

ANTI BULLYING POLICY

Anti Bullying Policy: August 2024

Vision

To redefine education by nurturing young minds through our GROWTH values, empowering them to thrive and contribute meaningfully to a just and sustainable future.

Mission

To unlock every learner's unique potential and foster a love for lifelong learning by creating a purpose-driven ecosystem built on our pillars of happiness.

A] Purpose

The primary purpose of this Anti-Bullying Policy is to establish and maintain a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment where all students can learn, grow, and thrive without fear of bullying or harassment. Empyrean School is committed to preventing and addressing bullying in all its forms, ensuring that every member of the school community is protected and respected. This policy seeks to promote a culture of empathy, respect, and responsibility among students, staff, and the broader school community.

B] Scope

This policy applies to all students, staff members, and any individuals associated with Empyrean School, including visitors, volunteers, and contractors. It encompasses all school-related activities, whether occurring on school premises or off-campus, including school trips, extracurricular activities, and any online interactions connected to the school community. The policy outlines the school's definition of bullying, reporting mechanisms, investigation processes, consequences for bullying behaviour, and support systems for victims. It also covers preventive measures and parental involvement, ensuring a comprehensive approach to creating a bullying-free environment.

C] Definition of Bullying

Bullying at Empyrean School is defined as any disorderly conduct, whether verbal, written, physical, or online, that causes harm or distress to another individual. This includes teasing, ridiculing, or handling a student with rudeness, and any behaviour that can lead to psychological or physical harm. Specifically, bullying encompasses acts that:

- Cause annoyance, hardship, or psychological harm to another student.
- Instil fear or apprehension in a fresher or junior student.
- Compel a student to perform an act that they would not ordinarily do, leading to a sense of shame, embarrassment, or distress.
- Generate an environment of intimidation, hostility, or offensiveness that adversely affects the mental or physical well-being of the victim.

D] Roles and Responsibilities in Anti-Bullying Efforts

1. Role of Students

- **Respect and Inclusivity:** Students are expected to treat their peers, teachers, and all members of the school community with respect and kindness. They should embrace diversity and contribute to an inclusive environment where everyone feels valued.
- **Zero Tolerance for Bullying:** Students must refrain from any form of bullying, including physical, verbal, social, and cyberbullying. They should avoid behaviours that can harm, exclude, or belittle others.
- **Active Bystanders:** Students should act as responsible bystanders and offer support to the victim, discourage the bully, and report the incident to a trusted adult.

- **Reporting Bullying:** Students have a responsibility to report any bullying incidents they experience or witness. Reporting should be done promptly to ensure the safety and well-being of all involved.
- **Peer Support:** Students should offer support to peers who may be targeted by bullying, providing friendship and helping them seek assistance if needed.

2. Role of Teachers and School Staff

- **Modelling Respectful Behaviour:** Teachers and school staff must model respectful and inclusive behaviour in their interactions with students, colleagues, and the broader school community. They play a critical role in setting a positive example.
- **Creating a Safe Environment:** Teachers are responsible for creating a classroom environment where all students feel safe, supported, and valued. This includes being vigilant and proactive in identifying and addressing any signs of bullying.
- **Education and Awareness:** Teachers should incorporate lessons on empathy, kindness, and the impact of bullying into the curriculum. They should use teachable moments to address bullying-related topics and foster a culture of respect.
- **Monitoring and Intervention:** Teachers and staff must actively monitor student interactions, both in-person and online, to identify potential bullying situations. They should intervene immediately when they observe or are informed about bullying, following the school's procedures for addressing such incidents.
- **Supporting Victims:** Teachers have a responsibility to support students who have been bullied, providing them with the necessary care, guidance, and resources to recover from the experience.
- **Engaging with Parents:** Teachers should communicate with parents about their child's behaviour, whether positive or concerning. They should involve parents in discussions about bullying incidents and collaborate on solutions to ensure the student's well-being.

