: Learners Today.. Leaders Tomorrow :

The Gulf English School

Whole School Anti-Bullying Policy

Date: September 2026

Author: Leadership Team

Adoption / Review	Committee	Lead Personnel	Review Date:
September 2026	ELT	LT	September 2027

This policy applies across all campuses:
GES Gharafa (Infants, Juniors, and Secondary)
GES Bin Omran

Responsible, **R**espectful, **R**esilience

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COMMITMENT STATEMENT

The Gulf English School is committed to fostering a culture where every student feels safe, respected, valued and empowered to succeed. Preventing bullying is a shared responsibility and every member of the GES community must play an active role in promoting kindness, inclusion, dignity and respect.

The Gulf English School's

Our Vision

We aim to develop a responsible, respectful, resilient school community, supporting the highest level of personal achievement in a changing modern intercultural world.

V1	We aim to develop a responsible, respectful, resilient school community,
V2	supporting the highest level of personal achievement
V3	in a changing modern intercultural world.

Mission Statements

M1	We provide a high-quality education, focusing on skills, knowledge and application, enabling our community to strive and achieve excellence
M2	We aim to develop a culture of life-long learning, independence, ambition, which is continuously demonstrated by our community.
M3	Our community promotes diversity and global citizenship where individual differences are understood and celebrated.
M4	To drive the development of creative skills and critical awareness in our students.
M5	Our school community provides a safe, supportive, and stimulating learning environment that focusses on the well-being of all
M6	We aim to integrate the use of technology on a day-to-day basis to enhance our teaching and learning.

Our Core Values: The 3 R's

- ✓ **Responsible:** Driven, Ambitious, Achiever
- ✓ **Respectful:** Empathy, supportive, caring, diversity
- ✓ **Resilient:** Risk takers, empowered, committed

1. Statement Summary

At our school, we are committed to creating a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for all students. Bullying in any form is not tolerated. This policy outlines how we prevent and respond to bullying across all campuses and phases of the Gulf English School (GES) through a consistent whole-school approach rooted in our values, the British curriculum, and respect for the diversity of our international school community in Qatar.

2. Policy Statement

The Gulf English School (GES) is committed to providing a safe, supportive, inclusive and respectful learning environment in which all members of the school community feel safe, valued, respected, protected and able to achieve their full potential.

Bullying in any form is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Bullying can have a significant impact on the emotional wellbeing, physical safety, academic achievement and personal development of students. The school therefore adopts a proactive approach to preventing bullying, responding effectively when concerns arise, and providing support for all students involved.

The school recognises that bullying can occur in person, online, during school activities, while travelling to and from school, and through interactions that take place outside school but have an impact on relationships and wellbeing within school. The welfare of students will always be the school's primary consideration.

This policy provides clear definitions, prevention strategies, and procedures tailored to each school phase to ensure consistency and clarity across the Infants, Juniors, and Secondary schools.

3. Aims of the Policy

- To prevent bullying through education, awareness, and consistent expectations.
- To ensure students, parents, and staff know what bullying is and how to report it.
- To establish clear reporting and investigation procedures.
- To support students who have been bullied and address the behaviour of those responsible.
- To promote kindness, respect, and inclusion in all areas of school life.

4. What is Bullying?

At GES we adopt the following definition:

Bullying is the repetitive and intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where there is an imbalance of power that makes it difficult for the targeted person to defend themselves.

Bullying can take many forms, including:

- **Physical**: hitting, kicking, taking belongings
- **Verbal**: name-calling, insulting, offensive remarks
- **Indirect**: spreading rumours, social exclusion, manipulation
- **Emotional**: being intentionally unfriendly, discrimination
- **Cyberbullying**: using technology to threaten, humiliate, or target others

Bullying may relate to:	We also recognise that bullying may arise due to:

• Race, nationality, or culture • Religion or belief systems • Appearance or health conditions • Gender or gender identity • Sexual orientation • Special Educational Needs (SEN) or disabilities • Home or family circumstances	• Peer pressure and social dynamics • Stereotyping and unconscious bias • Jealousy or competition • Political or social tensions • Perceived differences or nonconformity

Bullying is normally characterised by repetition, intent and an imbalance of power. A single serious incident may not meet this definition of bullying, but it may still constitute serious misconduct, discrimination, harassment or a safeguarding concern and will be addressed with equal seriousness under the appropriate school policy and procedures.

Not all disagreements or friendship difficulties constitute bullying.
Examples include:

- Occasional disagreements.
- Friendship fallouts.
- Single incidents of conflict.
- Arguments between students of equal power.

Such incidents remain important and will be addressed through the Behaviour Policy and restorative approaches where appropriate.

When determining whether behaviour constitutes bullying, the school will consider:

- The duration of the behaviour
- Repetition
- Intent
- Impact
- Context
- Evidence
- The presence of a power imbalance

The school reserves the right to determine whether behaviour constitutes bullying following investigation and review of all relevant evidence.

5. Signs and Symptoms

A student may show changes in behaviour or wellbeing that could indicate bullying or another concern. These signs do not necessarily mean that bullying is occurring, but staff should remain professionally curious, listen carefully and investigate or refer concerns appropriately.

