



MERIDIAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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Meridian International School

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Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

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Anti-Bullying Policy

1. Rationale

As a British School Overseas, [Meridian International School \[MIS\]](#) invites all students, parents, members of staff and welcomed guests to review the following behaviour policy. This has been developed from an anti-bullying & persecution viewpoint which respects both British values and the standards of the Czech Republic. In particular, [MIS] is committed to upholding the principles of the UK Government and those stipulated by the Department of Education (to see the particulars of the guidelines from the UK government, please view APPENDIX 1 of this document), and the Czech Republic guidelines in APPENDIX 2.



1.1 Purpose of the Policy

[MIS] is committed to working with students and parents to provide a learning environment that is secure and supportive so that all individuals can develop academically and socially free from fear of ridicule, harassment, or physical threat. We aim to create an environment where all members of the school community feel safe, respected, and valued. All children have an absolute right to be protected from others who may wish to harm, degrade, or abuse them. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. Bullying may be verbal, physical, or psychological. In fact, any action which makes a child feel uncomfortable, insecure, or threatened may be defined as bullying. The school disapproves of bullying in all its forms and considers it a most serious offence. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to share and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. [MIS] has a *positive sharing* approach. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff. The staff take the lead in creating a climate in which students will report immediately any bullying incident in the expectation that it will be dealt with urgently and firmly. Parents have an essential role to play in counteracting bullying. Where bullying is clearly established, parents of both victim and perpetrator will always be contacted and the school will seek to involve them in securing solutions.

This policy identifies how [MIS] upholds the above conditions by prevent and tackling bullying, as well as associated issues. The policy should be considered alongside our [Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy](#), as well as our [Positive Behaviour Policy & Personal Device Policy](#).

(1.1.1) Who does the Policy Apply to?

This policy applies only to incidents of bullying which take place on school premises. However, the school has an enduring interest in the welfare and conduct of its students and will respond positively to any information it receives about bullying outside school according to the following conditions:

-  If it emerges that if a student is responsible for bullying other children outside school, then this matter will be addressed and (if appropriate) the bully's parents/c informed.
-  If a child is found to be the victim of bullying outside school, then help and support will be offered, and advice given on how to avoid further incidents in future. The victim's parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed.

- ✚ If information is received that a child is being bullied by a sibling or parent(s)/guardian(s) outside school this will initially be discussed with the parents. If concerns persist, then the matter will be referred to social care to safeguard the student (see Safeguarding Policy).
- ✚ If children are being bullied by pupils of another school, then pastoral staff of that school will be informed and invited to deal with the matter.

1.2 Terminology & Definitions

Please find a brief description of frequently referenced designations used throughout this policy. This includes further definitions of what [MIS] categorizes as forms and types of bullying. The following is based on research conducted both in the Czech Republic and the U.K., yet it deals with Czech specific issues in most cases.

(1.2.1) What is Bullying?

There are five recognised features of bullying:

- ✚ It is deliberate, hurtful behaviour
- ✚ It is repeated over a period of time
- ✚ It is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves
- ✚ It is difficult for those who bully to learn new social behaviours
- ✚ Those who bully have and exercise power inappropriately over others.

All forms of bullying can be damaging to the development of both the person being bullied and the person bullying. Bullying can take many forms, but the main types are:

PHYSICAL: Pushing, hitting, kicking, punching, taking belongings or an act of violence with intent to harm

VERBAL: Name calling, insulting, threats/intimidation or making offensive remarks

INDIRECT: Spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups or being made the subject of malicious rumours

CYBER: Tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed, or otherwise targeted using text messaging, e-mail, instant messaging, or any other type of digital technology e.g., social networking sites (BEBO, Facebook, MySpace, BBM, Twitter). Misuse of associated digital technology such as camera and video aids – refer to Safeguarding policy.

Note: bullying is not one-off fall outs between friends.

(1.2.2) Forms of Bullying

It is important to be accurate and specific when an emotive word such as “bullying” is used. The following descriptions are offered to help parents, students, as well as educators, understand the specific nature of a bullying incident as well as how to assist with the issue. In education, we must be aware of the following.

BULLYING RELATED TO RACE, RELIGION OR CULTURE:

Racist or faith-based bullying is bullying based on a person’s background, colour, religion or heritage. Some surveys and focus groups have found that a high proportion of bullied students have experienced racist or faith-based bullying. Recent political and social issues also appear to have been a factor in bullying and harassment. There is research to support the suggestion that where black and minority ethnic children experience bullying, it is more likely to be severe bullying. Moreover, bullying incidents can be a subset of the indirect and direct racist hostility which children from minority populations, children of different faiths, as well as Roma (gypsy) children can experience in a number of situations. When racist or faith-based bullying takes place, the characteristics singled out not only apply to the individual child but also refer to their family and more broadly their ethnic or faith community as a whole. Racial and cultural elements in bullying can be seen to heighten the negative impact on a child’s sense of identity, self-worth, and self-esteem.