3. Role of Parents and Guardians

- **Promoting Respect at Home:** Parents and guardians are expected to teach their children the values of respect, kindness, and empathy at home. They should reinforce the importance of treating others with dignity and avoiding any form of bullying.
- **Monitoring Behaviour:** Parents should be aware of their child's behaviour, both in-person and online. They should supervise their child's use of technology and social media, ensuring they understand the consequences of cyberbullying.
- **Open Communication:** Parents should maintain open lines of communication with their children, encouraging them to talk about their experiences at school. This helps in identifying any issues related to bullying early on.

- **Reporting and Collaboration:** If parents become aware of bullying involving their child, they should report it to the school promptly. They should collaborate with the school to address the issue and support their child through the process.
- **Participation in School Activities:** Parents are encouraged to participate in school activities related to bullying prevention, such as workshops, seminars, and discussions. This involvement helps reinforce the school's anti-bullying efforts and supports a community-wide approach.

E] Key Aspects of the Anti-Bullying Policy

1. Types of Bullying

- **Physical Bullying:** Involves any form of physical aggression such as hitting, pushing, tripping, or damaging someone's belongings.
- **Verbal Bullying:** Includes name-calling, insults, teasing, intimidation, or making derogatory remarks about someone's appearance, abilities, or background.
- **Social Bullying:** Involves actions that harm someone's social reputation or cause social isolation, such as spreading rumours, deliberately excluding someone from group activities, or encouraging others to turn against a student.
- **Cyberbullying:** The use of electronic communication, including social media, text messages, or emails, to bully, harass, or intimidate someone. This can include posting harmful or humiliating content, sending threatening messages, or creating fake profiles to cause distress.

2. Reporting and Confidentiality

- **Reporting Mechanisms:** All members of the Emphyrean School community are encouraged to report incidents of bullying as soon as they occur. Reports can be made to homeroom teachers, coordinators, counsellors, or directly to the Principal. The school will also provide an anonymous reporting system to ensure that students can report bullying without fear of retaliation.
- **Confidentiality Protocol:** The school is committed to handling all reports of bullying with the utmost confidentiality. The identities of the individuals involved will be protected throughout the investigation process, and information will only be shared with those who need to know to address the incident effectively.

3. Investigation Process

- **Initial Response:** Upon receiving a report of bullying, the school will take immediate steps to ensure the safety and well-being of the victim. This may include separating the involved parties or providing support services.
- **Comprehensive Investigation:** A designated team, including coordinators, counsellor, and senior management, will conduct a thorough investigation. This process will include gathering evidence, interviewing the victim, the accused, and any witnesses, and reviewing any relevant documentation or communications.
- **Documentation and Record Keeping:** All stages of the investigation will be meticulously documented, including the findings, actions taken, and outcomes. These records will be securely stored and reviewed periodically to ensure the effectiveness of the policy.

4. Consequences and Disciplinary Actions

- **Verbal or Written Warning:** For minor, first-time offenses, a verbal or written warning may be issued, accompanied by a discussion on the impact of the behaviour and a clear explanation of the expectations moving forward.
- **Counselling and Behaviour Correction:** Both the victim and the perpetrator may be required to participate in counselling sessions designed to address the underlying issues and promote positive behaviour.
- **Suspension:** In cases of repeated or severe bullying, the student responsible may face temporary suspension from school. The duration of the suspension will depend on the severity of the incident.
- **Expulsion:** In extreme cases, where the safety and well-being of other students are significantly compromised, the school reserves the right to expel the student involved in bullying. This decision will be made by the Principal in consultation with the School Trust.

5. Support for Victims

- **Counselling Services:** Emphyrean School offers comprehensive counselling services to support victims of bullying. These services aim to help students recover from emotional or psychological harm, rebuild their confidence, and reintegrate into the school environment.
- **Peer Support Networks:** The school will facilitate peer support groups where students can share their experiences, offer mutual support, and build resilience against bullying.
- **Academic Support:** If a student's academic performance has been adversely affected by bullying, the school will provide appropriate academic support, which may include tutoring, modified assignments, or extensions on deadlines.

