



مدرسة عجمان الحديثة  
Ajman Modern School

# Policies & Procedures

2020 / 2021

# Anti-Bullying Policy (2019 – 2020)

## Ajman Modern School

### Policy Details

<b>Policy</b>	Anti-Bullying & Cyber Bullying Policy
<b>Function</b>	Physical & Online Safety & Security of All Students
<b>Status</b>	Recommended
<b>Audience</b>	Students
<b>Implementation</b>	School Counselor
<b>Issued for</b>	Students & Staff
<b>Reference No</b>	AMS/SP/ABP-2019/002
<b>Last Review</b>	7 <sup>th</sup> October 2019
<b>Next Review</b>	7 <sup>th</sup> October 2020
<b>Responsible SLT</b>	School Principal

### Vision, Mission and Core Values

#### Our Vision

To be a Model International School that enhances the skills of every student to its greatest potential preparing them to become an active member of the international society. **Our Mission**

To empower students by promoting intellectual curiosity, independent and critical thinking, communication and problem solving skills, a lifelong passion for learning, and an exposure to and a respect for cultural diversity

#### Core Values

Achievement | Collaboration | Integrity | Respect | Responsibility

## **Introduction**

The spirit of Ajman Modern School mission and the guidelines established in our Behavior Policy, as well as the unwritten rules of civilized behavior, all dictate that there should be no place in school for bullying. The school believes that all people in the school community have the right to learn and teach in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of intimidation or being bullied. Every individual in school has the duty to report an incident of bullying whether it happens to themselves or to another person. The school promotes a culture in which students are not afraid to report bullying, actively encouraging the reporting of incidents in order that interventions can be made.

The school strives to reinforce the principles of thought and consideration of others; tolerance; equality of opportunity; and the recognition and acceptance of others. Bullying Issues form a key part of the school's wellbeing and enrichment along with assemblies, which are underpinned by the American Curriculum and the UAE Moral Education Program.

## **Related Policies That Are Required Of Schools**

Behaviour Management Policy

Special Education Needs (SEN) and Learning Difficulties Policy

Discipline and Exclusions Policy

Equal Opportunities

Complaints Procedure

## **Purpose of Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students and staff enjoy a safe working environment free from bullying. This policy is implemented in partnership with our behaviour policy and serves the entire school.

## Aims and Objectives

This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur. The aims of the policy are:

- To ensure that AMS students are provided with a safe and secure learning environment and all students are aware of psychological damage that bullying can inflict on others
- To ensure that staff raise awareness amongst AMS students that bullying, threats and violence are not acceptable in society and in our school community
- To support students who are being bullied and to help them feel safe again, to rebuild their confidence and self esteem

## Definitions: Bullying

Bullying is referred as “Undesirable Negative Behavior” in MOE Behavioral policy, whereas, in ADEC is referred as “bullying”. It has different forms and patterns that can be mild and socially tolerable and others that are extremely aggressive and are not acceptable. Ministry of Education ensures the importance of creating safe learning environment for students to flourish mentally, emotionally and academically, insists on the importance of scaffolding the positive desirable behaviors and enhances the goodness on oneself of individual by establishing some methods and strategies to reduce the negative behavioral acts.

The behavioral policy of MOE was hence established to create a positive and healthy educational atmosphere for students. The policy states the kinds of act used as undesirable negative behaviors. For instance, coming late or not attending the morning assembly, vandalism to school properties, physical and verbal aggression and violation of trust and honor actions. The policy does not directly mention the term “Bullying” in the policy, but as undesirable negative behavior.