BULLYING RELATED TO SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS [SEND] & DISABILITIES:

Research shows that children and young people with SEND, and disabilities are more at risk of bullying than their peers. Public bodies have new responsibilities to actively promote equality of opportunity for all disabled people and eliminate disability-related harassment.

Children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities do not always have the levels of social confidence and competence and the robust friendship bonds that can protect against bullying. Where children with SEND and disabilities are themselves found to be bullying in most cases (except those related to specific conditions) schools should expect the same standards of behaviour as apply to the rest of the school community, having made the reasonable adjustments necessary.

BULLYING RELATED TO GIFTED & TALENTED:

Children and young people who are gifted and talented can be vulnerable to bullying. Their achievements, different interests and advanced abilities can set them apart from their peers and can lead to a sense of not ‘fitting in’ and feelings of isolation. Their talents and abilities may cause feelings of resentment and jealousy among their peers which may make them targets for bullying behaviour.

BULLYING RELATED TO APPEARANCE OR HEALTH CONDITIONS:

Those with health or visible medical conditions, such as eczema, may be more likely than their peers to become targets for bullying behaviour. Perceived physical limitations, such as size and weight, and

other body image issues can result in bullying, and obvious signs of affluence (or lack of it), can also be exploited.

BULLYING RELATED TO SEXUAL ORIENTATION:

Homophobic bullying involves the targeting of individuals on the basis of their perceived or actual sexual orientation. Evidence of homophobic bullying suggests that children and young people who are gay or lesbian (or perceived to be) face a higher risk of victimization than their peers. Homophobic bullying is perhaps the form of bullying least likely to be self-reported, since disclosure carries risks not associated with other forms of bullying. The young person may not want to report bullying if it means “coming out” to teachers and parents before they are ready to. Homophobic bullying includes all forms of bullying but in particular it can include:

- ✚ Verbal abuse - the regular use, consciously or unconsciously, of offensive and discriminatory language, particularly the widespread use of the term ‘gay’ in a negative context. Also spreading rumours that cause an individual’s perceived sexual orientation to be ridiculed, questioned or insulted
- ✚ Physical abuse - including hitting, punching, kicking, sexual assault and threatening behaviour
- ✚ Cyber-bullying - using on-line spaces to spread rumours about someone or exclude them. Can also include text messaging, including video and picture messaging

SEXIST OR SEXUAL BULLYING:

Sexist and sexual bullying affects both genders. Boys may be victims as well as girls, and both sexes may be victims of their own sex. Sexual bullying may be characterised by name calling, comments and overt “looks” about appearance, attractiveness, and emerging puberty. In addition, uninvited touching, innuendos and propositions, pornographic imagery or graffiti may be used. Children and young people identifying as trans-gender or experiencing gender dysphoria (feeling that they belong to another gender or do not conform with the gender role prescribed to them) can also be targeted by bullies.

BULLYING LINKED TO HOME CIRCUMSTANCES:

Students may be made vulnerable to bullying by the fact that they provide care to someone in their family with an illness, disability, mental health, or substance misuse problem. Young carers may be taking on practical and emotional caring responsibilities that would normally be expected of an adult. Research has highlighted the difficulties young carers face, including risks of ill-health, stress, and tiredness, especially when they care through the night. Many feel bullied or isolated. Children in care may also be vulnerable to bullying for a variety of reasons, such as they’re not living with their birth parents or because they have fallen behind in their studies. Some children and young people are heavily influenced by their communities or homes where bullying and abuse may be common. Some bullying at school may arise from trauma or instability at home related to issues of domestic violence or bereavement or from the experience of being part of a refugee family. Siblings of vulnerable children may themselves be the subject of bullying by association.








BULLYING OF OR BY MERIDIAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL STAFF:

Concerns relating to a member of the school staff or other person in a position of trust will be investigated thoroughly (see Safeguarding policy). Likewise, verbal, and physical abuse directed from students towards members of staff will also be dealt with severely (see consequences policy). The Head of School

reserves the right to insist that abusive parents leave the site and take steps to ensure the safety of students, staff, and other stakeholders. This could include taking out an injunction against the offending parent to prevent them from accessing the school site in the future.













