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Anti-Bullying Policy

Alicante, September 2024

Approved by the School Advisory Council (SAC) on 27.06.2024

Anti-Bullying Policy

1. Rationale

We believe that involving all members of the school community in the development, formulation and review of a school policy promotes a sense of partnership, ownership and shared responsibility for implementation.

2. Introductory Statement

This Policy has been drafted in line with the 'Pupils' Well-being Policy Framework' adopted at the level of the European Schools System. The Framework addresses the following policy areas:

- Child Protection
- Anti-Bullying
- Mental Health
- Good Behaviour
- Anti-Substance (Ab)Use
- Health, Safety and Security

The distinctive feature of the European Schools system, whose schools are hosted by and in different Member States, with their own regulations at national/regional level, required the conception of the Framework document as something that should be applied at system level and complemented, and at time regulated, by the national/regional regulations. This circumstance requires that each school develops its own policies to build the bridge between the global/system-wide concepts and the national/local contexts.

European School Alicante (ESA) is a KiVa school. Our school community believes that each pupil/student has a right to an education free from fear and intimidation. We regard bullying as a serious infringement of individual rights and a serious threat to the well-being of our pupils/students. Bullying of any kind is not tolerated at ESA.

All pupils/students are expected to contribute to the creation and maintenance of a safe and bully-free environment in the school. They are encouraged to engage in prevention strategies and to intervene responsibly where bullying instances may occur.

The Anti-Bullying Policy is part of the European Schools' Well-being Strategy. The strategy also includes policy guidelines in the area of child protection, good behaviour, combating substance abuse, health, and safety.

All established actions and procedures have, among others, the following objectives:

- Increase trust in one's own and others.
- Learning to live and work together.
- Improve academic performance.
- Develop the capacity to live with others.
- Build a welcoming and safe environment.
- Prevent and positively resolve conflicts that may arise.

3. Scope

This policy concerns any form of bullying among pupils/students at all times during the school day and in all places in the school. It also concerns incidents during school activities outside school such as outings, trips, excursions.

In any case, we expect our pupils/students to behave correctly in all circumstances inside and outside the school.

Other incidents in which other members of the school community are concerned or involved are regulated by the General Rules of the European schools and other applicable European Schools' regulations.

4. Definition of Bullying

Bullying can be defined as **behaviour that intentionally and repeatedly causes distress or harm to the same individual**, generally involving an imbalance of power. Bullying results in pain, distress and fear in the bullied person/people.

Bullying can take many forms, including:

Emotional	Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (hiding books, damaging personal belongings, threatening and rude gestures, etc.).
Exclusionary	Saying nothing, ignoring someone, preventing someone from participating in school life.
Verbal	Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, personal remarks aimed at undermining confidence, debasing someone on account of affiliation to a certain linguistic or national group.
Physical	Any use of violence, pushing, kicking, punching etc. and other unwanted forms of physical contact.
Against disability	Name-calling, comments on appearance, ability, achievement levels.
Racial	Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, jokes, inciting others to be racist, wearing provocative clothing or badges.
Homophobic	Use of homophobic language, making comments about sexuality, orientation or appearance.
Sexual	Unwanted sexual contact or comments/gestures, sexually abusive comments, pornographic material, graffiti with sexual content, distribution, publication or sharing of intimate photos.
Cyber	Sending threatening or disturbing messages or images, misusing the telephone, the Internet (chat room, social network, mail, sexting, WhatsApp, etc.) or associated technology such as camera and videos.
Linguistic	Making taunts or abusive comments based on spoken language or linguistic section affiliation.

Actions not considered as bullying

People can occasionally hurt each other, whether meaning to or not. To define it as bullying, the hurtful behaviour must be repeated.

These individual hurtful actions are undesirable as well and they also require an intervention. E.g.: Discussion/intervention from teachers/advisors/management.

