



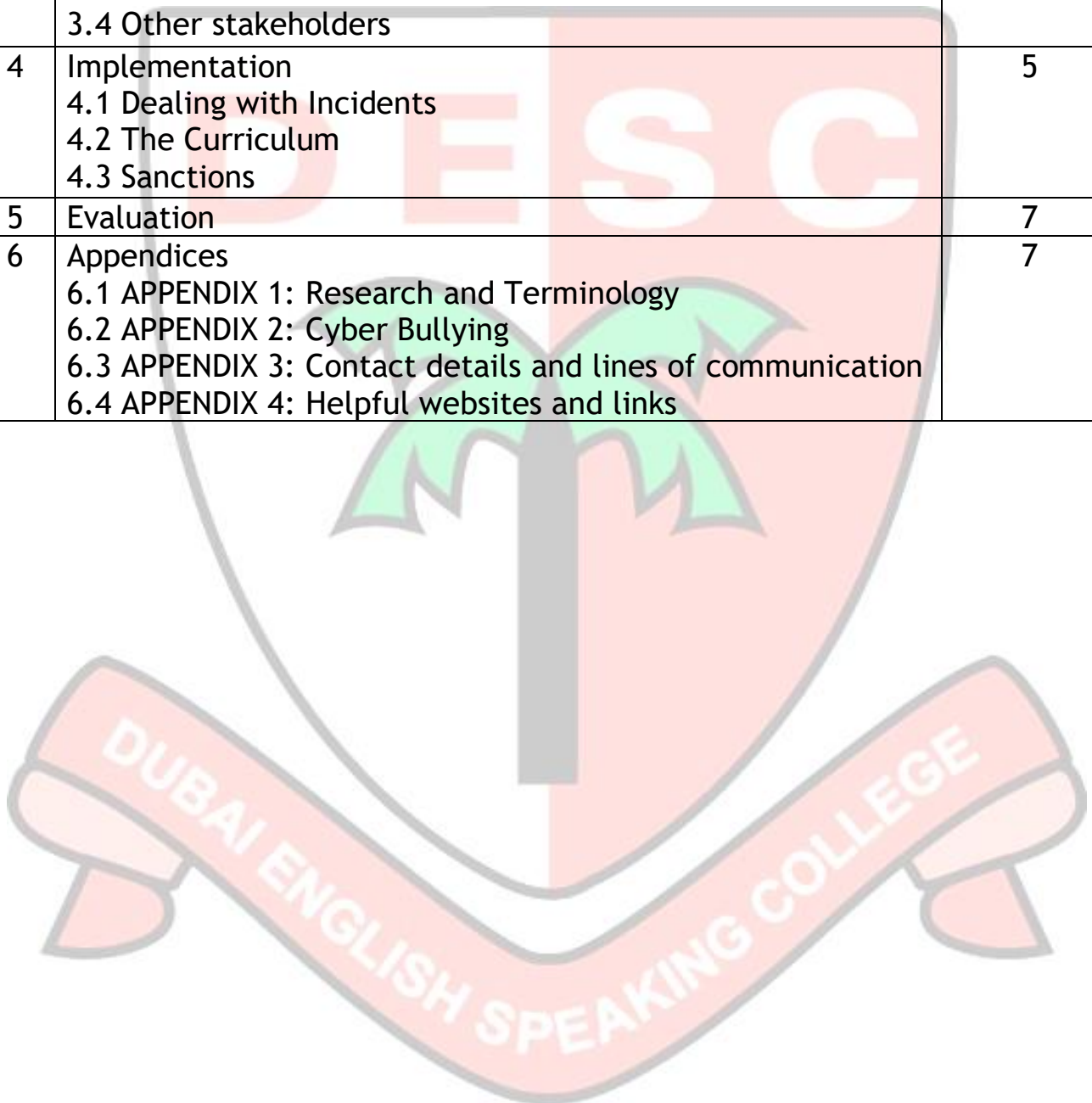
Dubai English Speaking College

Counter-Bullying Policy

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Author:	SBA	Review Date:	October 2023
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CONTENTS		PAGE NO.
1	Rationale	2
2	Aims	2
3	Responsibilities 3.1 Staff 3.2 Students 3.3 Parents 3.4 Other stakeholders	3
4	Implementation 4.1 Dealing with Incidents 4.2 The Curriculum 4.3 Sanctions	5
5	Evaluation	7
6	Appendices 6.1 APPENDIX 1: Research and Terminology 6.2 APPENDIX 2: Cyber Bullying 6.3 APPENDIX 3: Contact details and lines of communication 6.4 APPENDIX 4: Helpful websites and links	7