(1.2.2) The Effects of Bullying

Young people who are being bullied are being denied the opportunity to reach their potential. Long-term effects may include:

-  Absenteeism
-  Fall in academic performance
-  Poor self-esteem
-  Health problems
-  Isolation and failure to develop socially
-  Depression and suicide
-  Relationship difficulties

(1.2.3) Signs of Bullying Occurring

Educators and other school staff should be cognizant of the following:

-  Change of friendship group
-  Lack of friends
-  School rejection
-  "Illness" at certain times or on certain days
-  Changes in standard of work
-  Withdrawal/sudden lack of confidence
-  Severe cases of depresses
-  Missing possessions
-  Unexplained cuts and bruises
-  Cessation of eating regularly
-  Attempts or threatening to self-harm
-  Starts stammering

Although the above list is most likely to apply to victims of bullying, changes in behaviour can indicate that someone has developed anti-social traits and may be guilty of bullying others. Further, it could be the case that there is an unaddressed safeguarding concern.

Anti-Bullying Policy






2. Reporting, Recording & Prevention of Incidents

It is very important that all students and employees feel safe whilst in the school premises. Due to this, everyone is strongly encouraged to report any incident of bullying. It should be known that all report concerns will be dealt with sensitively and with compassion. Students: being the largest and most vulnerable category, those who are the primary concern of this policy, it is appropriate that they dominate importance when it comes to the anti-bullying procedure. It is important that students are aware of the policy and also operate in a manner according to the safeguarding guidelines. All teachers and students are responsible to help keep the school a safe environment for everyone.

2.1 Reporting & Recording Instances

The school encourages and equips the whole school community to report all incidents of bullying, including students who have experienced being bullied and bystanders who have witnessed an incident. We are a 'telling' school.

The school endeavors to provide clear, accessible, and confidential incident reporting systems, which include access to:

-  Staff including teachers and support staff who are aware of the importance of listening to students' concerns. We encourage all students to think about significant members of the school community that they can go to when they have a problem. This will generally be the Class Teacher
-  There are three Designated Safeguarding Lead members of staff (see Safeguarding Policy)
-  A class system to support younger/vulnerable students in school
-  Students
-  Internal school procedures ensure a concern reported through any of the above channels will be filtered to the SLT to be dealt with as soon as possible

(2.1.1) Observing Incidents of Bullying (Parents & Guardians)

If a concern is raised and not dealt with it becomes a complaint. Concerns and routine queries should be raised to Class Teacher. We place great emphasis on the role of the Class Teacher. It is the Class Teacher who has the most regular contact with your child, monitoring attendance, academic performance, and the general welfare of your child. If you have a query or a concern, please contact the Class Teacher first. Complaints of a serious nature should be made to the Deputy Head or Head of School, or if the complaint refers to the Head of School to the designated School Director. Please raise your concerns before they become complaints. In some circumstances it is necessary for the line manager to pass down an issue to another member of staff. This does not mean that the school is taking your concern any less seriously. Through delegation we are trying to ensure that your concern is dealt with as quickly as possible.

At [MIS], we firmly believe in a circle of communication between parents, students, and the school. Without this students' needs are not best met. If you have a concern or complaint, we would like you to tell us about it. We welcome suggestions for improving our work and want to know if you have any concerns. If you have a concern, please let us know as soon as possible. It is difficult for us to properly investigate an incident which happened some time ago.

Staff at the school will make every effort to respond to your EduPage-notice/call within forty-eight hours. More serious issues will be responded to within twenty-four hours. Due to the complex nature of some issues it is not always possible to resolve matters within this time frame, but staff will at the very least acknowledge your concern and indicate who is dealing with the matter.

When telephoning, please be aware that most staff will be teaching and that on many occasions you will be asked to leave a message. If the matter is urgent then you can ask the reception staff to find you a senior member of staff who will be able to help you. If you are not sure of the name of the person you want to speak to, please refer to the school website or ask the reception staff who will be able to help you. Please note it may not be possible to come into school without a prior appointment and expect to see a member of staff. We strongly recommend that you contact the Class Teacher by EduPage first.

(2.1.2) Recording Incidents of Bullying (Parents & Guardians)



Bullying incidents will be systematically acknowledged and used to identify patterns of behaviour. Many of our staff have been trained in how to identify and assist with bullying and this experience will be used to identify trends with specific groups (e.g., cyber-bullying), or within particular areas of the school site to allow preventative measures to be planned. By taking the positive action of recording incidents of bullying we are giving a clear message to parents, staff, and the wider community that we take these incidents seriously and can become essential evidence if there is a dispute between the parties about how an incident of bullying has been handled.

Data regarding bullying will be monitored and acted upon by the administration at the school.

(2.1.3) Prevention of Bullying (PSHEE / RSE / G.P.)

Meridian International School believes that the whole school community should work together to reduce bullying as part of our efforts to promote a positive and inclusive whole school ethos and create a safe, healthy, and stimulating environment. Alongside the school's responsive strategies for dealing with incidents of bullying, the school adopts as part of our pastoral support system, a whole school approach to implementing proactive and preventative interventions at a school, class, and individual level to reduce bullying.

