

RAHA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL KHALIFA CITY CAMPUS

Policy title	Anti-Bullying and Cyberbullying Policy
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Policy holder	Monica Woodward

Approving Committee	Name	Signature
Principal	Peter Taylor	

Introduction

At Raha International School KCC, we are committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment where all students, staff, and the broader school community are treated with respect and are part of a connection. We acknowledge the importance of addressing bullying and cyberbullying proactively, and we recognise the harmful effects these behaviors can have on students' wellbeing, academic success, and overall development.

This Anti-Bullying and Cyberbullying Policy is designed to prevent and respond to bullying in all forms, in alignment with the principles of restorative practice and the regulations outlined by the Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK).

Scope

This Anti-Bullying and Cyberbullying Policy applies to all students, staff, and members of the Raha International School KCC community. It covers incidents of bullying and cyberbullying that occur both within the school environment and outside of school hours, provided they impact the safety, wellbeing, and learning of students at school. The policy encompasses all forms of bullying, including physical, verbal, social, and cyberbullying, and outlines the roles and responsibilities of students, staff, and parents in preventing and addressing such behaviour.

Definition of Terms

- **Bullying:** Deliberate, harmful behaviour by an individual or group, intended to intimidate or hurt others. It involves a real or perceived power imbalance and is often done during a sustained period of time.
- **Cyberbullying:** A form of bullying that occurs through electronic means, including social media, text messages, emails, and other digital platforms, with the intent to harm or harass others.
- **Restorative Practice:** A method of addressing bullying incidents by focusing on healing, accountability, and repairing relationships through open dialogue and mutual understanding. However, restorative practice will not be used where there is ongoing risk, coercion, fear, or a significant power imbalance, or where it may compromise student safety or wellbeing.
- **Physical Bullying:** Acts of aggression such as hitting, pushing, or other forms of physical harm intended to cause distress or pain.
- **Verbal Bullying:** The use of harmful words, insults, or mockery aimed at hurting or belittling an individual.
- **Social Bullying:** Actions that aim to exclude, isolate, or embarrass someone, including spreading rumors, gossiping, or purposefully leaving someone out of a group.

- **Power Imbalance:** A situation where one individual or group holds more power, either through physical strength, social influence, or number, making it difficult for the victim to defend themselves.

Policy Statement

Raha International School KCC is fully committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for all members of our community. We believe that every student has the right to learn, grow, and thrive without the fear of bullying or cyberbullying. We are dedicated to preventing bullying in all its forms, addressing incidents promptly and effectively, and supporting those impacted by bullying behaviours.

This policy applies to all students, staff, and community members and reflects our commitment to fostering a culture of respect, empathy, and responsibility. We strive to create a learning environment where differences are valued and where students feel safe and supported, both physically and emotionally.

Bullying

At Raha International School, we strive to promote healthy relationships and ensure a safe environment for all members of the school community. The UAE Ministry of Interior Child Protection Center identifies bullying and peer abuse, and cyber bullying under its child protection dimensions, "The Ministry of Interior Child Protection Centre will work, in collaboration with other entities and agencies, to address the issue of bullying among children in order to ensure that children do not suffer the harm that is often associated with this activity" (MoI- CPC, 2016).

Aligned with the policies and guidelines of the Ministry of Interior Child Protection Center, RIS KCC treats any form of bullying as a serious offence and as such does not tolerate or trivialize bullying behaviours:

"Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time." Bullying may be verbal, physical and or social. Examples of bullying include, but are not limited to: making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

Cyberbullying

"Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place over digital devices like cell phones, computers, and tablets. Cyberbullying can occur through text messages, and apps, or online in social media, forums, or gaming where people can view, participate in, or share content. Cyberbullying includes sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or mean content about someone else. It can include sharing personal or private information about someone

else causing embarrassment or humiliation. Some cyberbullying crosses the line into unlawful or criminal behavior.” (Stopbullying.gov)

Cyber bullying is particularly dangerous as it usually involves relative anonymity and the ability to reach large audiences. Furthermore, material once online may never be completely removed. Examples of cyberbullying include but are not limited to: unkind text messages or emails, rumors sent by email or posted on social networking sites, and embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles.