While a specific conduct might not constitute bullying, it might still be hurtful, reprehensible and subject to disciplinary consequences, as foreseen in the General Rules of the European schools.

5. Objectives

5.1 Link with the European Schools principles and ESA's multiannual plan

All our policy documents stem from the European Schools principles¹. This policy document relates to the development of at least three of the eight key competences² for lifelong learning, which are at the core of all European Schools syllabuses. (#5 Personal, Social and Learning, #6 Civic, #8 Cultural Awareness and expression)

It is also in close relationship with the School's Multiannual and Annual plans and it should be read in conjunction with other school policy documents.

5.2 What we want to achieve

- To stand out as a school with a strong community spirit, where all pupils/students find themselves in a welcoming environment and friendly atmosphere, unhindered by any form of bullying.
- To raise awareness of bullying as an unacceptable form of behaviour.
- To ensure that pupils/students can learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment, without fear or stress.
- To create a school ethos which encourages pupils/students to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour.
- To create a school ethos that acknowledges, accommodates and respects diversity of people.
- To take practical actions to prevent incidents of bullying behaviour.
- To develop procedures for investigating and dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour.
- To develop support structures for those affected by or involved in bullying behaviour.

6. The KiVa approach

ESA is a KiVa school. The KiVa Anti-Bullying programme is an innovative school-based Anti-Bullying programme which has been developed by the University of Turku in Finland using cutting-edge research on bullying and its mechanisms, prevention, intervention, and monitoring. KiVa is an evidence-based programme to prevent bullying and to tackle the cases of bullying effectively. See more here about KiVa: <https://www.kivaprogram.net/>

This programme is being gradually introduced in our school. We would like it to become imbedded in the culture of the whole school with the purpose of improving the school's social and learning climate.

These are the KiVa golden rules of behaviour:

1. We treat everyone with respect.
2. Together we will make the class a group which everyone enjoys being a part of.
3. We do not bully others.
4. We will fight hidden bullying.
5. We will not join in on bullying or reinforce the bully.
6. We will support and defend the person being bullied.
7. We will tell somebody (teachers, parents, classmates...) when we suffer or witness bullying.

¹ <https://www.eursec.eu/en/European-Schools/principles>

² <https://education.ec.europa.eu/focus-topics/improving-quality/key-competences>

7. School strategies

The school's 'KiVa Team' oversees the implementation of Anti-Bullying pro-active (prevention) strategies along with re-active (intervention) strategies, having due regard for the well-being of all the pupils/students. The involvement of all staff members (Supervisors, Special Needs Assistants, Classroom Teachers, Educational Advisors, School Psychologists, Management) is crucial. Any suspected case of bullying will be looked into with diligence and in the shortest possible time.

7.1. Pro-active Strategies (Prevention)

- Pupils from Primary to Secondary (as of 2022-2023 until S3) will be regularly taught specific KiVa lessons throughout the year to foster an inclusive and bully-free culture in the school.
- Aspects of certain subjects in our curriculum, for example Physical Education and Ethics/Religion deal with issues such as "Human Dignity" and "Rights and Responsibilities" and will encourage positive behaviour between pupils/students.
- A Whole-school "Well-being week": The topic of bullying could be explored in varying ways across all year groups in a variety of different subjects and through activity.
- Pedagogical connections will be established with other existing well-being school programmes.

7.2. Re-active strategies (Intervention)

7.2.1 Nursery/Primary School

When there is a case of bullying and the **KiVa Team** is informed (by the class teacher, subject teacher, parents, pupils/students), then the KiVa Team takes actions.

1. The KiVa procedures start.
2. KiVa team tackles the case.
3. A teacher designated by the KiVa team delivers the appropriate KiVa lesson.
4. The documentation will be kept by the KiVa team in a separate file.