According to MOE, bully is defined as any form of deliberate physical, verbal or electronic abuse, intimidation or threat by a student(s) against one student or more, or against school personnel, on a repeated basis. Bullying in UAE is defined as “the willful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten, upset or frighten someone”. It is rarely a ‘one-off incident’ but a course of action that is sustained over a period of time - 2-3 days or 2-3 months. Bullying can be:

**Verbal** - comments intended to upset the receiver or the receiver’s family

**Physical** - pushing or hitting another student

**Emotional** - excluding a student from a friendship group or an outing/event

**Written abuse** - targeted name-calling or jokes, or displaying offensive posters

**Violence** - including threats of violence

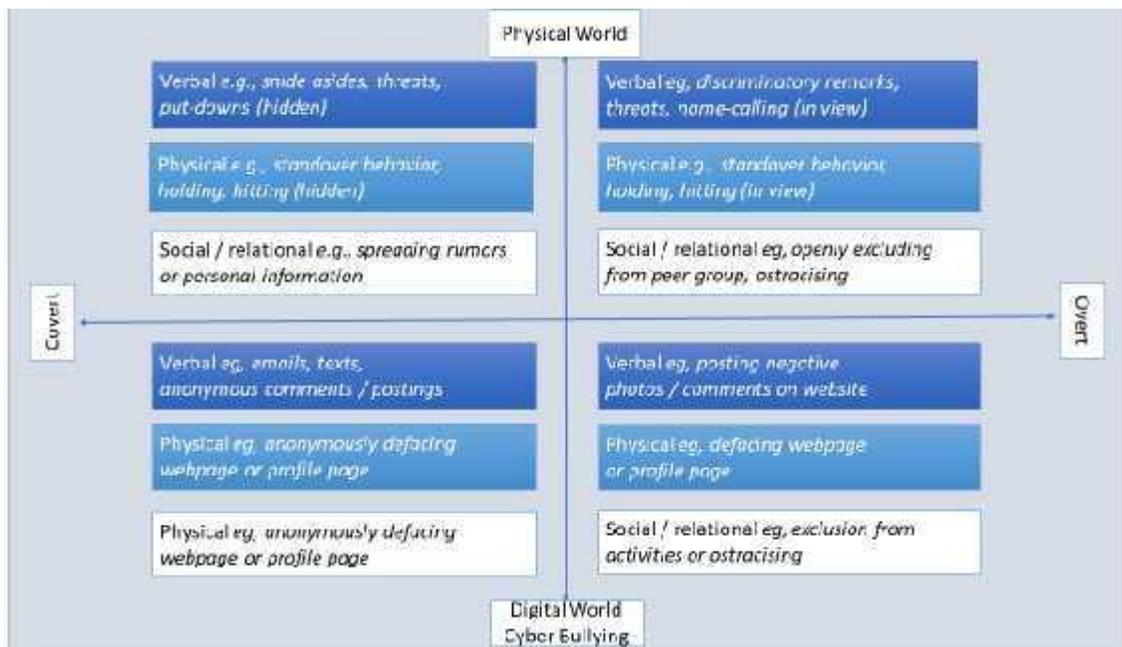
**Sexual harassment** - unwelcome or unreciprocated conduct of a sexual nature, which could reasonably be expected to cause offence, humiliation or intimidation

**Discrimination including racial discrimination** - treating people differently because of their identity, comments about ethnicity

**Cyberbullying** - either online or via mobile phone.

There are also some behaviors, which, although they might be unpleasant or distressing, are not bullying. Bullying is not:

- **Mutual conflict** - which involves a disagreement, but not an imbalance of power. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation.
- **Single-episode acts** of nastiness or physical aggression, or aggression directed towards many different people, is not bullying
- **Social rejection or dislike** is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.



## Cyberbullying

It is bullying that takes place in form of inappropriate comments sent through SMS, Text, Email and apps, or online in social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, forums, or gaming where people can view, participate in, or share content over digital devices like cell phones, computers, and tablets. It includes sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or mean content about someone else.

