Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy applies to the whole school, including the EYFS

CONTENTS:

Definitions:

"Bullying" See 1.5 – 1.7

"DfE" Department for Education

"DSL" Designated Safeguarding Lead

"PSHE " Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education "MT"

Management Team

1. Introduction

1.1. Various legislation and government guidance is reflected in this policy. As a school located in the Comunidad de Madrid, we also follow the *Protocolo Específico de Prevención y Actuación frente al acoso escolar,* which is applied to the whole school (British and IB).

1.2. This guidance is aimed at eliminating unlawful discrimination, harrassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act in all areas of society.

1.3. Pupils learn best in a safe and calm environment that is free from disruption and in which education is the primary focus.

1.4. Bullying affects the whole school community: pupils, their families, teachers, support staff and governors. Primarily it threatens the safety and happiness of the pupils and may undermine their educational achievement. Bullying is specific unacceptable behaviour, and as such is totally alien to our school ethos and aims. By raising awareness and working together, according to the guidelines laid down in this policy, we can hope to deal with bullying effectively and send a clear message to all concerned that bullying of any kind will not be tolerated at Alegra. Our success will be tested not by the absence of problems but by the way we deal with them when they arise.

1.5. There are various definitions of bullying, however the key points are that it is unwanted, aggressive behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

1.6. Bullying is targeted, intentional and repetitive. It can take many forms (verbal, social, physical and cyber-bullying). It is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups or because of a protected characteristic, for example on grounds of race, religion, culture, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between pupils or perceived differences. Bullying can be direct (either physical or verbal) or indirect (ex. being ignored, rumour spreading, being excluded deliberately or not spoken to, or through cyber-technology - social media, gaming, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email). Bullying can cause psychological damage and even suicide.

1.7. Bullying is likely to involve an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim (whether actual or perceived). This can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), from an intellectual imbalance or by having access to the support of a group. It can result in the intimidation of a person through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

1.8. When there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm' a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern. In such cases, procedures to be followed would be as per our Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy.

2. Aims and objectives

2.1. Bullying is wrong and damages individual children. We therefore do all we can to prevent it, by developing a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable.

2.2. As a school, we aim to produce a safe and secure environment where all can learn without, and measures are in place to reduce the likelihood of bullying. Essentially, we wish to **establish a climate of trust and respect for all**.

2.3. This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.

2.4. We aim to make all those connected with our school aware of our opposition to bullying, and we make clear each person's responsibilities with regard to the eradication of bullying in our school. Some measures to achieve this can be:

- for staff to actively promote awareness of this topic and possess a clear understanding of the associated procedures.

- training on the different ways to intervene in a conflict related to bullying, inside and outside the classroom

- workshops on early detection of bullying

3. Bullying

3.1. Bullying is not confined solely to relationships between young people. Verbal and emotional bullying in particular may occur between staff or staff and parents, staff and pupils, or parents and children. All members of our school community have a responsibility to prevent such occurrences of bullying.

3.2. A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that they are being bullied. If you are concerned and become aware of any of the following, you should ask if someone is threatening or bullying your child. Children of primary school age may:

- Be unwilling to go to school or doing poorly in their school work
- Come home regularly with clothes or books destroyed
- Become withdrawn, start stammering
- Become distressed, stop eating
- Cry themselves to sleep or have nightmares and call out 'leave me alone'
- Have unexplained bruises, scratches, cuts
- Have their possessions go 'missing'
- Refuse to say what's wrong
- Give improbable excuses to explain any of the above
- Poor self-esteem and perception of self-efficacy

3.3. It is important to understand the difference between bullying and conflict. For example it is not considered bullying if children exclude someone on the playground now and then, however repeated and deliberate exclusion can be bullying. A child communicating their dislike of another child is not considered bullying, as long as they do not start rumours or verbally abuse another child. A child unintentionally bumping into or tripping another child is not considered bullying, as long as it is not deliberate and repetitive. Arguments between pupils will inevitably happen at school and these are not considered bullying. Even though, when a conflict happens, we must ensure that it is communicated to the

preceptora, who will then be responsible for conducting the investigation and the follow up of the "case". Once sufficient information has been gathered in the case of a bullying alert, cross-reference the details with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) department.