7.2.2 Secondary School (S1-S3)

1. The staff member (or a parent / student) should inform the advisor / class teacher in case of suspicion of a bullying case.
2. The case will be discussed during the KiVa coordination meeting, where a multidisciplinary professional team (Educational Advisors, School Psychologists, and KiVa coordinators) will decide if an intervention would be required.
3. If it is not a bullying case, the case will be managed by the class teacher/advisors and Secondary Management.
4. If it is a bullying case:
 - KiVa Team will intervene (see appendix 2).

7.2.3 Secondary School (S4-S7)

KiVa will be applied also to senior Secondary students as from school year 2023-24. Bullying cases will be dealt with by Educational Advisors, Class Teachers, Psychologists and Secondary Management, when necessary.

8. Roles and responsibilities

The Pupils will have the responsibility of complying with the Anti-Bullying policy. They will also have the responsibility of reporting incidents of bullying that they are subject to or have witnessed. The Pupils' Committee (CdE) has Students' representatives in the School Advisory Council and in the Education Councils.

The Parents/Guardians will have the responsibility of upholding the recommendations within the policy and accepting the measures held within it. Where incidents of bullying are occurring to their child, they will have the responsibility of reporting this to the relevant class teacher/advisor. The parents/guardians will have the responsibility of signing the Anti-Bullying policy on behalf of their child and therefore agreeing to be bound by it.

All staff must be aware of this school policy and intervene accordingly.

Where possible, all bullying incidents should be dealt with swiftly by the adult closest to it.

All staff members have the responsibility of reporting immediately any bullying incident or behaviour that they have witnessed or are aware of.

Teachers will promote the Anti-Bullying policy and be constantly vigilant for any inappropriate behaviour. In the secondary cycle, teachers must record all incidents in the "disciplinary event form" given as many details as possible. This written report shall be submitted to the relevant Educational Advisor who will investigate the inappropriate behaviour and if necessary, involve the KiVa Team for help or follow up.

Teachers are responsible for delivering the agreed preventive KiVa lessons to the pupils/students. Such lessons should be planned and included in the timetable. The class teacher will maintain an overview of the situation in each class, by staying in contact with the subject teachers. If s/he so wishes, they may assist the subject teacher/advisor where necessary in the investigation and resolution of issues.

The KiVa Team is responsible for monitoring the implementation and development of the schools' Anti-Bullying policy. They will follow all prevention and reaction strategies in the school. They will intervene in the cases escalated to them. They will also participate in the delivery of the Anti-Bullying programme to pupils/students.

The KiVa Team will also decide as to the most appropriate and effective time to inform the parents/guardians on the bullying situation.

The Educational Advisors (Secondary) will be responsible for the copying, distribution and filing of information regarding all reported incidents. They are involved in the investigation of incidents and in resolving issues that are not deemed as bullying and that are not passed on to the KiVa team.

The School psychologists shall be responsible for the specialist care of both the injured party and the accused and shall be invited to meetings of the KiVa Team. They will also follow-up cases with the Care team³.

The Assistant Deputy Directors, under the guidance of **the Deputy Directors**, shall have responsibility for the implementation of the policy in the nursery, primary and secondary school, including its publicity at staff meetings, parent teacher meetings and assemblies. They shall also liaise with staff on a regular basis regarding bullying behaviour.

³ With "Care Team" we refer to all the professionals working to care any specific pupil/student: Members of Management, Psychologists, Class Teachers, Pedagogical Advisors, KiVa Team members.

The Director shall have the overall responsibility for the implementation and development of the policy. S/he will also be responsible for its ratification and will only become involved in cases which have exceeded the responsibility of the Deputy Director.