COUNTER BULLYING POLICY

1. RATIONALE

The Trustees and staff at DESC value the positive relationships between all within the DESC community, as fostered by the College. We expect every allegation of bullying to be taken seriously. All staff, pupils and parents should be aware of the negative effects that bullying can have on individuals in the College in general, and all parties should work towards ensuring that pupils can work in an environment without fear or prejudice. Bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at DESC.

DESC recognises that it must take note of bullying perpetrated outside of College hours, which spills over into the College. We will do what is reasonably practicable to eliminate any such cases of bullying. DESC takes a strong stance against bullying of any type, as it indicates a lack of appreciation for the feelings of others.

2. AIMS

At DESC, we aim to create an environment where pupils can grow and flourish without fear. Each pupil has the right to be safe, protected and feel happy within College at all times. We aim:

- To ensure that children learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment, without fear of feeling vulnerable or uncomfortable.
- To promote positive attitudes in staff, pupils and parents.
- To demonstrate to all that the safety and happiness of pupils and staff is paramount.
- To demonstrate that the College takes bullying seriously and will not be tolerated.
- To take measures that prevent and/or react to all forms of bullying; both within the College and during off-site activities.
- To support everyone within the DESC community in identifying and protecting those who might be bullied.
- To clarify to all staff, pupils and parents that bullying is always unacceptable.
- To promote an environment where students feel they can trust and tell adults if they are being bullied or if they know of others who are being bullied.
- To ensure that all staff are aware of their duty of care and the need to be alert to signs of bullying.
- To ensure that all staff, students and parents are aware of procedures to follow if they are concerned about the safety, happiness or wellbeing of another person within the DESC community.

Staff at DESC, promote a community of strong individuals. We believe in fostering an ethos and environment that encourages individuals to:

- RESPECT themselves
- RESPECT all students and staff
- RESPECT their environment
- Form POSITIVE relationships based on empathy and tolerance
- POSITIVELY accept and RESPECT diversity and difference
- POSITIVELY promote kindness

The Counter Bullying Policy at DESC aims to outline the protocols in place at the college, with the intention to address any form of bullying that takes place within its culture. In addition to educating both staff, pupils and parents on how bullying can be effectively dealt with, while reinforcing a zero-tolerance attitude to all members of the DESC community.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 DESC STAFF

The Headteacher (HT) has a duty to draw up procedures to prevent bullying amongst pupils. The HT will:

- ensure that all staff have an opportunity to discuss strategies; and review them regularly.
- determine the strategies and procedures.
- discuss development of the strategies with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).
- ensure appropriate training is available.
- ensure that the procedures are brought to the attention of all staff, volunteers, parents and pupils.
- report to the governing body.
- ensure that any reports of bullying at DESC are investigated.
- ensure that all staff are aware of the Counter Bullying Policy and agree a shared responsibility in our zero-tolerance approach.

The Deputy Headteacher (DHT)/Assistant Headteacher (AHT)/ Heads of House (HOH) will:

- be responsible for the day-to-day management of the policy and systems.
- ensure that there are positive strategies and procedures in place to help both the bullied and bullies.
- keep the Headteacher informed of incidents.
- arrange relevant staff and student training, determine how best to involve parents in the solution of individual problems.
- ensure proper record-keeping.

Heads of Department (HOD) will:

- be responsible for ensuring that the school's positive strategies are adhered to;
- know the school's procedure and deal with any incidents that are reported.

Form Tutors will:

- be responsible for liaising with the Head of House over all incidents involving pupils in their forms.
- be involved in any agreed strategy to achieve a solution.

GROW Teachers will:

- teach lessons that will raise awareness about bullying in GROW lessons and provide students with information about how they can respond to bullying.
- provide opportunity for students to discuss the importance of including others and taking a stand against unfair treatment of others.

