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Wesgreen
International School

Inspiring excellence, empowering global minds

WESGREEN ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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2. Opening Statement

At Wesgreen International School we recognize that every child and adult should have the opportunity to be treated with respect, free from emotional or physical danger as well as prejudice and discrimination. Our school is a nurturing safe environment which accepts all religious, cultural backgrounds and nationalities.

3. Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide clarifications of the different types of bullying, as well as outline the roles and responsibilities of the Wesgreen community when faced with a bullying situation. We aim to encourage a school ethos where bullying remains unacceptable and promote a whole school approach to prevent bullying. Students, parents and staff are encouraged to speak out and raise concerns about bullying incidents.

4. Definition of bullying

Bullying is the repeated and purposeful negative actions by one or more persons, towards another who has difficulty defending him- or herself due to an imbalance of power. Bullying therefore usually involves an intentional aggressive action like saying or doing mean or hurtful things on purpose, which is repeated over time.

5. The different types of bullying

When looking at the different ways that bullying can take place, it is important to remember that bullying is a reoccurring act towards a specific person, with the intention to cause harm. This is different to teasing, which is a once off act without the intention to cause harm. Outlined below are definitions of different types of bullying:

- Verbal bullying – when someone is continuously making offensive comments and name calling with the intent to cause harm to a student
- Social exclusion or isolation – when someone is continuously and purposefully excluded from social activities and groups for the purpose of causing harm and upset to a student
- Physical bullying – when a student is repeatedly being physically assaulted through means of hitting, kicking, shoving, and spitting
- Defamation – when someone is continuously spreading hurtful lies and false information about a student with the intent to cause harm to his/her reputation
- Vandalism and theft – when someone takes or damages possessions such as money, stationary or school bags on purpose of a specific student
- Intimidation – when someone continuously threatens or forces someone to do something they don't want to do, which can be harmful to themselves or others
- Discrimination – when someone is treated unjustly based upon culture, race, nationality, gender or age.
- Cyber bullying – when someone is a victim of bullying through various platforms including social media, email and instant messaging apps, and online games. This could include verbal bullying, defamation, intimidation or exclusion from online activities. For more information on online safety, please make reference to the E-Safety Policy.

6. What are the harmful effects of bullying?

Bullying does not only have harmful effects on the person being bullied, but it also affects the observers or bystanders, the bully, as well as the whole school culture.

6.1. Effects on students who are bullied

- Students who are bullied report lower self-esteem, higher rates of depression, loneliness, and anxiety than their peers.
- Students who are bullied are more likely to report disliking school, not participate in class, have higher absenteeism rates, and receive lower grades than their peers.
- Being bullied is often related to physical conditions such as stomach pains, sleeping problems, headaches, tension, bedwetting, fatigue and poor appetite.
- Although relatively rare, students who are persistently bullied are more likely to report more suicidal ideation than non-bullied peers.

6.2. Effects on the observers or bystanders of bullying

- Students who observe bullying may feel that they are in an unsafe environment.
- Observers or bystanders of bullying may feel powerless to act or feel guilty for not acting.
- Students who see bullying happen may feel tempted to participate.

6.3. Effects on students who bully others

- Students who bully others get into fights more frequently than their peers.
- Students who bully are more likely to steal, vandalize property, use substances, or carry a weapon.
- Students who bully others often report poor grades.
- Students who bully their peers often report a perceived negative climate at school.

6.4. Effects on schools with bullying issues

- When bullying continues and a school does not take action, if affects the whole school climate and creates an environment of fear, insecurity and disrespect.
- Students in schools with frequent bullying incidents often report disliking school and may experience difficulty learning.
- Students in schools with bullying issues perceive teachers and other staff to have little control and may feel uncared for.

7. How should you respond to a bully?

The response to bullying will differ, depending on whether it is response from the person being bullied, a bystander, a teacher or a parent.

7.1. If you are the student being bullied

- Ignore the behaviour.
- Tell the person responsible for the bullying to stop.
- Tell the person responsible for bullying that if they continue, they will tell a teacher/ form tutor/ Head of Year/ counsellor/ parent.
- Inform a trusted adult such as a teacher, form tutor, Head of Year, counsellor, or a member of the Core Safeguarding Team.

7.2. If you witness someone being bullied, you are a bystander. Students are encouraged to discourage bullying behaviour by:

- If you feel safe stand up for the person being bullied.
- Leave the situation.
- Report it to a responsible, trusted adult.
- Support the person being bullied immediately or talk to them later.
- As part of a group make it clear that it is not okay to bully.

8. Teachers' roles and expectations with regards to bullying

- Stop and address incidents immediately as they happen.

- Remove the students from the environment without causing harm to the students.
- Remain with the student until they feel calm or safe, or refer to the counsellor or Head of Year if unable to stay with student until they have calmed down.
- Vigilantly monitor students' interactions within the school to ensure positive behaviours.
- Ensure that students feel safe and can approach them with concerns.
- Treat each case as serious and not dismiss any students concerns.
- Praise students for informing them of a bullying concern.
- Investigate the situation further and inform line-manager / Head of Year of the concern.
- Refer student to counsellor if appropriate.

9. Parents' roles with regards to bullying

- Support their child by listening to concerns.
- Inform the class teacher, form tutor, Head of Year, Head of School or counsellor to allow for further action.
- Support Wesgreen's behaviour policy, including response to bullying incidents.

10. Response to bullying by the school

Wesgreen responds to bullying in accordance to the guidelines set out by the Behaviour Policy. Actions take in response to incidents will depend on the severity of the event and the harm caused to other students.

11. Bullying during Remote Learning

Wesgreen does not and will not tolerate abuse or inappropriate use of technology, and online learning platforms. This includes any acts described in the Remote Learning User Agreement, which was written in accordance with guidelines issued by the Ministry of Education and UAE legislature. Not following these laws and guidelines may lead to actions that can include suspension, removal from online classrooms, and possible criminal charges as set out in UAE legislature. Additional the Guidelines for Remote Learning and the E-Safety policy also provides guidelines on the appropriate use of online learning platforms.

12. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed annually and shared with staff during induction, training and termly Safeguarding updates.

Deputy Headmaster: _____

Headmaster: _____

Date of next review: June 2022