullying Procedure

This procedure has been created as a prelude to the Anti-Bullying Policy that will be published in the 2026-27 academic year.

Definition of Bullying

The Anti-Bullying Alliance (2026) defines bullying as “... the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online.” Bullying can cause significant physical, psychological, social or educational harm, and takes different shapes and forms, including (but not limited to):

- Physical: pushing, kicking, biting, poking, hitting, pinching, etc
- Verbal: spreading rumours, name calling, teasing, sarcasm, threats, belittling
- Emotional: humiliation, isolating others, hiding resources, tormenting, threatening gestures, intimidating, ridicule, excluding, manipulation and coercion
- Sexual: inappropriate touching, unwanted physical contact, abuse comments, homophobic abuse, exposure to inappropriate content or films, etc
- Online or cyber bullying: involves using technology to inflict harm, demean, or cause pain to another individual, which involves (but is not limited to) sharing private or embarrassing photos without consent, posting on social media, sending nasty text messages / private messages, social exclusion (American Psychological Association, 2026; American Psychological Association, 2022).
- Indirect: includes the exploitation of individuals

(Anti-Bullying Alliance, 2026)

Rationale

As a caring and inclusive school, we have a responsibility to protect the wellbeing of every student within our community. We aim to recognise, respect and celebrate each other's differences and similarities and acknowledge the need for positive relationships between members of the school community as a requirement for good overall well being.

Bullying can cause serious long term harm to individuals' physical and mental health and can negatively impact their educational attainment and social development. There are no circumstances under which it can be condoned and it is the responsibility of all staff to help with creating a safe, secure environment for our school, free from any forms of threat or harassment. At the ISE, we aim to build and maintain a community where individuals are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and to follow restorative practices which can help to build a safe and welcoming atmosphere, allowing students to grow and learn to the best of their abilities. The ISE takes a primary preventative approach to bullying through the implementation of a universal social and emotional wellbeing program (Jigsaw) that provides anti - bullying education, which is delivered every year in age - appropriate sessions as part of a spiral curriculum in the [primary international](#) and secondary departments.

Current procedure for managing bullying incidents

Primary International & Dutch Bilingual Departments

Class teachers and learning support coordinator / anti-bullying coordinator must be notified of all bullying reports.

Staff are encouraged to sympathetically deal with all reported (alleged) bullying incidents with minimal delay. Additionally, alleged incidents involving cyber-bullying (that occur both in and outside of school hours), will be investigated and managed by the school.

The victim and alleged perpetrator(s) must be interviewed as soon as practical (following the alleged incident) by either the class teacher / learning support coordinator and / or anti-bullying coordinator (depending on the level of complaint), with individual versions of events documented in writing. Witness statements must be taken and evidence ascertained from a variety of sources to determine whether the bullying claims are substantiated or unsubstantiated.

Incidents involving alleged bullying will be managed according to the following levels:

- Low level: Class teachers will initially manage reported incidents and document these in writing. The learning support coordinator / anti-bullying coordinator must be informed after an incident is documented. The learning support coordinator / anti-bullying coordinator may then interview the victim, alleged bully and any witnesses if necessary.
- Medium level: Learning support coordinator / anti-bullying coordinator informs the Head of Department who contacts the victim and bully's parents for an interview.
- High level: Head of Department informs authorities for further follow up.

Disciplinary actions:

- Disciplinary actions will be taken where necessary, and may include letters or meetings with parents, suspension or (in serious cases) exclusion from school.

Follow up:

- It is essential that the victim feels safe and supported within the school community, and that the alleged perpetrator has experienced a fair hearing. The anti-bullying coordinator will follow up each case to ascertain if there were any consequences or re-occurrences; and to identify whether either party would benefit from access to social and emotional support (if necessary).

Secondary Department

This policy outlines the formal steps for addressing bullying within our secondary school community. Our goal is to maintain a safe, inclusive environment for all students through prompt intervention and a clear escalation framework.

1. Initial Reporting and Immediate Response

- **Notification:** All reports of bullying must be formally communicated to the Mentor, and the Year Coordinator.
- **Prompt Action:** Staff are expected to address all reported or alleged incidents with empathy and urgency.
- **Cyber-Bullying:** depending on the nature of the incident the school's jurisdiction may extend to cyber-bullying. Any digital harassment that affects a student's well-being or safety—regardless of whether it occurs during or outside school hours—may be investigated, when this occurs outside of school however there is a shared responsibility with the families to manage the situation.

2. Investigation Phase

Team that wrote the policy; MR approval date (if applicable)

The school will conduct a thorough and objective investigation to determine if claims are substantiated:

- **Interviews:** The victim and the alleged perpetrator(s) will be interviewed as soon as practical by the mentor and or coordinator depending on level of severity.
- **Documentation:** Individual accounts of the events must be recorded in writing in student notes, these may be done in shadow files if there is a child protection element involved, physical evidence may also be collected where applicable.

3. Management Levels

Incidents are categorized and managed based on the following severity levels:

Level 1: Low Level e.g. low level arguing amongst students, minor incidents such as mild name calling etc.

- **Management:** Handled initially by the Mentor.
- **Process:** The incident is documented in writing. The Coordinator is informed and may conduct follow-up interviews with the parties involved if necessary. Depending on the nature of the event parents are usually contacted via phone call or email if not available. (This communication should also be documented in the student's file). A reflection is carried out with the mentor and the perpetrator. A low level sanction may be issued at the discretion of the mentor and coordinator (lunch time detention etc.).

Level 2: Medium Level e.g. mid level arguments amongst students, mid level victimisation, targeting, continuous low level bullying type behaviours towards particular students or groups.

- **Management:** Escalated to the Coordinator.
- **Process:** The incident is documented in writing. The coordinator will contact the parents of both the victim and the perpetrator to arrange mandatory meetings. Medium or high level sanctions are usually issued at this point (internal suspension, external suspension etc.)

Level 3: High Level e.g. Persistent violence resulting in physical harm, persistent manipulation and social exclusion, extreme cyberbullying inc. creating fake accounts etc.

- **Management:** Handled by Coordinator, Senior Leadership and External Authorities.
- **Process:** The incident is documented in writing (in shadow files in the case of child protection elements). The Head of Department may involve relevant external authorities (e.g., social services) for further follow-up and legal compliance. High level sanctions at this point (e.g. extended external suspension, zorgclass, potential expulsion depending on circumstances).

4. Disciplinary Actions

Disciplinary measures are implemented where necessary to maintain school safety. Actions may include, but are not limited to:

- Formal letters of warning.
- Required parental conferences.
- Internal or external suspension.
- Permanent exclusion (expulsion) in severe or repeated cases.

5. Support and Follow-Up

The school is committed to restorative justice and long-term well-being:

- **Victim Safety:** It is paramount that the victim feels secure and supported within the school community.
- **Due Process:** The school ensures that the alleged perpetrator receives a fair and impartial hearing.
- **Monitoring:** The mentor and coordinator will monitor each case to prevent recurrence and assess the need for ongoing social or emotional support (counseling) for all involved parties.

References:

American Psychological Association. (2026). Bullying. Accessed on 13.04.2026 from <https://www.apa.org/topics/bullying>

American Psychological Association. (2022). Cyberbullying: What is it and how can you stop it? Accessed on 13.04.2026 from <https://www.apa.org/topics/bullying/cyberbullying-online-social-media>

Anti-Bullying Alliance. (2026). Our definition of bullying. Accessed on 13.04.2026 from <https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/understanding-bullying/definition>