All Staff and adults within the DESC community will:

- know and follow all relevant policies and procedures with a “no blame approach”; (as provided within the policy).
- record the details of incidents on Go4Schools Behaviour Module in line with DESC's Behaviour Policy.
- be observant and talk to pupils, staff and parents.

- deal with incidents according to DESC’s Behaviour Policy.
- never let any incidence of bullying go unreported, whether on-site or during an off-site activity.
- be vigilant and take action to reduce the risk of bullying at all times especially in places where it is most likely.
- inform the SLT if they feel that extra staff might be needed in a particular area.
- inform HOH or the HT/DHT of any incidents occurring that need immediate action.

3.2 DESC STUDENTS

What you can you do if you or a peer is being bullied?

- Confide in a person of trust, for example: teacher, friend, student advisor and/or a parent.
- Try to be an active/positive bystander, discourage others from standing quietly and allowing bullying to take place.
- Write down the events that you have witnessed with the dates that incidents took place, list other witnesses present and inform a staff member.
- Use the sheet provided to help you understand the support available.

Who can you contact for support?

- Heads of House
- Teachers
- Parents
- Friends
- Student Leaders
- Siblings
- Student Advisors
- School Nurses

At DESC we do not believe that bullying is an “expected” part of school life. Please trust that any referrals or reports will be dealt with in a discreet manner. Please note, that whilst staff at the College are vigilant, incidents can occur that we do not witness, parents and students are encouraged to report incidents immediately so that they can be investigated and resolved as quickly as possible.

Students will be involved in the development of positive strategies through mutual agreement. Students will have an input into the counter-bullying strategy.

A major part of the strategy will consist of coaching pupil’s personal awareness, communication and confidence building skills. Thus, empowering pupils, providing them with strategies on how to deal with any potential harassment or bullying scenarios.

3.3 DESC PARENTS

Parents should know and trust that the College will not tolerate bullying, and take a positive, active approach to educating pupils in effort to eliminate incidents.

Adolescent years are a time of change and some individuals cope better than others. The following are a list of symptoms to look out for. However, please be advised that if your child presents with any of these symptoms; it does not necessarily mean that they are victim of a bullying incident.

- Stopping eating and/or coming home hungry.
- Truanting or saying they are going somewhere but not turning up.
- A change in their usual routine.
- Not willing to become involved in school activities.

- Refusing to talk about school and their emotions.
- Becoming withdrawn and lacking confidence.
- Change in their typical academic achievements.
- Claiming to feel unwell before going to school and/or refusing to go to school.
- Unexplained behaviours, such as; asking to be driven to school, asking for additional money and clothes or possessions missing.
- A change in your child's emotional state, for example; unexplained moods.

Advice on how to report bullying:

- Contact the Parent Liaison (PL) for your child's House or Sixth Form pastoral support for students in Year 12/13.
- Advise your child to speak to a HOH, a teacher, a form tutor or a member of staff that they feel confident and comfortable with.

Your role within the DESC community to help tackle the bullying

- Trust that DESC will carry out a thorough investigation into all reported incidents.
- Understand that DESC will support your child and complete extensive work to ensure that the incident is dealt with.
- Report any incidents of suspected bullying as soon as possible, via the relevant communication channels.
- Use the correct lines of contact to report your concerns (Parent Liaison or Sixth Form support).
- Use the guidance provided to establish patterns of behaviour.
- Work with DESC so that we can all ensure that your child feels happy, safe and supported.

3.4 OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Trustees: The Trustees will liaise with the HT over all counter-bullying strategies and be aware of individual cases where appropriate. The governing body will discuss, review and endorse agreed strategies and will discuss the HT's report on the working of this policy. The governors will liaise with the Headteacher to arrange for a regular programme of staff development, which will include child protection and counter-bullying strategies. This will include training for support staff as well as teachers.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 Dealing with Incidents

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be investigated and dealt with promptly by the teacher or member of staff who has witnessed or been approached. Please refer to 6.1 Appendix 1 for information regarding types of bullying and the signs and symptoms of bullying.
- If a more serious and/or dangerous element to the bullying is suspected HOH/HT/DHT/AHT must be informed immediately.
- The teacher will record the details of the incident on Go4Schools and complete any relevant investigation and inform the relevant HOH and Parent Liaison (but in their absence an AHT/DHT or HT must be informed).
- The HOH will then lead and direct the handling and recording of the incident(s). All parties will be interviewed, and a record made using House coloured statement sheets (provided by House Parent Liaison).
- Staff teaching the bullied pupil and the form teacher will be informed. They will monitor the student and report any further concerns to the HOH.
- The appropriate strategy and plan of action to combat the bullying will be decided upon using the procedure checklist. The HOH will also decide upon the level of parental involvement.