It is expected that parents work in cooperation with the school to educate our students about the seriousness of cyber bullying. While some incidents of cyber bullying do occur at school, most reported cases occur outside of school hours. In these cases we work together with parents to ensure that this behavior stops. If the cyberbullying action adversely affects the safety and wellbeing of a student while in school, RIS KCC will take disciplinary action against those students involved. RIS KCC students who commit cyber bullying will be subject to the consequences for bullying in the Matrix of Consequences.

Students are encouraged to report all incidents of bullying, and community members are expected to enforce the policy.

Classification of different kinds of bullying (Educational and Administrative Staff)

Kinds of Bullying	Direct	Indirect
Verbal Abuse	Verbal insults	Persuading another person to criticise or insult someone
	Unfair criticism	Spreading malicious rumours
	Name calling	Anonymous phone calls and emails
Gestural Abuse	Threatening or obscene gestures	Deliberate turning away or averting one's gaze to ignore someone
	Menacing stares	
Physical means	Striking	Getting another person to assault someone
	Throwing things	
	Using a weapon	
	Removing and hiding belongings	
Relational bullying	Forming coalitions against someone	Persuading people to exclude someone

At Raha International School KCC, we understand that bullying can take many forms, and we aim to address all instances regardless of the medium in which they occur.

For an action to be bullying it should satisfy the following conditions:

- The actions are intended to hurt someone or put them under stress.
- The person being targeted cannot defend himself or herself adequately, for example because he or she is physically weaker, outnumbered (having no supporters) and does not have the skills to resist. There is ALWAYS a power imbalance.
- Typically, it is repeated over time.
- It is not the same thing as fighting or quarrelling between people of equal power.
- Nor is it the same thing as friendly teasing, which the target acknowledges as being a joke.

Assessing the Severity of Bullying

Low severity commonly involves thoughtless periodic teasing, name calling and occasional exclusion. This can be annoying and unpleasant and can escalate and then involve more serious forms of bullying. Most bullying is at this level.

An intermediate level of bullying occurs when a child is subjected for a time to forms of harassment which are both systematic and hurtful. These may include cruel teasing, continual exclusion and some threats or some relatively mild physical abuse, pushing or tripping.

Severe bullying occurs when the harassment is cruel and intense, especially if it occurs over an extended period and is very distressing to the victim. It frequently involves serious physical assaults, but it can still be severe when the bullying is non-physical if the methods used are unremitting, occur over an extended time period and are psychologically damaging.

Signs a child is being bullied:

Physical:

- Unexplained bruises
- Scratches or cuts
- Torn clothes
- Damaged belongings

Psychosomatic:

- Non-specific pains Headaches
- Abdominal pains
- Mouth sores

School related behaviours:

- Afraid of travelling on the school bus
- Asking to be driven to school
- Unwilling to go to school
- Deterioration in school work
- Coming home hungry (because lunch was taken)
- Reporting loss of possessions
- Asking for or stealing money
- Fear of walking to or from school
- Change of route to school

Changes in social behaviour:

- Having fewer friends / being isolated
- Not wanting to go out
- Being often excluded from social gatherings

Emotional indicators:

- Appearing upset, unhappy, lonely, tearful, distressed
- Becoming withdrawn and depressed
- Stammering
- Suicidal thoughts
- Unexpected mood swings

Worrying behaviours:

- Irritability and temper outbursts
- Stopping eating
- Over-eating
- Being unable to sleep
- Nightmares
- Bed wetting
- Crying out during sleep
- Refusing to say what is wrong

Indicators of poor health:

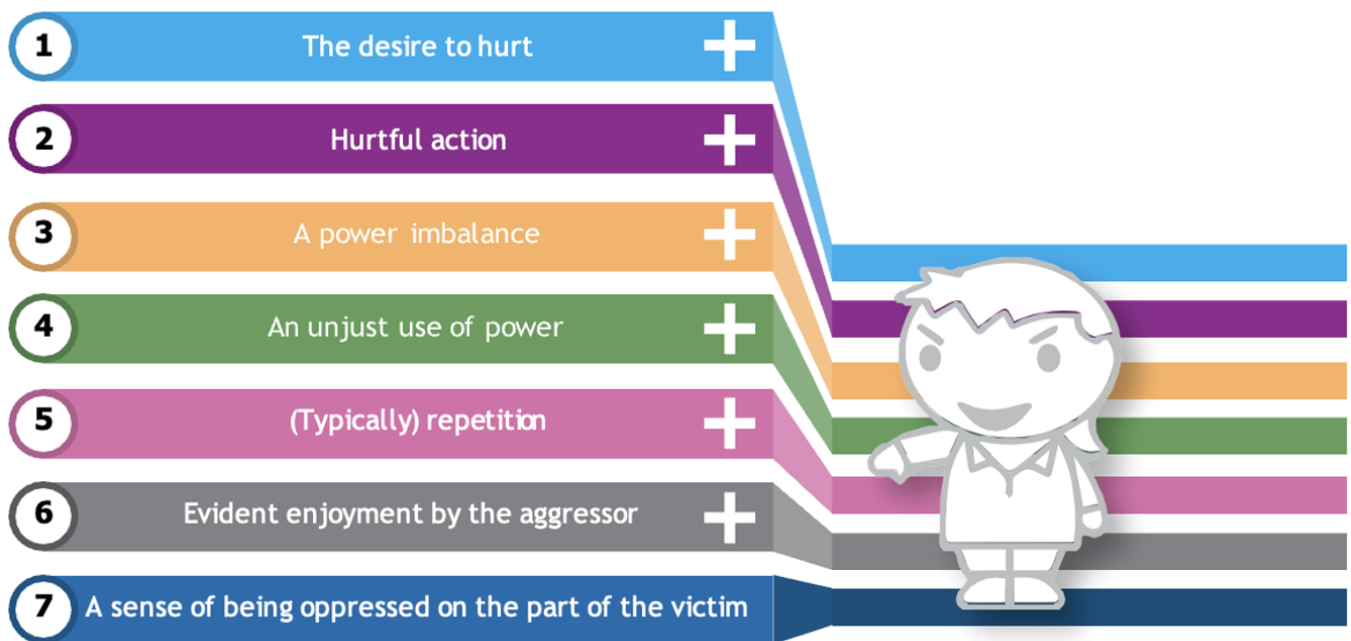
- Being generally tired or run-down
- Low resistance to infection
- Recurring illnesses
- Threatening or attempting suicide

Research has shown that these are some of the effects on repeatedly bullied students:

- Bullying can seriously damage the mental health of some vulnerable children and it can last for a life time.
- Children who are repeatedly bullied at school are often unable to learn their lessons. They find it hard to concentrate and may stay away from school.
- Children who repeatedly engage in school bullying are much more likely than others to commit crimes and harm others unless their behaviour is changed.

The Seven Elements of bullying (Educational and Administrative Staff)

These elements are typically found when cases of bullying occur:



Restorative Practice Approach

We approach bullying and cyberbullying incidents through restorative practices, focusing on healing, accountability, and the restoration of relationships. Our goal is to create a school environment where everyone feels valued, heard, and supported. However, restorative practice will not be used where there is ongoing risk, coercion, fear, or a significant power imbalance, or where it may compromise student safety or wellbeing.

Restorative practice emphasizes:

- Understanding the harm caused by bullying.
- Encouraging accountability and responsibility in the person who has bullied.
- Providing support for the person who has been bullied.
- Repairing relationships to rebuild trust and promote reconciliation.

Key Principles

In alignment with ADEK policies and our school values, the following principles guide our approach to preventing and addressing bullying and cyberbullying:

1. **Prevention:** Creating a positive school culture that promotes respect, empathy, and inclusivity.
2. **Intervention:** Addressing any incidents of bullying promptly and effectively, ensuring all involved parties are supported.
3. **Restoration:** Facilitating restorative conversations and activities to rebuild trust and foster understanding.
4. **Education:** Raising awareness about the impact of bullying and teaching students how to behave responsibly in both physical and digital spaces.
5. **Partnership:** Collaborating with families, the wider community, and external organizations to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all students.