9. Communication

9.1 Publishing and Publicising an Anti-Bullying Policy

- Excerpts from the Anti-Bullying Policy should be visible throughout the school in corridors and classrooms in as many languages used in the school as possible.
- Staff will be reminded at regular intervals about the policy and in any case whenever it is updated. New staff must also be made familiar with the policy during their induction.
- It will be published on the school website and in the pupils/students' agenda (extract).
- A class session will be held with each class group to get them familiar with the policy at the beginning of each year.
- The Anti-Bullying Policy will be promoted at various occasions. E.g.: Parents' nights, first year enrolment, pupil-run-events and open nights.
- The AMPA (APEEE) is committed to raise the awareness of parents on the issue of bullying. This includes encouraging parents to report incidents of alleged bullying early on to school staff.
- The Pupils' Committee (CdE) is committed to bringing attention to the students about the Anti-Bullying Policy and its implications in the general scope of student wellbeing. They should therefore be active participants in all relevant activities that relate to its implementation, promotion, and revision.
- Information sheets for parents, pupils/students and teachers on the Anti-Bullying policy of ESA will be provided. (See Appendix 3)
- Parents/Guardians are required to sign the school agenda stating that they have read and understood the Anti-Bullying Policy.

9.2 Supervision and Monitoring

- Bullying "black spots"⁴ within the school will be identified and monitored during break times.
- Staff will be vigilant and follow the procedures as incidents arise. Certain staff members will identify themselves with a fluorescent 'KiVa jacket' during supervision.
- An exceptional 'whole class survey' on bullying may be administered if needed.
- Every year, pupils/students will take an online anonymous survey to review instances of bullying in the school, depending on their age.

9.3 Pupil Involvement

- Senior students could assist newcomers to the school through a "mentor" programme.
- The Pupils' Committee (CdE) should play an important role in both the organisation and implementation of the "well-being week".
- A pupil Anti-Bullying committee can be established to work and initiate a bully-free culture in the school.
- Pupil involvement should also be sought to promote a responsible use of social networks

9.4 School Advisory Council (SAC)

⁴ A possible definition of "black spot" is the following: a place or area marked by a particular trouble or concern

The SAC needs to ratify the school's Anti-Bullying policy submitted to for ratification. Policy updates will be first presented and discussed inside the Education Councils.

10. Advice to Pupils

- Remember that what one pupil sees as fun, may be hurtful to another.
- Ask yourself: "***Would I like to be treated that way?***"
- Do not stand by when bullying occurs.
- Speak up on behalf of the bullied pupil who may be too scared to speak and/or report the incident to an adult.
- If you feel you are being bullied, or are a witness to bullying, talk to someone you can trust, like a parent/guardian, teacher, friend, a supervisor, a KiVa Team member or educational counsellor/advisor.
- Remember that it is not your fault if you are being bullied.
- Encourage and support the bullied pupil to stand up for him / herself and to be assertive and encourage your classmates to do the same.

11. Advice to Parents/Guardians

- Remember that your child may also be involved in the bullying.
- Watch for signs of distress in your child, e.g. irrational and changeable behaviour; reluctance to go to school; change in appetite and/or sleeping habits; frequently feels unwell; torn, damaged or missing clothes or belongings.
- If you notice behavioural changes in other children and / or bullying, report it to the Educational advisor/class teacher.
- Listen to your child's concerns, remembering you do not have to have immediate answers.
- If you suspect bullying is going on, discuss it as soon as possible with the class teacher and / or educational counsellor/advisor in the first instance. **Do not attempt to deal with it yourself, do not confront other parents. Let the school take care of it.**

12. Reviewing and evaluating the policy

The policy will be reviewed and evaluated every two years to ensure it is being adhered to and that it continues to meet the needs of the school. On-going review should be in line with any changing information or regulations and feedback from parents/guardians, pupils/students, staffmembers and others. The policy will be revised as necessary in the light of such review and evaluation and within the framework of school planning.

Annex I: Screeebubg and discussion

Anenex II: Handling of bullying cases

Annex III: Information leaflets for teachers, pupils, parents and guardians.

SCREENING AND DISCUSSIONS: DOCUMENTATION



Screening

To be filled out by the adult who is the first to know about the hurtful behaviour.

SCREENING: IS THIS BULLYING?