- The follow up and after-care will be co-ordinated by the H/DOH and PL. This might include a 'watching brief', where staff are asked to report anything of concern from the student(s) highlighted, a call to parents to check the wellbeing of their child. Student Advisors may be involved throughout the process or after incidents as a supportive measure.
- The implementation of the strategy will be overseen by the HOH involved and AHT/DHT/HT.
- Parents will be kept informed by the relevant staff appointed by the HOH/AHT/DHT or HT.
- Any sanctions will be determined by the HOH/AHT/DHT or the HT in line with the Behaviour Policy.
- In any incident of bullying, staff must be aware of the following principles:
 - It is important that students who experience bullying are heard.
 - It is important to note that people react differently to bullying and it is often very difficult to tell if someone is upset and/or hurt.
 - If a student feels upset, they are encouraged to speak to their teacher or a responsible adult at an appropriate time.
 - It must be emphasised to the students that they should NEVER take the law into their own hands and should remember that physical aggression is not acceptable.
 - They should be reassured that the adult will try to sort out the problem as calmly as possible.
 - All students are treated equally and fairly during the initial stages of collecting information.
- The most serious incidents are referred to the DHT or the HT.
- Parents may be requested to meet staff members to discuss the incident.
- The incident is recorded on Go4Schools.
- Pupils will be encouraged to be vigilant and to report incidents of bullying to the relevant member of Staff.

Reporting and Recording

- All incidents must be reported and recorded in full and the records kept in the central file by the HOH, DHOH and the PLs as well as on Go4Schools.
- The incident should be dealt with instantly, by the member of staff who has witnessed the behaviour.

4.2 The Curriculum

Counter-bullying Education in the Curriculum:

- The school will raise the awareness of the anti-social nature of bullying through our GROW programme and MSC curriculum, as well as in school assemblies, through the use of form time and in the curriculum as appropriate.
- The Head of GROW, is responsible for initiating and developing a series of counter-bullying sessions as part of the GROW course.
- Heads of Department are responsible for introducing counter-bullying material in their programmes of study as appropriate.
- Changing the attitudes and behaviour of bullies will play a major part in the strategies used by the school.
- Various theme days will be used along with many other whole school events that will be organised to educate students and staff on the importance of promoting inclusion and tolerance. There is also a positive emphasis on preventing and dealing with incidents of bullying at DESC.

4.3 Sanctions

Where pupils do not respond to preventative strategies to combat bullying, tougher action will be taken to deal with persistent bullying. Sanctions are determined by the nature of the bullying on a case to case basis in line with our Behaviour Policy. As Bullying can very complicated, it is

important to note that each individual case will have different circumstances. Sanctions might include:

- Writing a letter of apology;
- Removal from the group (in class);
- Withdrawal of break and lunchtime privileges;
- Withholding participation in a school trip or sports event(s) that are not an essential part of the curriculum;
- Internal exclusion;
- Fixed term and permanent exclusion from school;
- An exclusion would only be considered in a case of extreme and continued bad behaviour, bullying, sexual harassment etc. Any exclusion for even a short period would be discussed and agreed by the Senior Leadership Team, The Headteacher and where necessary the Chair of the Board of Governors.

5. EVALUATION

The HT, DHT and SLT Team together with the HLT will consider case studies to determine what can be learned from the incidents and how they were handled, with a view to improving the school's strategies. These case study reports will also enable patterns to be identified. The HT will report findings to the Governing Body.

The Counter Bullying Policy at DESC will be reviewed annually and maybe updated in response to current affairs or guidelines provided by the Governing Body.