Through Personal, Social, Health & Economic Education (PSHEE) / Relationships & Sex Education (RSE), as well as Global Perspectives (G.P.) lessons, in addition to the monthly Class Teacher Hour and annual programs related to national "anti-bullying weeks", both positive personal and social behaviours are taught:

-  Students should be able to recognise bullying behaviour
-  Students should know that they can and should speak out

- ✚ Students should have the confidence to talk to someone if they find themselves to be a victim of bullying
- ✚ Students should know who to speak to (Class Teacher / Safeguarding Team member)
- ✚ Students should feel confident that they will be listened to and supported
- ✚ Students should be taught (an ongoing exercise) that bullying is a serious breach of the school rules and will not be tolerated

Meridian International School will also strive to:

- ✚ Adopt positive behaviour management strategies as part of the school's *Behaviour Policy*.
- ✚ Ensure that the school's anti bullying statement or charter is actively promoted in assemblies and other formal occasions, as well as displayed around the school.
- ✚ Provide training on behaviour management and anti-bullying for all relevant staff including lunchtime staff.
- ✚ Provide social skills groups for vulnerable individuals and groups.
- ✚ Provide a transition programme to support students moving across year groups and key stages.
- ✚ Provide information on Czech support agencies, such as *Nadace Nase dite/Our Child Foundation*, bullying including telephone numbers for help lines and addresses for supportive websites.
- ✚ Ensure adequate supervision of pupils before school, at breaks and lunchtimes and after school. Use CCTV when applicable to review any incidents in open areas.
- ✚ Manage outdoor areas according to year groups as best as possible.
- ✚ Provide a range of opportunities at lunchtimes so that pupils have positive activities in which to engage.
- ✚ Through the School Council and feedback, students will review the effectiveness of the school's measures in counteracting bullying.
- ✚ Use students and peer mentors to pro-actively reduce bullying and act as a student voice. Publish activities and lead assemblies/whole school activities.
- ✚ Identify and use opportunities within the school curriculum to discuss aspects of bullying to emphasise that the school does view bullying as a serious issue, and to explore the appropriate ways of behaving towards each other e.g. within citizenship, cross curricular days and as part of the assembly schedule.
- ✚ Teachers will ensure that they do not use teaching materials or equipment which portray a bad or negative view of any group because of their ethnic origin, gender, ability/disability etc.

✚ Teachers will encourage pupils to treat everyone with respect through:

- Modelling the behaviour, they expect through their own dealings with pupils
- Always challenging inappropriate responses from pupils towards other individuals or groups (including racial or minority groups)
- Implementing the school's guide to rewards and sanctions (see Behaviour policy)
- Promoting the school's anti-bullying policies at the start of the school year, to highlight the issue and to encourage pupils to take a positive stand against bullying
- Promoting positive and caring attitudes towards minorities through the curriculum, assemblies, school interaction and charity work
- The school will, through staff and partner organisations, restrict access to certain websites on the school computing system and monitor internet use where appropriate
- Regulate the use of mobile phones during the school day
- Work pro-actively with community groups to respond to and help eradicate anti-social behaviour in the community. Liaising with members of the community e.g., transport service providers and engaging in community initiatives and safer school partnerships.

(2.1.4) Reporting Incidents of Bullying

All staff have a responsibility to tackle bullying. [MIS] endeavors to ensure that teachers and other adults working with students are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to identify and address all types and forms of bullying effectively and safely. This includes recognising the signs of bullying in children and how to identify vulnerable young people who may be susceptible to being bullied or becoming actively involved in bullying and bullying type behaviour. All of this is to ensure that everyone in [MIS] feels competent and confident in appropriately challenging bullying. It will be ensured that teachers have a clear understanding of the school's policy and procedures on preventing and responding to incidents of bullying including providing short and long-term support to those affected by bullying.

When a member of staff receives information, either directly or indirectly, that a child may have been the victim of a bullying incident, this report will be taken seriously and investigated. If bullying is suspected staff will talk to the suspected victim, the suspected bully and any witnesses and take written statements. It is recognised that in some situations "victims" may exaggerate or invent bullying incidents and members of staff need to be aware of this.