6. Preventive Measures

- **Awareness and Education:** Regular workshops, seminars, and classroom activities will be conducted to raise awareness about the harmful effects of bullying. These programs will emphasize empathy, respect, and the importance of creating a positive school culture.
- **Code of Conduct:** All students will be required to sign a code of conduct at the beginning of each academic year, which outlines the school's expectations regarding behaviour and the consequences of bullying.
- **Increased Supervision:** The school will ensure that areas prone to bullying, such as playgrounds, corridors, and restrooms, are adequately supervised by staff members. This supervision aims to prevent bullying incidents and intervene quickly if they occur.

7. Parental Involvement

- **Communication with Parents:** Parents will be promptly informed if their child is involved in a bullying incident, either as a victim or perpetrator. The school will work closely with parents to address the issue and support the student's well-being.
- **Educational Workshops for Parents:** Emphyrean School will organize workshops and information sessions for parents, equipping them with the knowledge and tools to recognize signs of bullying, support their children, and collaborate with the school in preventing bullying.

8. Monitoring and Review

- **Regular Policy Reviews:** The Anti-Bullying Policy will be reviewed to ensure that it remains effective, relevant, and in alignment with best practices. The review process will consider feedback from students, parents, and staff.
- **Ongoing Monitoring:** The school will continuously monitor the implementation of the policy through regular feedbacks. This monitoring aims to identify any areas for improvement and ensure that the school environment remains safe and welcoming for all students.

9. References:

- **Olweus, D. (1993).** *Bullying at School: What We Know and What We Can Do*. Blackwell Publishers. A foundational text in understanding the nature of bullying, its effects, and strategies for prevention in educational settings.
- **Smith, P. K., & Sharp, S. (1994).** *School Bullying: Insights and Perspectives*. Routledge. This book offers comprehensive insights into the causes, consequences, and effective interventions for school bullying.
- **Rigby, K. (2007).** *Bullying in Schools and What to Do About It*. Australian Council for Educational Research. A practical guide that provides educators with strategies to prevent and address bullying in schools.
- **American Psychological Association. (2020).** *Bullying: A Module for Teachers*. A resource module that provides teachers with tools to understand and combat bullying in the classroom.
- **National Centre Against Bullying. (2021).** *What Is Bullying? Definition, Types, and How to Deal With It*. A comprehensive online resource offering definitions, types, and management strategies for bullying.
- **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). (2017).** *School Violence and Bullying: Global Status Report*. This report provides a global perspective on school bullying and violence, with recommendations for schools worldwide.

Name, Signature and stamp of Principal

Soumyabrata Mukherjee

Principal
Empyrean School
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School stamp**Annexure I: Anti-Bullying Code of Conduct Form****Student Pledge**

I, the undersigned, understand that Empyrean School is committed to maintaining a safe and respectful environment for all students. I agree to uphold the following principles as part of the school's Anti-Bullying Code of Conduct:

1. Respect for All:

I will treat all members of the Empyrean School community with respect and kindness, regardless of their background, appearance, abilities, or beliefs.

2. No Tolerance for Bullying:

I understand that bullying in any form—whether physical, verbal, social, or online—is unacceptable. I will not engage in or support any behaviour that causes harm, fear, or distress to others.

3. Responsibility to Report:

If I witness or become aware of any bullying behaviour, I will report it immediately to a teacher, counsellor, coordinator, or any other trusted adult at the school. I understand that reporting bullying is a responsible action that helps protect others.

4. Support for Peers:

I will offer support to any student who is being bullied, whether by offering friendship, reporting the incident, or providing assistance in other appropriate ways.

5. Use of social media:

I will use social media responsibly, avoiding any actions that could hurt, embarrass, or exclude others. I understand that cyberbullying is as harmful as face-to-face bullying and will not be tolerated.

6. Positive Contribution to School Culture:

I will actively contribute to creating a positive and inclusive school environment by participating in activities that promote understanding, empathy, and cooperation among students.

7. Compliance with School Policies:

I agree to follow all school policies related to behaviour, including this Anti-Bullying Code of Conduct. I understand that violations may result in consequences as outlined in the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.

Acknowledgment

By signing this form, I acknowledge that I have read, understood, and agree to adhere to Empyrean School's Anti-Bullying Code of Conduct. I am aware of the consequences of violating this code and commit to fostering a safe and respectful environment for all.

Student Name: _____**Grade/Class:** _____**Signature:** _____**Date:** _____