Hurtful behaviour was reported on

The person who has been contacted first was

The person who reported hurtful behaviour was

- the pupil targeted by hurtful behaviour
- a peer of the targeted pupil, name
- pupil's Mom / Dad, name
- a teacher, name
- someone else, name

The pupil who was targeted:

Class:

What has happened? Provide concrete examples of behaviours that were perceived hurtful.

How many times has hurtful behaviour occurred?

When was the last time it occurred?

For how long has the situation been going on?

Pupils who have taken part in the hurtful behaviour:

On the basis of the information acquired this is

- a conflict or a fight between children
- a case of hurt feelings due to misunderstandings
- a single case of an aggressive or a hurtful act
- continuous bullying → to be directed to the KiVa team.

Also the cases which are not directed to the KiVa team require intervention! In these cases schools' established procedure takes place. For example, the class teacher tackles the situation discussing with the pupils involved, or the dispute is solved by mediation, or a sanction is given. In some cases, it will be necessary to be very assertive about the hurtful behaviour of the pupil.

Discussions

All the discussion forms are to be filled out by the KiVa team.

Target of the actions:

class

When was the KiVa team informed about the bullying case? On

Names of the KiVa Team members tackling this case:

1. DISCUSSION WITH THE TARGET OF THE ACTIONS

Date,

What type of bullying has occurred?

How many times has bullying occurred? Select the best answer.

- once or twice
- three times or more

When was the last time that bullying occurred?.

For how long has the bullying been going on?

- for a week or two
- for a month
- for 2 to 6 months
- for 6 to 12 months
- for years

The perpetrators who have actively taken part in the actions (name and class):

The pupils who have not taken part in the actions or who have been friendly towards the targeted pupil. (The aim is to find pupils for the class teacher to talk with and come up with some ideas to support and encourage the target of the actions).

Further information:

The class teacher has been informed about this discussion on

Parents or guardians have been contacted on,

2. INDIVIDUAL DISCUSSIONS WITH THE PERPETRATORS OF THE ACTIONS

The discussions are to be held with all the pupils (individually) during the same lesson.

Pupil:

Class:

Matters noted or agreed on during the discussion:

Pupil:

Class:

Matters noted or agreed on during the discussion:

Pupil:

Class:

Matters noted or agreed on during the discussion:

Pupil:

Class:

Matters noted or agreed on during the discussion:

3. GROUP DISCUSSION WITH THE PERPETRATORS OF THE ACTIONS

To be held immediately after the individual discussions.

Date

Notes:

Parents or guardians have been contacted on

4. CHECK WHETHER THE CLASS TEACHER HAS MET WITH A FEW CLASSMATES OF THE TARGET OF THE ACTIONS

The class teacher has met with classmates on

5. FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSION WITH THE TARGET OF THE ACTIONS

Date

According to the target of the actions, the bullying has

- stopped
- decreased
- remained the same
- increased

Notes:

6. FOLLOW-UP GROUP DISCUSSION WITH THE PERPETRATORS OF THE ACTIONS

Date

Is the target of the actions present at the discussion? (This is not required, but possible if s/he wants to).

- no
- yes

Notes:

Possible further measures:

Handling of bullying cases



When the KiVa team is notified about a bullying case, the team follows a discussion protocol individually (or in a group) with the students who have taken part in the bullying situation ideally during one lesson.

1 KiVa team discusses with the student who has been bullied

2 KiVa team discusses individually with the students who have taken part in bullying.

3 KiVa team discusses in a group with the students who have taken part in bullying

4 The school informs the guardians whose children have been invited to a KiVa discussion

5 KiVa team has a follow-up discussion with the bullied student

6 KiVa team has a follow-up discussion with the students who have taken part in bullying

If the situation has not changed the guardians are involved in the discussions along with the head teacher.

Other protection/correctional/disciplinary methods can be implemented if the situation has not changed.