The school will offer a proactive, sympathetic, and supportive response to children who are the victims of bullying. The exact nature of the response will be determined by the particular child's individual needs and may include:

- ✚ Immediate action to stop the incident and secure the child's safety
- ✚ Positive reinforcement that reporting the incident was the correct thing to do
- ✚ Reassurance that the victim is not responsible for the behaviour of the bully
- ✚ Informing/informing parents at the earliest opportunity
- ✚ Strategies to prevent further incidents
- ✚ Sympathy and empathy
- ✚ Counselling
- ✚ Befriending /creation of a support group
- ✚ Extra supervision/monitoring
- ✚ Peer mediation/peer mentoring
- ✚ Adult mediation between the perpetrator and the victim (provided this does not increase the victim's vulnerability)
- ✚ Arrangements to review progress

Social networking websites are sometimes used for bullying and any threats made on such a site and acted on in school will be classed as pre-meditated and are likely to result in a more severe sanction. It should be acknowledged that it is very difficult for the school to act on cyber bullying which has occurred outside of school time. The new **[MIS] Personal Device Policy** has been updated to address this growing struggle.

Discussion with the "bully":





- ✚ Talking about what happened, to discover why they became involved
- ✚ Informing the bully's parent(s)/guardian(s)
- ✚ Continuing to work with the bully in order to modify attitudes - this can include changes to class groupings or school travel arrangements
- ✚ Taking one or more of the disciplinary steps described below to prevent further bullying

2.2 Monitoring & Review

To fully resolve any issue regarding bullying and safeguarding the welfare of our students, **[MIS]** will endeavor to "not forget" about a single case and to undertake reviews of the situation. In most case this can be achieved through the Class Teacher role, with mentors checking on those students who have experienced bullying. In regard to the perpetrator, reviews will take place according to the formal Positive Behavioural Policy guidelines.

Bullying prevention strategies can take many forms. Though we believe we always do our best to serve our students well, [MIS] promises to review its bullying prevention strategies regularly, to ensure that our policy is up to date with current educational/pastoral methodologies. For example, altering our strategy to adjust to the increase of “online” or “personal device” bullying.

The opinions of others will be sought and, if necessary, [MIS] will gain the opinion of others from across our family. These can be obtained via the following examples:

-  Meetings with students, running anti-bullying events, in addition to using the Student Council as a positive representation for student interests
-  Discussion with parents and ensuring parents feel they can contact the school to discuss the improvement of our policies; further, that parents will use parents' meetings effectively and join in discussion on wider school issues
-  Effective use of EduPage for quick communication (to swiftly solve a problem before it escalates)
-  Informal meetings and discussions with parents, students, and everyone in the [MIS] family

Data will be used by the Head of School & School Directors to review strategy and celebrate success. The policy will be reviewed by the Head of School and School Directors annually at the first meeting at the start of each academic year.



Advice/parents' guides will be posted on the website to ensure parents/carers are kept informed of the latest trends. This will enable the school and parents/carers to work together to minimise and prevent bullying in our community.

2.3 Roles, Responsibilities & Sanctions

Meridian International School has a positive behavioural process for each section of our institution. Each negative incident surrounding the phenomenon of bullying will be reviewed and assessed accordingly to the individual circumstance of each particular case. Information about the 'behavioural review' board is featured at the beginning of this document.

Where students do not respond to preventative strategies to combat bullying, tough action will be taken.

At [MIS] intimidating or bullying others - including by electronic media [cyber-bullying] - are considered as serious breaches of the Positive Behaviour Policy, and a range of strategies and/or sanctions may be applied, determined in accordance with the Positive Behaviour Policy and through consideration of the nature of the bullying on a case-by-case basis. The Head of School will be informed, and may be consulted with regard to appropriate sanctions, which may include:

-  Writing a letter of apology - Removal from the group (in class)
-  Withdrawal of break and lunchtime privileges

- ✚ Withdrawal of other privileges (e.g., for cyber bullying, iPad use is suspended)
- ✚ Withholding participation in any School trip or sports events that are not an essential part of the curriculum
- ✚ Individual Action Plan or a Weekly Report Card monitored by the Class Teacher or by the Head of Primary/Secondary
- ✚ Warning of exclusion in the event of further misbehavior
- ✚ Exclusion from lessons or from school. Exclusions include:
 - Internal Suspension (between 1 and 3 days, depending on severity)
 - External Suspension (between 1 and 3 days, depending on severity). Student and parents must meet with the Head of Primary/Secondary on the day of return, prior to the student being permitted back in class
 - Indefinite Suspension is an exclusion from school for an unspecified period. This is usually used to enable further investigations into serious incidents to take place
 - Permanent Exclusion (expulsion) is the ultimate sanction

The Head of Pre-School/Primary/Secondary/High School will contact the parents/guardian, by EduPage, to inform them of the situation and will arrange a meeting with the student, the parents, and the Class Teacher.

The appropriate sanction will be explained at the meeting and subsequently implemented.

Some offences, where it is the duty of the school to report particular incidents, may lead to Police involvement in order to safeguard the school community.

The school may also offer support to the student in terms of outside counselling (recommendation of centres)

Further Offences: any further instances of bullying will be dealt with directly by the Head of School and may result in the parents being required to find alternative arrangements for the education of their child, possibly at short notice, in accordance with the school's contract.