Examples of this include but are not limited to:

- Bullying by text, messages or calls on mobile devices
- The use of cameras to cause distress, fear or humiliation
- Making threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating remarks online
- Posting threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating material online
- Hijacking/cloning e-mail or any social media accounts

The particular forms of cyberbullying can include any of the following:

Harassment or cyberstalking

Defamation or vilification

Impersonation & Peer rejection

Unauthorized publication of private images    Manipulation

Unauthorized publication of private images

Cyber bullying is generally criminal in nature, and it should be noted that the UAE Penal Code (Federal Law No. 3 of 1987, Article 138) prohibits publishing *‘through any means of publicity news, pictures or comments pertaining to the secrets of people’s private or familial lives even if the same is true’*. According to cybercrime laws in UAE, a suspect who blackmails or threatens [commits any form of bullying or intimidation] to dishonour or shame a victim using the telecommunication system [social media tools or internet] could face jail or fines.

Cyberbullying leaves no physical scars so it is less evident to a parent or teacher, but it is nevertheless highly intrusive and the hurt it causes can be very severe. The AMS school has clear expectations in respect of the use of information and communication technology and will tackle incidents of cyberbullying in order to prevent them from escalating and causing serious damage to an individual, the broader school community and the school’s reputation.

All students are expected to collaborate fully in any enquiry the school may need to conduct relating to a student’s use of information and communication technology both in and out of school, including permission for data disclosure from third parties such as telephone and internet service providers, where there is reasonable belief that cyberbullying has taken place and that this will assist in bringing an end to such activity.

While following, MOE instructions, Ajman Modern School takes a zero tolerance approach to all forms of bullying. Any student(s) who bully another student will be dealt with and be made to apologize for their actions. Bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination will not be tolerated. We treat all our students and their parents fairly and with consideration and we

expect them to respect the staff, the school and each other, in return. All forms of bullying are unacceptable at our school and any instances will be recorded and, where appropriate, will result in disciplinary action. Ajman Modern School has certain guidelines to stop cyber bullying attached in appendix -1.

## **Identifying Bullying**

AMS School works to identify bullying behaviour at the early stages and towards behavior modification before the problem becomes more serious. Advice and counselling is available for all students, to support making the right choices and not succumbing to peer pressure.

The following signs and symptoms may be indicators of bullying:

- Anxiety about travelling to and from school e.g. requesting parents to drive or collect him/her, changing travel routes, avoiding regular times for travelling to and from school
- Unwillingness to go to school, refusal to attend, truancy
- Deterioration in educational performance, loss of concentration and loss of enthusiasm and interest in school
- Pattern of physical illnesses e.g. headaches, stomach aches
- Unexplained changes either in mood or behaviour which may be particularly noticeable before returning to school after weekends or especially after longer school holidays
- Visible signs of anxiety or distress e.g. stammering, withdrawing, nightmares, difficulty in sleeping, crying, not eating, vomiting, bedwetting
- Spontaneous out-of-character comments about either students or teachers.
- Possessions missing or damaged; Unexplained bruising or cuts or damaged clothing
- Increased requests for money or stealing money
- Reluctance and/or refusal to say what is troubling him/her

## **Dealing with Bullying**

In Ajman Modern School we listen to all parties involved in bullying incidents and always take allegations from victims seriously. We reassure students that we will do all in our power to protect and support all parties involved while the issues are being resolved. All incidents will be investigated as fully as possible.

All bullying suspicions are taken seriously and each incident is dealt with individually with the needs of each student being addressed separately. When an incident is reported, bullies and victims are interviewed separately. Witness information is obtained from written record of the incident. The investigation and outcome is documented and communicated to relevant staff.

The school applies behavior modification methods using professional discretion and considering each student's individual personal circumstances. Any action that is taken will be to prevent further incidents. Support is always provided to both victim and bully.

All bullying cases are considered to be violations of the school's behaviour and anti-bullying policies. As it is defined in our behaviour policy, exclusion will be considered in response to a serious breach of the school's policy. Injurious or severely harmful behaviour to other students or staff members is a reason for immediate dismissal.