6. APPENDICES

6.1 APPENDIX 1: Research and Terminology

“Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.” (*Preventing and Tackling Bullying, Advice for Head Teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies, DfE, 2011, p. 4*)

At DESC we recognise that there is no “hierarchy” of bullying, all forms of bullying should be taken seriously and dealt with appropriately. We understand that bullying can take place between different members of the community. It can involve individuals or groups; occur face-to-face, take place indirectly or through digital platforms. We understand that children can be unkind, have disagreements with each other and friends fall out from time to time, this is not necessarily considered as bullying. We are aware that bullying can cause deep distress to individuals and in some cases prompt extreme changes in behaviour.

The four categories of bullying are:

1. **Physical** - hitting, kicking, taking or hiding belongings, pulling, grabbing, touching etc.
2. **Verbal** - name calling, teasing, insulting, writing or sending unkind notes or messages, including cyber-bullying (see below).
3. **Emotional** - being intentionally unfriendly or unkind, excluding, tormenting looks, rude gestures and spreading rumours.
4. **Cyber** - email and internet chat room/app misuse, mobile phone threats by text or similar, calls, and social websites.

Specific types of bullying include:

- Bullying related to race or colour, religion or belief or culture.

- Bullying related to special education needs or disabilities (SEND).
- Bullying related to appearance or health conditions.
- Sexist or sexual bullying.
- Bullying using electronic/digital forms of contact (cyber bullying) *see Appendix 1 “Roles within Bullying.”*

Different roles within bullying:

- Ringleader - those relying on social power, dominating others, often with group support.
- Associates - others joining in and, therefore, afraid of the ringleader.
- Bystander - the awareness of a silent majority that bullying is taking place but feeling unable to do anything about it.
- Defenders - those who try to stop bullying by any means.
- Victim - the person being targeted persistently over a period of time.

Gestures of bullying include:

- Causing physical pain or discomfort.
- Intimidation and rude gestures.
- The ‘look’ or ignoring - examples of non-verbal bullying.
- Threats and extortion.
- Malicious gossip and exclusion from the group.
- Telling tales with the express purpose of causing trouble.
- Threatening texts or messages in chat rooms.

Signs and Symptoms:

A person may indicate signs or behaviour that he/she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and they should investigate if a person:

- Is unwilling to go to school.
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence.
- Starts stammering.
- Attempts or threatens self-harm.
- Cries herself/himself to sleep at night or has nightmares/ bedwetting.
- Regularly feels ill in the morning.
- Changes their pattern in schoolwork or achievement.
- Comes home with clothes torn or books/equipment damaged.
- Has possessions go missing.
- Has unexplained cuts and bruises.
- Stops eating.
- Is frightened to say what is wrong.
- Changes his/her usual daily routine.

All staff should be aware of these possibilities and report promptly any suspicions of bullying to the appropriate person. It is important to note that, if a person presents any of the symptoms listed above, it does not necessarily mean that they are being bullied and further investigation will need to take place.

6.2 APPENDIX 2: Cyber Bullying

- “Cyber-bullying is an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual using electronic forms of contact repeatedly over time against a victim who cannot easily defend him or herself.”
- Types of Cyber Bullying
- There are 7 identified categories of cyber bullying:

- Text messaging bullying
- Picture/video clip bullying via mobile phone
- Phone call bullying via mobile phone
- Email bullying
- Chat room bullying
- Bullying via websites
- Bullying through instant messaging

6.3 APPENDIX 3: Contact details and lines of communication

Please contact the House Parent Liaison allocated to the House your child is in or for student in the Sixth Form, please contact the Sixth Form pastoral support- sixthformsupport@dessc.sch.ae

- Desert House - desertsupport@dessc.sch.ae
- Earth House - earthsupport@dessc.sch.ae
- Sky House - skysupport@dessc.sch.ae
- Coast House - coastsupport@dessc.sch.ae

6.4 APPENDIX 4: Helpful websites and links

The Department for Education have produced advice on preventing and tackling bullying:

[Preventing and tackling bullying](#)

[Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying](#)

An overview of cyberbullying:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/issues/cyberbullying/>

[Cyberbullying: advice for Headteachers and school staff](#)

[Cyberbullying Guidance](#)

[Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre- For advice, help or to make a report](#)