4. Supporting victims of bullying

4.1. We have a responsibility to support victims of bullying and make appropriate provision for their needs. The nature and level of support will depend on the individual circumstances and the level of need. These can include a quiet word from a teacher that knows the pupil well, asking their preceptora to provide support, seeking guidance from counsellors, engaging with parents, referring to local authority children's services or to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

4.2. Children who are being bullied are often too frightened to tell others. However they are encouraged to inform their parents, class teacher, tutor, a peer mediator, or one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) if they feel that they are being victimised or bullied in any way.

4.3. Children should be encouraged to speak openly by showing that we are concerned and want to help and support them. Promises should not be made to keep anything secret but the child should be reassured that we will help them sort out the problem.

4.4. If a child is a perpetual 'victim' of bullying by different groups or individuals we will try to observe the child's reactions to others when talking or playing to see if they are being bullied for any perceived 'bad' habits. We will help them to change this behavior, if appropriate, and develop better social skills and confidence.

4.5. Other ways our school community helps include encouraging a child's self-esteem, giving them responsibilities to help them feel valued and important, encouraging them to do things they are good at and by praising their achievements.

4.6. Removing bullied children from school, even for a short time, disrupts their education and can make it difficult for them to reintegrate. We will therefore do all we can to ensure that bullied children feel safe and continue to attend school. Measures: Individual work with both bully and bullied.
  - Bully: make sure he/she knows we are aware of what is going on and he/she would have consequences if it happens again + emotional support
  - Bullied: make sure he/she knows she is protected by all teachers.

5. Raising awareness of bullying

5.1. Implementing classroom strategies:
- During 'circle time' our teachers encourage our pupils to raise issues concerning bullying and talk about them, to help them understand the feelings of bullied children, and to practice the restraint required to avoid lapsing into bullying behaviour
- This time is also used to praise, reward and celebrate the success of all pupils, and thus to help create a positive atmosphere
- Raising awareness of bullying and behaviour as an issue through brain-storming, role-play, drama, stories, assemblies, projects, songs and historical events
- Using Character Development & PSHE lesson time for general discussions about

bullying, including the differences between people and the importance of avoiding prejudice-based language; or Computing lessons to talk about online safety, cyber-bullying and reinforcing the school's E-Safety Policy in tutorias and assemblies.

- During Anti-bullying week, year groups produce 'Anti-Bullying' posters.

5.2. Implementing whole school strategies:

- All our staff watch for early signs of distress in pupils and report any such behaviour to the child's class teacher or to one of the DSLs
- Whole school clarity of approach and strong home/school links
- Assemblies dealing with these issues
- Our staff receive sufficient training to identify and deal with all incidents of bullying
- Our staff are advised about how to reduce the risk of bullying at times and in places where it is most likely to occur
- Any disciplinary sanctions will reflect the seriousness of an incident and convey a deterrent effect
- Our staff have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaviour outside our school premises 'to such an extent as is reasonable'. Any such reported incidents of bullying will be investigated and acted on according to the procedures below.

5.3. Teaching our pupils about strategies which they can use to protect themselves from bullying (eg. by staying calm, being firm and walking away from a situation, and encouraging them to tell an adult or a friend what has happened).

6. School Procedure

6.1. Periodic training is provided to our staff to ensure that the principles and purpose of this policy are understood, legal responsibilities regarding bullying are known, action is defined to resolve and prevent problems and where sources of support are available. Where appropriate, specialized skills may be needed to understand the needs of particular pupils (for example those with special educational needs and/or disabilities).

6.2. Our staff will immediately inform the Head or another member of the SMT of any bullying concerns. Similarly, parents are advised to inform their child's class teacher and/or Head immediately if they have any concerns. The child will then be placed on the Concerns List.

6.3. Once a child has been put on the Concerns List, the class teacher/preceptora will email all staff involved, in contact with the child with the reasons. From that point onwards, any member of staff dealing with an incident involving that child (in relation to the particular area of concern) will make a note on the pupil's folder, so that everyone is aware of any updates relating to the case. All staff should be extra vigilant, particularly at break times, and report back to the class teacher or member of the MT if further conflict occurs. Periodically, all members of staff should check the pupil's folder for any new updates. A written record will be kept to track any progress/incidents with that specific child. Once a child is ready to come off the Concerns List, the class teacher will send an email to all staff explaining why.