Anti-Bullying Policy

3. Advice & Guidance About Bullying Concerns

No school is immune from bullying and no school should be complacent. If bullying occurs at [MIS], it is vitally important that all of us should know what action to take. The following sub-sections of this document serve as “guides” for different members of our school family. These are: (i) parents, (ii) students, and (iii) teachers and staff.

We encourage all members of our community to carefully read and act on it if necessary. Staff at [MIS] recognise bullying behaviour as all forms of physical and psychological abuse systematically directed at victims who find this hurtful. We take responsibility for helping all students to understand what bullying is and the harm it can do. We believe that adults can set an example in their own behaviour. We hope that the ethos of the school will help to instill mutual respect and civilised behaviour.

We recognise that in our preventative approach to bullying we should provide pupils with the opportunity to discuss the topic through class teacher periods and meetings. We will also ensure that every student knows where, when and to whom they can talk about any bullying incidents. This may be staff at school or parents at home. Pupils must feel confident that talking to adults is the proper course of action if they witness or experience bullying.

3.1 Parents

For parent(s)/guardian(s), if you discover that your child is being bullied, please do not encourage him or her to 'hit back'. It may be contrary to your child's nature and may be just what the bully wants. Emphasise to your child that there is nothing wrong with him or her and that he or she can be helped. Contact the School. Incidents of bullying should be immediately referred to the Class Teacher. Senior staff may then be called in to help. Although the nature of the response will depend on the circumstances, we have a standard procedure to follow which does not necessarily involve punishment in the first instance. Staff are experienced and use tact and discretion in their follow-up.








The whole school community (parents, pupils, teaching and support staff) has a role to play in combating bullying. All pupils should be aware that there is no such thing as an innocent bystander and the school neither condones nor ignores bullying, while all adults should be familiar with this policy to avoid inappropriate action being taken. We should all be committed to ensuring that every student receives his or her education in a safe environment free from humiliation, oppression, or harassment.

Please refer to the full policy for more detailed information.




3.2 Students

Bullying can ruin a student's school life and education, so we treat it very seriously. It is a form of anti-social behaviour that has no place at Meridian International School. Bullying can take many forms: physical, psychological, or verbal. It can affect the happiness and achievements of the victims, the on-lookers, and the bullies themselves. Remember that there may be others being bullied so you will be helping them as well as yourself by talking to someone.




The following advice has been suggested and approved by Meridian International School students:

-  Try to ignore the person who is attempting to bully you
-  Tell someone what has been happening, even if you have been warned not to. You may go to any adult in school, but particularly your Class Teacher or your parents. They will want to know and to help
-  Do not retaliate (try to get even) in a physical or verbal way. Walk calmly away from the situation
-  Do not blame yourself
-  If you see someone else being bullied, find an adult in school (possibly your Class Teacher or teachers) and explain what you have seen and heard
-  Do not just ignore bullying. Think about how you would feel in the victim's position. Remember that bullying doesn't go away by itself
-  Make sure that you do not get involved in the bullying as an 'easy' option out of the situation - don't help the bully, help the victim

Basic advice on appropriate and positive behaviour within school:

-  Be friendly and rely on friends to help you avoid these situations
-  React calmly, walk away to avoid further reaction
-  Think positively about yourself and be confident

Some advice on how to avoid being a bully:







-  Talk about problems, rather than taking them out on someone else
-  Don't make unpleasant remarks about anybody - even if you intend them as a joke
-  Try to avoid confrontations: find some way and somewhere to cool down

3.3 Teachers & Staff

As a teacher, it can be very difficult to know how to handle a bullying-related situation. What do you do if a pupil comes to you asking for help? What if they haven't asked for help, but you have witnessed it? What if you have seen nothing but have noticed a change in behaviour and are worried about the child?

Children spend most of their youth in education and if they are getting bullied, it can have a detrimental effect on their studies, health and happiness. They may not tell their parents what is going on, but if they are going through a tough time, they may turn to you - the teacher - for support.

A recent study from the Anti-Bullying Alliance (UK) stated that *'the equivalent of one child in every classroom (4%) said they were being bullied face to face or online every day,'* so it's important as a teacher to recognise the signs of a child suffering. School bullying will affect children in different ways. Children may not want to talk about what they are going through, so it can be difficult to know if there is a problem.

-  Change in academic performance
-  Easily upset
-  More prone to argue
-  Becoming less social
-  Increased number of sick days
-  Staying behind or leaving early

The following steps (taken from the Anti-Bullying Alliance) can serve as a good guide of how to approach a suspicion or direct case:

Make sure your students know how to report bullying and who to speak to

Options for support should be known and information should be clear and accessible. Students need to know who to talk to so they feel confident in seeking help. Similarly, all school staff should be well-trained in the different forms of bullying a student may experience.

