School of Knowledge
(St. Mary's Group of Schools)

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Reviewed By & Date	Principal and SLT / JUNE 2024
Next Revision Date	AUGUST 2025

Approved by: Principal and SLT

VISION OF THE SCHOOL

Striving for excellence, striding towards success and seeking new horizons for personal growth and worth.

MISSION STATEMENT

Each toddler walking through the gates of School of Knowledge is viewed as a talent reserve and the school works relentlessly towards empowering each and every child.

CORE VALUES

We believe:

✔ In fostering honesty, charity, justice and service to others.

✔ In empowering critical and creative thinking.

✔ In a collaborative learning environment that involves cooperation among students, teachers, school leaders, staff and parents.

✔ In enabling students to become global citizens to face the challenges of the 21st century.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Role	Name
Principal	Ms. June Amanna
Vice Principal	Sr. Sarala Christi
Child Protection Officer	Ms. Bridget Shakesy
Head/Administrative Coordinator	Ms Binu Paul, Ms Ulfath
School Counselors	Ms.Feba Alina Thomas Ms Rhea Ashok Khare
Health Department	School Doctor and Nurses
Physical Education Department	Ms. Afshan, Mr. Robin

INTRODUCTION

At School of Knowledge, we aim to provide a supportive and disciplined environment in which children are encouraged to pursue high academic and personal goals as happy and secure individuals. The policy reflects the school ethos and the curriculum. Its emphasis is on helping children to take responsibility for their behavior and caring for others. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Online Safety Policy, Acceptable Use Policy, the Behavior Policy, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

1. AIM OF THE POLICY

Our school aims to encourage positive behavior so that anti-social behavior such as bullying is prevented. We do all we can to prevent it, by developing an ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable. We aim to produce a safe and secure environment where all pupils can learn without anxiety by addressing all forms of bullying including cyberbullying. This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur. This also includes a procedure to follow and how to record bullying to enable patterns to be identified.

2. DEFINITION
WHAT IS BULLYING?

- It is the use of deliberate force forms of verbal or physical abuse whether individual vs individual or group vs individual;
- It is unjust and repetitive behavior and over time;
- It is intended to hurt or pressure someone, where this person is unable to defend him/herself, due to the unequal strength between the bully and the person getting bullied; It can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices.

WHAT IS NOT BULLYING?

Not every act of unkindness can be classified as bullying. We recognize that sometimes pupils are spontaneously unkind to each other without thinking, and more often than not this is a one-off incident. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.

3. TYPES OF BULLYING
Physical bullying

- Physical bullying includes hitting, pushing, shoving or intimidating or otherwise physically hurting another person, damaging or stealing their belongings. It includes threats of violence.

Verbal and written bullying

❖ Verbal and written bullying includes name-calling or insulting someone about an attribute, quality or personal characteristic.

Social bullying

❖ This is sometimes called relational or emotional bullying and includes deliberately excluding someone, use of silence, spreading rumors, the formation of cliques, sharing information that will harm the other person and/or damaging a person's social reputation or social acceptance.

Cyberbullying

❖ Cyber-bullying involves the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated and hostile behavior by an individual or group that is intended to harm others.

❖ It includes any form of bullying behavior that occurs via texting, social networking sites, mobile phones, digital media, email, camera-enabled devices, and image sharing sites such as YouTube or Flickr. Besides;

❖ It can be used to carry out all the different types of bullying; an extension of face- to-face bullying.

❖ It can also go further in that it can invade home/personal space and can involve a greater number of people.

❖ It can take place across age groups and school staff and other adults can be targeted.

❖ It can draw bystanders into being accessories.

❖ It includes threats and intimidation; harassment or 'cyberstalking'; vilification; exclusion or peer rejection; Impersonation; and manipulation.

❖ It includes the circulation of private information or images.

❖ It can be an illegal act as in the UAE it is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information in any media including internet sites.

It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It can involve complicity that falls short of direct participation. Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time and can involve everyone: pupils, other young people, staff and parents. Although bullying is not a specific criminal offense, there are criminal laws that apply to harassment and threatening behavior.

Some forms of bullying are illegal and should be reported to the police and become a Child Protection issue. These include:

- Violence or assault
- Theft
- Repeated harassment or intimidation, e.g. name-calling, threats and abusive phone calls, emails or text messages.

- Hate crimes

4. POLICY PROCEDURE

School of Knowledge educates students both in the proper use of technology and about the serious consequences of cyber-bullying and will, through curriculum, computing lessons and assemblies, continue to inform and educate students in these fast-changing areas.

❖ All students and teachers must read, understand and sign the acceptable use of policy/ Agreement.

❖ All members of the school community are aware that any incident of cyber-bullying or harassment or misuse of technology should be brought to the notice of the E-Safety Officer/Child Protection Officer.

❖ Students are permitted to use school electronic systems only which are authorized by the IT Administrator and abide by BYOD policy for the use of the personal device.

❖ Whilst education and guidance remain at the heart of what we do, our school will take action against those who take part in cyber-bullying in line with the guidelines in the Behavior Policy.

❖ Support is offered to victims of bullying including emotional support and reassurance.

5. GUIDANCE FOR STAFF

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

- Deal with each incident individually and to access the needs of each student separately;

- Regard all incidents as potentially serious and investigate them thoroughly.

- Ensure that bullies and victims are interviewed separately and obtain witness information.

- Ask the pupil to show you the electronic devices.

- Note down everything on the screen relating to an inappropriate text message or image, including the date, time and names.
- Make a transcript of a spoken message, again record date, times and names. Tell the pupil to save the message/image.
- Ask the pupil 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. Normal procedures to interview pupils and to take statements will then be followed particularly if a child protection issue is presented.

6. GUIDANCE FOR PUPILS

If you believe you or someone else is the victim of cyber-bullying, you must speak to the Class Teacher or a trusted adult as soon as possible.
Do not answer abusive messages.
Do not delete anything until it has been shown to your Class Teacher. Do not give out personal details. Never reply to abusive emails and someone you do not know.

- Show respect for all members of the school community.
- Speak out against bullying and report it when you see it.
- Support students who are bullied.
- Respect and support School Prefect initiatives.
- Support the Student Representative of House and Council to assist with anti-bullying suggestions.

7.   GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS

Cyberbullying can have a negative effect on academic, social and psychological aspects in children. For young children, general internet safety tips are a good starting point to help them to develop appropriate online etiquette and to learn appropriate responses to misbehaviors. The following tips are particularly important:

➢ At this age, children's internet use should still be closely monitored. To help with this try to keep the electronic devices in a shared or visible place in the home.

➢ Keep your child connected online and offline to friends and family that they trust. This helps to protect them from potentially negative outcomes.

➢ Help your child understand that what they say and do online is important. Encourage your child to use the same manners, communicate with others in the same way and report others who aren't being nice, just as they would in the offline world.

➢ Advise your child not to respond to any negative messages and to report any negative messages they receive to you or another trusted adult.

➢ If your child has passwords for their online activities advise them never to share their password with friends—friendships may be short-lived at this age and former friends can misuse passwords to cyberbully.

➢ 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.

➢ If your child has been involved in cyberbullying and seems distressed or shows changes in behavior or mood it may be advisable to seek professional support.

➢ Parents are advised to approach or inform the Class Teacher/Counsellor/Child Protection Officer for further support and guidance.

8. SANCTIONS

In line with the Ministry of Education and School Behavior Policy, bullying cases are considered to be third level behavior violations. Sanctions for bullying are in line with the School's Behavior Policy. Strong sanctions, such as suspension and exclusions, may be necessary and imposed in cases of severe and persistent bullying.