6.4. Any additional information (eg. an email from parents) relating to a child on the Concerns List, including records of incidents involving sensitive issues, are kept in the Incidents File and recorded by a member of the SMT.

6.5. The MT monitors pupils on the Concerns List on a weekly basis, via a report

created on our records. This will help to ensure that adequate monitoring measures and strategies are in place.

6.6. Depending on the nature of the incident, our class teachers or members of the MT will talk to all pupils involved. These pupils may then be interviewed separately and witness accounts obtained. Pupils may be asked to record their own account of events.

6.7. Pupils will be told that the matter will be taken seriously and will be dealt with as soon as possible. Depending on the nature of the incident, parents may be informed on an informal or formal basis. An apology will be obtained from the bully/ies to the victim. An action plan will be drawn for both parties involved.

6.8. Depending on the nature of the incident, the perpetrator may go on report using our system of rewards and sanctions in line with behaviour targets. Any disciplinary measures will be applied fairly, consistently and reasonably. Exclusion will only be considered in extreme cases of severe and persistent bullying. Should our Head of Prep or SMT require additional support or advice, they will contact external agencies as required (such as the police, local authority or children's social care).

6.9. Records contained within the Incidents file will be reviewed periodically by our Head and MT to evaluate the effectiveness of our school's approach to bullying, enable any patterns to be identified, consider motivations behind bullying behaviour and to address underlying issues. Our Head will agree a strategy with relevant staff to remedy these.

7. The role of staff

7.1. All our staff take every form of bullying seriously, and seek to prevent it from taking place.

7.2. If any of our teachers witness an act of bullying, they will usually investigate it themselves first. Our teachers and support staff do all they can to support the child who is being bullied. If a child continues to be bullied then, after

consultation with our Head or another member of the MT, our teacher will inform the child's parents. A written record will be started to monitor events as described above.

7.3. When any bullying incident is seen or reported taking place between members of a class, our teachers will deal with the issue immediately. This may involve counselling and support for the victim of the bullying, and punishment for the child who has carried out the bullying. Time is spent talking to the child who has been bullied: explaining why their action was wrong, and that child is encouraged to change their behaviour in future. Tutors are encouraged to be actively involved in this. If a pupil is repeatedly involved in bullying other pupils, or depending on the seriousness of the offence, our Head or another member of the SMT will be informed.

7.4. It is our Head's responsibility to implement our school anti-bullying strategy, and to ensure that all our staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of our school policy, know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying, and know what sanctions can be adopted. Suitable training is provided so that our staff are aware of what action should be taken in order to reduce the risk of bullying.

7.5. Our Head and SMT ensure that all our pupils understand the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders. They know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in our school. Our teachers draw the attention of pupils to this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, they may decide to use an assembly as the forum in which to discuss with other pupils why this behaviour was wrong, and why a pupil is being punished. PSHE lessons also help to raise awareness of bullying.

7.6. Our Head and SMT foster a climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

8. The role of parents

8.1. Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, are advised to contact their child's class teacher immediately. If they are not satisfied with the response, they are advised to contact our Head or another member of the SMT. If they still remain dissatisfied, they are advised to follow our procedures as detailed in our Complaints Policy.

8.2. Parents are responsible for supporting our school's anti-bullying policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of our school community. Parents should also play a part to prevent bullying when they find themselves as bystanders.

9. Monitoring and review

9.1. Our SMT acknowledge their responsibility to ensure that this policy is effectively implemented and meets all current regulatory requirements.

9.2. This policy is reviewed annually, however it may be amended earlier if legislation or our school procedures change.

9.3. This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by our Head and SMT. In order to readily have a clear picture of bullying incidents throughout our school and to ensure that our policy is being effectively implemented, the number and nature of concerns are discussed and monitored regularly.

Signed: V Muller / M Kemp

This policy is reviewed annually	
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Author	SENCO Team Prep School
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This policy should be read in conjunction with the following related policies:

Child Protection & Safeguarding; Behaviour & Discipline; E-safety.