The following sanctions could apply depending on the nature of the bullying incident:

**Verbal warning** and contact with parents

**Loss of play time/detention** – break time, after-school

Please note that parents should receive notice of a proposed after school detention

Isolation or reflection time

Restorative justice

Temporary ban from attending school

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Principal**

The principal is responsible for ensuring the full implementation of this policy. The main tasks of the principal are to:

- Lead the implementation of the anti-bullying policy and procedures at the school.
- Ensure all staff members are aware of this policy and the expectations it sets for them.
- Inform parents and students of the anti-bullying policy and the procedures in place. ➤  
Monitor and review the school's anti-bullying policy and data annually together with the counsellor and the school governing board

### **Counsellor**

The main tasks of the counsellor are to:

- Ensure that all staff are trained and knowledgeable of the school policy and procedures, and provided with support as needed
- Support the student council in their programmes and events related to anti-bullying and strengthening the school community
- Deal with any bullying reports
- Discuss with the victims of bullying and the bullies and come up with a plan how to stop such behaviour & contact the parents of bully/bullies and the parents of victims ➤  
Ensure that accurate records are maintained on all cases of bullying, and that these are kept in a secure place and marked "strictly confidential"
- Monitor and review the school's anti-bullying policy and data annually together with the principal and the school governing board.

## All Staff Members

The main tasks of all the staff members are to:

- Model friendly and approachable attitudes and behaviour
- Discuss regularly what bullying is and how to deal with such behaviour
- Teach bullying prevention, stressing that bullying of any kind will not be tolerated
- Guide the students to immediately report any suspected bullying
- Listen, respond & support to reports of bullying & refer to the counsellor as needed
- Pay particular attention, take immediate action and report any incidents of bullying
- Implement the school code of conduct, anti-bullying policy and behaviour policy

## Student Council

The main tasks of the student council are to:

- Plan and hold programmes and events related to anti-bullying and strengthening the school community

## Students

All students are expected to:

- Behave appropriately, showing respect for all members of the school
- Follow the school's anti-bullying policy
- Never engage in any activity that is intended deliberately to upset another person, to bully or defame
- Support students who are bullied and be responsible bystanders
- Report any behaviour that they may consider bullying – either offline or online - to a member of staff
- Assist and support the student council in handling bullying

If a student is bullied, we encourage them to:

- Tell the bully to stop
- Stay with a group of friends or with other people
- Don't fight back or respond to any abusive messages as it may make matters worse
- In case of cyberbullying, do not delete anything until you have received a permit from the counsellor
- Seek help, talk about it and report it to a teacher or counsellor

## Parents

The main tasks of the parents are to:

- Show a real interest in their children's social life and in school events.
- Encourage their children to have friends round, to join clubs and to be tolerant and broad minded towards others.
- Build up their children's self-esteem by emphasizing positive features and accepting individual characteristics.
- Discuss the school's anti-bullying policy with their children and suggest positive strategies if his/her rights are abused.
- Encourage their children to take action on bullying, but do not tell them to retaliate either physically or with name calling.
- Show an example by being firm but positive and not aggressive in their approach to discipline.
- Confront the possibility that their child may be a bully. If the school contacts suggesting that their child may have been involved in bullying, try not to go on the defensive or to find excuses for the bullying behavior. Work constructively with the school to find a solution to the problem.

## Practices & Procedures

### Procedures

- Treat all reports seriously and sympathetically.
- Act straight away.
- Inform other staff, ensure the incident is documented.
- Remain totally objective and helpful. Take reports from both parties. ➤ If the incident is minor and can be handled on the spot, do so, discussing the implications with all parties.
- Cyber bullying: where incidents of cyber bullying are reported the school will intervene and investigate and deal with the alleged incident.
- If a serious incident occurs the school counsellor will be told of the incident and will talk to those involved.
- If the incident is major, inform your line manager. Parents should be contacted. ➤ Disciplinary action, in line with the school's range of sanctions, will be taken where appropriate. Such action may include letters, meetings with parents, internal suspension or the child leaving the school in the following academic year. Alternatively, parents may be asked to remove their child from the school.