Have a clear definition of bullying

While there is no legal definition of bullying, the different forms of bullying should be understood and publicised. Students need to understand what is unacceptable behaviour and the consequences that can occur. Students also need to know what the school considers 'bullying' so they feel confident in reporting it. If they feel they are being bullied, they should not be told otherwise. Talk to them and together you can find a solution.

Ask the student what they want to do

It's important that the child has a say in the actions taken. Children often fear what might happen if they report bullying, which is why they often stay quiet. They don't want to risk making the bully angry and making the situation worse. As a teacher, you need to listen.

Be clear on your response to bullying

The school's anti-bullying policy should provide clear information on how any form of bullying will be dealt with. You need to challenge the bullying behaviour and make sure it will not continue afterwards. With every incident of bullying, it is important to consider the whole school community and ensure everyone is on the same page.

Continue to communicate

Long after the incident is resolved, continue to keep in contact. Regular communication with the children and parents involved will help you understand whether the situation was dealt with correctly and if any further action needs to be taken.

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4. Advice & Guidance About Bullying Concerns

Whilst we are based in the Czech Republic, Meridian International School acknowledges that English language sources may be of more benefit to the majority of our students. As such – in accordance with our policy – students which seek outside help should first contact the required Czech agencies listed in this document, yet they should also take note of the recommended UK resources in case they are not Czech-language speakers.

4.1 UK Department of Education (Advice & Guidance)

DfE Behaviour & Discipline in Schools Guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/behaviour-and-discipline-in-schools>

Mental Health & Behaviour in Schools Advice for School Staff

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2>

Counselling in Schools A Blueprint for the Future: Advice for School Leaders & Counsellors

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/counselling-in-schools>

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

Working Together to Safeguard Children

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

4.2 UK Legislative Links

Schools' duty to promote good behaviour: Section 89 Education and Inspections Act 2006 and Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014.

Power to tackle poor behaviour outside school

[:http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/pdfs/ukpga_20060040_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/pdfs/ukpga_20060040_en.pdf)

The Equality Act 2010:

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/pdfs/ukpga_20100015_en.pdf

4.3 UK Specialist Organisations

The following organisations provide support for schools and parents dealing with specific bullying issues including social, mental, or emotional affects caused by bullying. The U.K. has more available agencies available in comparison to the Czech Republic, however students are encouraged to first seek help from the two Czech Republic based groups below. In the following organisations, Czech groups are listed first, followed by English-language recommendations.

Our Child Foundation (Nadace Nase dite): Following the model of the British Childline, the NND launched a nationwide Safety Line 116 111 for children and young people.

The line was launched on October 1, 1994. In 1994, the foundation also established an association called the Safety and Youth Line Association, which was entrusted with the continuous operation of the Safety Line.

After 10 years of experience, October 1, 2004, the Association of Safety and Youth was united. The association took over the main projects of the Foundation - the Safety Line, the Parental Line and the Home Message Line. At the end of 2004, the association also had the task of providing all the necessary funds for these projects.

The internet line helps children as well as the telephone crisis line. The Internet link can also be contacted by e-mail at help@linkabezpeci.cz

www.nasedite.cz

EDUin: an organisation which promotes education reform in the Czech Republic, which can be contacted about guidelines and bullying procedures within schools.

www.eduin.cz

The Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA): Founded in 2002 by NSPCC and National Children's Bureau, the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) brings together over 100 organisations into one network to develop and share good practice across the whole range of bullying issues.

The ABA has also put together a fact sheet outlining the range of support that is available to schools and young people from the anti-bullying sector which can be accessed here.

<https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>

The Diana Award: Anti-Bullying Ambassadors programme to empower young people to take responsibility for changing the attitudes and behaviour of their peers towards bullying. It will achieve this by identifying, training, and supporting school anti-bullying ambassadors.

<https://diana-award.org.uk/>

Kidscape: Charity established to prevent bullying and promote child protection providing advice for young people, professionals, and parents about different types of bullying and how to tackle it. They also offer specialist training and support for school staff, and assertiveness training for young people.

<https://www.kidscape.org.uk/>

The BIG Award: The Bullying Intervention Group (BIG) offer a national scheme and award for schools to tackle bullying effectively. Restorative Justice Council: Includes best practice guidance for practitioners 2011

4.4 Cyber Bullying Organisations

Safer Internet: Czech Republic based resource that offers a portfolio of education activities for students, parents and teachers, about internet and online safety.

<https://www.saferinternet.cz>

Pomoc Online: Anti-Cyber Bullying assistance and help, including a hotline for children to call. The organisation also has a mission to remove illegal content from the internet.