Note: Restorative practice will not be used where there is ongoing risk, coercion, fear, or a significant power imbalance, or where it may compromise student safety or wellbeing.

Responsibilities of Students

Students at Raha International School KCC are expected to:

- Treat all members of the school community with respect, kindness, and fairness. This embodies our RIS KCC core values of courage and connection.
- Report any incidents of bullying or cyberbullying they witness or experience to a trusted adult (teacher, counselor, or school leader).
- Participate in restorative processes, where appropriate, to help repair harm and restore relationships.
- Engage in discussions and activities designed to promote empathy, respect, and responsibility.

Responsibilities of Staff

Staff members are responsible for:

- Modeling respectful behaviour and fostering a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for all students.
- Identifying and addressing potential bullying behavior promptly, using a restorative approach.
- Providing students with guidance on appropriate behaviour both in-person and online.
- Supporting students involved in bullying through counseling, conflict resolution, and restorative practices.

- Collaborating with families and school leadership to address any concerns regarding bullying.
- Engaging in regular professional development on anti-bullying strategies, restorative practices, and ADEK's policies.

Responsibilities of Parents/Guardians

Parents and guardians have a key role in supporting the school's efforts to combat bullying. They are expected to:

- Encourage their children to treat others with respect and kindness.
- Support their children in following the school's expectations regarding behavior, both on and off school grounds.
- Report any concerns or incidents of bullying to the school, either directly or via the designated channels.
- Be active partners in restorative processes when their child is involved in bullying, whether as the victim or the perpetrator.
- Monitor their child's online activities and guide them on the responsible use of technology.

Procedures for Addressing Bullying and Cyberbullying

When bullying or cyberbullying is reported or observed, the following steps will be taken:

Investigation:

- The school will investigate the incident in a timely manner, ensuring the safety of all students involved.
- All parties will be interviewed, including witnesses and those directly involved in the bullying incident.
- The severity and frequency of the bullying will be assessed, as well as the context in which it occurred (e.g., whether it was face-to-face or online).

Support:

- The person being bullied will receive support from the school counselor and other relevant staff members.
- The student who engaged in bullying behaviour will be provided with an opportunity to reflect on their actions and will be supported in taking responsibility for their behaviour.

Restorative Conversation:

- Restorative practice will be used to engage the individuals involved in a dialogue about the harm caused, with the goal of understanding each other's perspectives, addressing the impact of the bullying, and making amends.
- The process will be facilitated by a trained staff member (e.g., counselor, the LTL:SE or the DH) to ensure it is fair and effective.

Follow-up:

- A follow-up plan will be put in place to monitor the situation and ensure that bullying behaviour does not recur.
- The school will keep parents informed throughout the process and provide ongoing support as needed.

Prevention and Awareness Programs

The school will implement ongoing prevention strategies to reduce bullying and cyberbullying, including:

- **Anti-bullying week:** To promote awareness and encourage positive behaviours.
- **Assemblies:** Age-appropriate programmes for students to understand the consequences of bullying and the importance of respect and inclusivity.
- **Digital Citizenship Education:** Teaching students how to safely and responsibly use digital platforms and how to recognise, report, and prevent cyberbullying.

Reporting and Confidentiality

Students, parents, and staff are encouraged to report any concerns related to bullying or cyberbullying to school staff. Reports can be made in person, by email, or through the school's reporting platform.

Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the investigation process, with information shared only with those directly involved in addressing the situation. The identity of students who report bullying will be protected, and retaliation against individuals who report bullying is not tolerated.

Disciplinary Action

While the primary approach is restorative, disciplinary actions may be necessary and will follow the Behaviour Policy. The severity of the consequences will depend on the nature of the incident, the impact on the victim, and whether the individual has shown remorse. Disciplinary actions may include:

- Restorative meetings with students and staff.
- Loss of privileges (e.g., extracurricular activities).
- Parental meetings and counseling sessions.
- Internal /External suspension or expulsion for severe or repeated incidents, in accordance with ADEK guidelines.