### Bullying – Preventive Measures

Our school sees preventing bullying as our main responsibility in terms of this anti-bullying policy. The school will:

- inform students and parents of our expectations in order to ensure a productive partnership, where each and everyone has a role to play in eradicating bullying ➤ build and maintain a community in which everyone feels valued and safe and where individual differences are appreciated, understood and accepted

- promote a secure and happy, caring environment where kindness and helpfulness are expected and respected
- praise and reward positive behaviour which benefits others and the community as a whole
- teach students to respect themselves and others, promoting crucial self-esteem

### **Cyberbullying - Preventative Measures**

For the prevention of cyber-bullying, in addition to the measures described above, [Ajman Modern School]:

- Expects all students to adhere to its [policy for the safe use of the internet/ E-Safety Policy]. Certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and our IT Department monitors students' use;
- May impose disciplinary sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse, of the internet;
- Offers guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details safe;
- Does not allow the use of mobile phones in classrooms, public areas of the school, or where they may cause annoyance to others; and
- Does not allow the use of cameras/ mobile phone cameras in toilets, washing and changing areas.

### **Investigation**

The nature of any investigation will depend on the circumstances. It may include:

- A review of evidence and advice to preserve it, for example by saving or printing (e.g. phone messages, texts, emails, website pages).
- Efforts to identify the perpetrator (looking at the media, systems and sites used) ➤  
Speaking to witnesses who may have useful information.

- Requesting a student to reveal a message or other phone content or confiscating a phone (Staff do not have the authority to search the contents of a phone).

If a member of staff suspects or is told about a cyber-bullying incident, they are expected to follow the protocol outlined below:

- Ask the student to show them the mobile phone or any other device
- Note clearly everything on the screen relating to an inappropriate text message or image, to include the date, time and names
- Make a transcript of a spoken message, again record date, times and names
- Tell the student to save the material in question and send it to the counsellor
- Go with the student to see the counsellor
- Normal procedures to interview students and to take statements will be followed particularly if a child protection issue is presented.

### **Working with the perpetrator**

Work with the perpetrator and determine sanctions on an individual basis, in accordance with the anti-bullying policy, with the intention of:

- Helping the person harmed to feel safe again and be assured that the bullying will stop
- Holding the perpetrator to account, so they recognize the harm caused and do not repeat the behavior
- Helping bullies to recognize the consequences of their actions and facilitating change in their attitude and behavior
- Demonstrating that cyber bullying is unacceptable and that the school has effective ways of dealing with it.

Ajman Modern School will have school wide program in year 2019 – 2020 regarding antibullying to inform and educate students about the issues related to bullying and to give

them strategies to deal with situations they might encounter. School will work to identify opportunities in the curriculum where bullying and other forms of anti-social behaviour can be discussed.

## Disciplinary Structures to Deal with Incidents of Bullying

In line with the Ministry of Education procedures and the AMS Behavior procedure for disciplining students, the Bullying cases are considered to be High level violations. Accordingly the school applies the following behavior modification methods.

Sr. No.	Violation Level	Violation Decision
1	1 <sup>st</sup> Violation	1/2 day internal exclusion Warning Form no1 Parents are notified (written and verbal)
2	2 <sup>nd</sup> Violation	1 Day exclusion Warning Form no2 Parents are notified (written and verbal) Meeting with parents
3	3 <sup>rd</sup> Violation	2 day exclusion Warning Form No. 3 Parents are notified (written and verbal) Meeting with parents Re registration reviewed.

### Steps Taken

#### DC Level – 1 (Warning)

If a student is beginning to behave in a manner which could develop into or be interpreted as bullying, wherever possible a warning will be given (DC Level 1). In this way it is hoped that many potentially serious situations will never materialize. However, the warning stage is at the discretion of the school, and a student involved in a serious instance of bullying will bypass this stage and be placed onto the relevant scale of Ajman Modern School Procedures.