<https://www.pomoconline.saferinternet.cz>

ChildNet International: Specialist resources for young people to raise awareness of online safety and how to protect themselves. Website specifically includes new cyberbullying guidance and a practical PSHE toolkit for schools.

<http://www.childnet.com/>

Think U Know: resources provided by Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) for children and young people, parents, carers and teachers.

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) has produced a range of resources for schools, colleges and parents about how to keep children safe online, this includes advice for schools and colleges on responding to incidents of 'sexting'.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis>

4.5 LGBTQ+

STUD ASSOCIATION: Czech Republic based group role is to support gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender minority and seek to attain full equality between LGBT community and other members of the society. STUD is primarily focused on working with youth to ease the process of coping with one's sexual orientation.

<https://stud.cz>

EACH: (Educational Action Challenging Homophobia): provides a national freephone Actionline for targets of homophobic or transphobic bullying and training to schools on sexual orientation, gender identity matters and cyberhomophobia.

<https://each.education/resources>

Proud Trust: helps young people empower themselves to make a positive change for themselves and their communities through youth groups, peer support, delivering of training and events, campaigns, undertaking research and creating resources.

<https://www.theproudtrust.org/>

Schools Out: Offers practical advice, resources (including lesson plans) and training to schools on LGBT equality in education.

<http://www.schools-out.org.uk/>

Stonewall: An LGB equality organisation with considerable expertise in LGB bullying in schools, a dedicated youth site, resources for schools, and specialist training for teachers.

<https://www.stonewall.org.uk/>

4.6 SEND

Life for Children/Zivot Detem: a Czech Republic charity that focusing on helping children with disabilities. They can be contacted for advice and also in regard to charitable aid.

<https://www.zivotdetem.cz>

Mencap: Represents people with learning disabilities, with specific advice and information for people who work with children and young people.

<https://www.mencap.org.uk/>

Changing Faces: Provide online resources and training to schools on bullying because of physical difference.

<https://www.changingfaces.org.uk/>

Cyberbullying and children and young people with SEN and disabilities: Advice provided by the Anti-Bullying Alliance on developing effective anti-bullying practice.

https://contact.org.uk/media/750755/cyberbullying_and_send_-_module_final.pdf

Anti-bullying Alliance SEND programme of resources: Advice provided by the Anti-bullying Alliance for school staff and parents on issues related to SEND and bullying.

<https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/groups-more-likely-experience-bullying/sen-disability>

4.7 Mental Health

ALPA: a Czech-based charity which focusses on supporting families with children suffering from issues of mental health.

<https://www.alpa.cz>

PSHE Association – guidance and lesson plans on improving the teaching of mental health issues.

<https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/>

4.8 Race, Religion & Nationality

Anne Frank Trust: Runs a school's project to teach young people about Anne Frank and the Holocaust, the consequences of unchecked prejudice and discrimination, and cultural diversity.

<https://annefrank.org.uk/>

Educate Against Hate: Provides teachers, parents and school leaders practical advice and information on protecting children from extremism and radicalisation

<https://educateagainsthate.com/>

Tell MAMA: Measuring Anti-Muslim Attacks (MAMA) allows people from across England to report any form of Anti-Muslim abuse, MAMA can also refer victims for support through partner agencies.

<https://tellmamauk.org/>

Anti-Muslim Hatred Working Group: Independent members of this group are representatives from the Muslim community and will assist and advice on all relevant issues.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/anti-muslim-hatred-working-group>

4.9 Sexual Harassment & Sexual Bullying

Chance to the Children: Czech charity that offers support to abused children. Offers assistance and support to children that are being abused, or for individuals that believe a child may be abused.

<https://sancedetem.cz>

Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAW): A Guide for Schools. This guide from the End Violence Against Women Coalition sets out the different forms of abuse to support education staff to understand violence and abuse of girls, warning signs to look for, and how to get your whole school-working towards preventing abuse.

<https://www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/>

Disrespect No Body: a Home Office led campaign which helps young people understand what a healthy relationship is. This website includes teaching materials to be used in the classroom.

<https://www.disrespectnobody.co.uk/>

Anti-bullying Alliance: advice for school staff and professionals about developing effective anti-bullying practice in relation to sexual bullying.

<https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>

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5. Bullying Incident Report Form

Date & Time of Incident	
Location (if appropriate)	
Observed or <u>Reported</u>?	
Alleged Aggressor	
Alleged Victim	
Witness	
Staff Supervising at the Time	
Circumstances	
Nature of Bullying	
Repeated or One-Off?	
Immediate Action Taken	
Report Completed By	
Staff Action	

Follow-up Action

Head of School	
Director	
Preventative Action Taken (if any)	
Date Report Filed	