Type of bullying	Behaviour Policy Level
Low-level, emerging, one-off relational harm	Level 2 (Restorative intervention, Whole School Reflection, Level 2 letter signed by parents)
Repeated bullying, intimidation, harassment	Level 3 (Internal suspension, counselor intervention, Level 3 letter signed by parents, antibullying undertaking signed by parents)
Persistent, severe, or online defamation, taking & sharing of photos/videos without consent	Level 4 (External suspension, behaviour contract, student on probation, Level 4 behaviour letter signed by parents, antibullying undertaking signed by family)

By fostering a culture of respect, responsibility, and inclusivity, Raha International School KCC is dedicated to preventing bullying and cyberbullying and ensuring that all members of the school community feel safe, supported, and valued. Through a collaborative approach and the principles of restorative practice, we aim to address any issues that arise and guide students toward positive behaviors and conflict resolution.

This policy aligns with ADEK's regulations and is integral to the holistic development of our students in both physical and online spaces.

Anti-Bullying Family Undertaking Acknowledgement of Risk and Responsibility

Date: _____
Student Name: _____
Grade: _____

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

We appreciate your cooperation and engagement following our recent communication regarding concerns about your child's behaviour, which has been identified as **bullying and/or cyberbullying** in line with the Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying and Cyberbullying Policy at **Raha International School Khalifa City Campus (KCC)**.

This undertaking is a pastoral and safeguarding measure designed to ensure a shared understanding between home and school regarding the seriousness of the matter, the potential risks associated with ongoing bullying behaviour, and the importance of continued collaboration between home and school to prevent further harm.

Acknowledgement of Behaviour and School Notification

By signing this undertaking, you acknowledge that:

- You have been formally notified by Raha International School Khalifa City Campus (KCC) of concerns relating to your child's behaviour.
- The behaviour identified meets the school's definition of bullying and/or cyberbullying.
- You understand that such behaviour may impact the safety, wellbeing, and emotional health of other students.

Acknowledgement of UAE Law and Risk

Bullying and cyberbullying are taken seriously under the **laws of the United Arab Emirates**, including legislation relating to child protection, harassment, intimidation, and the misuse of electronic communication.

You understand that:

- Bullying behaviours may constitute **criminal offences** under UAE law.
- Parents and guardians have a responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to prevent their child from causing harm to others.
- Failure to address ongoing bullying behaviour may expose families to **legal action initiated independently by the parents or guardians of affected students**.

Parental Responsibility and External Support

You acknowledge that Raha International School Khalifa City Campus (KCC) has advised that additional support may be required to address and rectify your child's behaviour.

By signing this undertaking, you confirm that you will:

- Actively support the school in addressing your child's behaviour.
- Engage with **recommended external support** (such as counselling, behavioural intervention, or therapeutic services), where advised.
- Take responsibility for monitoring and addressing your child's behaviour both **in school and outside of school**, including online activity.
- Keep the school informed of progress and any relevant developments.
- You understand that a failure to engage meaningfully with recommended support may be considered a lack of reasonable parental intervention.

School Commitment

Raha International School Khalifa City Campus (KCC) confirms that it will:

- Continue to fulfil its duty of care to **all students**.
- Respond to bullying concerns in a timely, fair, and proportionate manner.
- Implement restorative, educational, and disciplinary measures in line with school policy, ADEK guidance, and UAE law.
- Provide appropriate pastoral and wellbeing support to students affected by bullying.
- Monitor behaviour closely following this undertaking and escalate concerns where required.

Declaration

By signing below, you confirm that you have read, understood, and agree to the contents of this Anti-Bullying Family Undertaking. You acknowledge the seriousness of this matter and your responsibility to take appropriate steps to prevent further harm.

Parent / Guardian Declaration

Name: _____
Signature: _____
Date: _____
Contact Number: _____
Relationship to Student:
☐ Mother ☐ Father ☐ Guardian ☐ Other: _____

For School Use

Name: _____
Role: _____
Signature: _____
Date: _____

Revision Log

Date	Changes	Reviewed By
May 2026	Alignment with Secondary Behaviour Policy	Behaviour Management Committee