## **DC Level 2 (Written Letter)**

Where, after due investigations, the school is satisfied that bullying has occurred, it will be explained to the bully why his/her behavior is unacceptable, and positive strategies will be pursued to raise his self-esteem as well as to protect the victim. The bully's parents will be informed by letter. Removal from stage 1 may be possible only when the following criteria have been met:

- There is no evidence that the student has continued to use bullying behaviors in any form
- There is evidence of the positive support of the anti-bullying policy in the new behaviors that the student is exhibiting

However, this is entirely at the discretion of the school, and any student previously on DC Level 2 who is involved in a further instance of bullying will be placed directly on to DC Level 3.

## **DC Level 3 (SLT)**

If the bullying continues, arrangements will be made to minimize contact between bully and victim. The bully's parents will be called into school to discuss the situation. The bully will sign a statement promising that the bullying will not be repeated. It will not be possible to be removed from Stage 2 or any subsequent stage.

It is envisaged that in most circumstances these two stages will be sufficient. As per SLT decision, student will be excluded from school for 1 day

## **DC Level 4 (Internal/External Exclusion)**

Where there is no improvement in the bullying, the bully will be excluded (temporarily suspended) from the school for at least a week. This may be internal or external depending on the severity of the case along with prior history of such behavior.

## **DC Level 5 (Permanent Exclusion)**

As a last resort, and when it is clear that the bully consistently endangers the welfare of fellow members of the school community, he or she will be permanently excluded from Dubai College.

## **Reporting**

As a school we encourage victims and witnesses to speak up. Staff will be alert to changes in behaviour, attitude and wellbeing. All incidents will be treated seriously, however trivial they might seem at first. Every individual in school has the duty to report an incident of bullying whether it happens to themselves or to another person.

## **Communication**

The school communicates with parents on any incidents and investigations. We work in partnership with parents and students to prevent any bullying and to deal with any incidents of bullying.

## **Review**

This policy will be reviewed at least once a year by the principal and the counsellor.

## Appendix – 1

### School Guidelines for Cyber Bullying

#### Guidance for Staff

If you suspect or are told about a cyber-bullying incident, follow the protocol outlined below:

##### Mobile Phones

- Ask the student to show you the mobile phone
- Note clearly everything on the screen relating to an inappropriate text message or image, to include the date, time and names
- Make a transcript of a spoken message, again record date, times and names
- Tell the student to save the message/image
- Go with the student and see the Head, or in his absence, a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

##### Computers

- Ask the student to get up on-screen the material in question
- Ask the student to save the material
- Print off the offending material straight away
- Make sure you have got all pages in the right order and that there are no omissions
- Accompany the student, taking the offending material, to see the Head
- Normal procedures to interview students and to take statements will then be followed particularly if a child protection issue is presented.

## Guidance for Students

- Do not give out personal IT details
- Never reply to abusive e-mails
- Never reply to someone you do not know
- Stay in public areas in chat rooms
- If you believe you or someone else is the victim of cyber-bullying, you must speak to an adult as soon as possible.
- This person could be a parent/guardian, your teacher, Counsellor, SLT members of the school.
- Do not answer abusive messages but log and report them.
- Do not delete anything until it has been shown to your Class Teacher, Counsellor or the Head (even if it is upsetting, the material is important evidence which may need to be used later as proof of cyber-bullying)

## Guidance for Parents

It is vital that parents and the school work together to ensure that all students are aware of the serious consequences of getting involved in anything that might be seen to be cyber-bullying. Ajman Modern School informs parents of the cyber-bullying policy and the procedures in place to deal with cyber-bullying.

- Parents can help by making sure their child understands the school's policy and, above all, how seriously ASD takes incidents of cyber-bullying
- Parents should also explain to their sons or daughter's legal issues relating to cyberbullying
- If parents believe their child is the victim of cyber-bullying, they should save the offending material (if need be by saving an offensive text on their or their child's mobile phone) and make sure they have all relevant information before deleting anything ➤ Parents should contact the Principal/Vice Principal as soon as possible. A meeting can then be arranged, which may involve other relevant members of staff