Information leaflets for teachers, pupils and parents/guardians

Teachers

All teachers have a role and responsibility to make ESA a bully-free school.

Please do not stand by when you see instances of negative behaviour. Take positive actions as follows:

Step 1: If you see inappropriate behavior, intervene in the situation to stop the behaviour. Report this behaviour to the class teacher/educational advisor (through the Disciplinary Event form at Secondary level) giving as many details as possible.

Step 2: In the Primary cycle, the KiVa procedures starts. In the Secondary cycle, the Educational Advisor will investigate the inappropriate behaviour and when necessary, involve the KiVa Team for help or follow up.

Step 3: In the Secondary cycle, the case will be discussed during KiVa coordination meeting, where a multidisciplinary professional team (Pedagogical Advisors, School Psychologists, and KiVa coordinators) will decide if an intervention would be required.

Step 4: If bullying is not occurring, but rather inappropriate behaviour, the class teacher/educational advisor will deal with it. If it is a bullying case, the KiVa procedures start.

Most importantly: Lead others by example. We all have the right to work in a bully-free environment so let us strive for it! Thank you all for your consideration.

Pupils

We do not accept any forms of bullying in ESA!

We operate a 'no blame' policy for bullying. Therefore, if you report any bullying behaviour to an adult, you will not get anybody into trouble. The adults will investigate the behaviour, talk to the pupils involved and put a stop to it. Nobody will be in trouble with their parents or teachers provided that they change their ways. If the bullying continues, other measures, including disciplinary ones, will be taken.

Remember these important rules so that we can keep ESA bully-free!

1. Remember that what one pupil sees as fun, may be hurtful to another.
2. Ask yourself: "Would I like to be treated that way?"
3. Do not stand by when bullying occurs.
4. Speak up on behalf of the bullied pupil who may be too scared to speak and/or report the incident to an adult.
5. If you feel you are being bullied, or are a witness to bullying, talk to someone you can trust,

like a parent/guardian, teacher, friend, a supervisor, a KiVa Team member or educational advisor.

6. Remember that it is not your fault if you are being bullied.

7. Encourage and support the bullied pupil to stand up for him / herself and to be assertive and encourage your classmates to do the same.

Parents/Guardians

ESA does not accept any form of bullying.

We, as a school community, will do our utmost to deal with bullying behaviour in our school, ensuring that any negative behaviour does not affect the wellbeing of our pupils and staff.

If you suspect any type of bullying, please follow these steps:

Step 1: Firstly, contact your child's class teacher (Primary/Nursery) or Educational Advisor (Secondary) to report any bullying behaviour.

Step 2: If it is not a bullying case, they will deal with the inappropriate behaviour. If it is a bullying case, the KiVa procedures start.

Step 3: The KiVa team (in pairs) will meet individually with the pupil(s) accused of bullying and those being bullied. They will discuss the behaviour and actions and will aim to reassure the child being bullied as well as explain to the perpetrators why their actions cannot continue.

Step 4: The class teacher may be asked to have a discussion with other members of the class who could show support for the pupil being bullied.

Step 5: Follow-up discussion with the pupil who was being bullied. – Has the situation improved?

Step 6: Follow-up discussion with the pupil(s) who have taken part in the bullying, along with the pupil who was bullied if they so wish. – How do we ensure that the bullying stops?

If the bullying behaviour does not stop, parents will be involved, as well as management if necessary. Pupils could be subject to sanctions at this point.

In general:

- Watch for signs of distress in your child. E.g.: irrational and changeable behaviour; reluctance to go to school; change in appetite and/or sleeping habits; frequently feels unwell; torn, damaged or missing clothes or belongings.
- If you notice behavioural changes in other children and / or bullying, report it to the Educational advisor/class teacher.
- Listen to your child's concerns, remembering you do not have to have immediate answers. Remember that your child may also be involved in the bullying.
- Never confront other parents. Let the school handle it.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.