- Is unwilling to come to school;
- Becomes withdrawn and anxious;
- Lacks confidence;

- Low self-esteem or unexplained physical/psychosomatic symptoms;
- Drop in attendance
- Physical signs
- Isolated from others
- Excuses not to mix with others
- Changes in behaviour, including increased anger or aggression
- A decline in engagement, concentration or academic performance
- Changes in sleep, mood or eating patterns
- Truancy

Types of Bullying – Refer to Appendix 1

6. Prevention

Preventing bullying is a whole-school responsibility.

GES promotes a culture where respect, kindness, responsibility and inclusion are consistently modelled and celebrated.

Current preventative measures include:

Curriculum

- PSHE lessons
- Form Time programmes
- Online Safety curriculum
- Safeguarding curriculum
- Wellbeing education

Student Voice

- Student Council
- Student forums
- Peer mentoring
- Anti-Bullying ambassadors

School Culture

- Assemblies
- Anti-Bullying Week
- Celebration of diversity
- Character development programmes

Monitoring Systems

- Pastoral tracking systems
- ClassCharts/ClassDojo monitoring
- Student wellbeing surveys
- Safeguarding data reviews

Staff Development

- Annual safeguarding training
- Behaviour management training
- Cyberbullying awareness
- Child-on-child abuse training
- Cultural awareness training

7. Whole School Approaches

Primary Procedures

In the Primary School, bullying prevention begins with the development of positive relationships and emotional literacy.

Class Teachers play a central role in:

- Building positive classroom communities
- Teaching respectful behaviour
- Modelling kindness
- Monitoring wellbeing

Phase Leaders and Assistant Headteachers (Pastoral) work alongside Class Teachers to investigate concerns, support students and engage families.

The Primary School prioritises:

- Early intervention
- Restorative conversations
- Emotional coaching
- Family partnership

Students are encouraged to seek support from trusted adults as soon as concerns arise.

Other strategies include:

Infants (EYFS & KS1)

- Circle time and storytelling to explore feelings and friendship.
- Use of puppets, visual prompts, and class charters to model good behaviour.
- Positive reinforcement and support for developing empathy.

Juniors (KS2)

- Anti-bullying pledges and classroom discussions.
- Circle time focused on healthy friendships and resilience.
- Introduction of the Speak Up bot (see below) for confidential reporting.

Secondary Procedures

The Secondary School recognises the increasing complexity of friendships, social relationships and online interactions.

Students receive explicit education regarding:

- Digital citizenship
- Healthy relationships
- Respectful communication
- Online conduct
- Diversity and inclusion
- Peer mentoring and anti-bullying ambassadors.
- Themed assemblies and workshops (e.g. online safety, respect in relationships).
- Clear online reporting options and digital education.

8. Reporting and Responding to Bullying

We encourage a 'tell someone' culture where students feel safe and supported when raising concerns.

Reporting Bullying:

Bullying can be reported by:

- **Students**
- Parents
- Staff
- Visitors

Students may report concerns to:

- Class Teacher
- Form Tutor
- Head of Year
- Head of Primary
- Head of Secondary
- School Counsellor
- DSL
- Any trusted member of staff

Reports will always be taken seriously and responded to appropriately.

All students can:

- Speak to any trusted adult (teacher, TA, counsellor).
- Share concerns with parents who can notify the school.
- Report incidents via pastoral forms, digital tools, or in person.

Juniors & Secondary: Speak Up Bot

- students in the Juniors and Secondary phases have access to Speak Up, a digital bot placed in Microsoft Teams designed to support students in reporting bullying confidentially and safely.
- The bot offers guidance and reassurance and links to a Microsoft Form for reporting.
- Once submitted, the Form automatically notifies the Head Teacher and Deputy Head of that phase for investigation.

Response Procedure (All Phases):

1. **Listen** to the student without judgement.
2. Record the concern promptly and accurately using the school's approved safeguarding, wellbeing or pastoral recording system.
3. Investigate promptly, fairly and proportionately, hearing from relevant parties, unless the concern meets the threshold for immediate DSL referral.
4. Inform parents/carers in accordance with the Parent Communication section below and any safeguarding advice from the DSL.
5. Support the student who has experienced bullying with check-ins, safe spaces, counselling or other appropriate pastoral support.
6. Address the behaviour of the student displaying bullying behaviour through restorative conversations, behaviour plans, support and/or sanctions as appropriate.
7. Follow up to ensure the situation has been resolved and the student feels safe.

9. Complaints and Further Escalation

Parents/carers who remain concerned about the school's response should first raise the matter with the relevant phase leadership so that the concern can be reviewed. If the matter remains unresolved,

parents/carers may use the school's Complaints Policy and Procedure. Safeguarding concerns may be referred directly to the DSL at any stage.

10. Malicious or Deliberately False Allegations and Retaliation

Students must be able to report concerns in good faith without fear of retaliation. An allegation that is not substantiated is not, by itself, considered malicious. Where there is clear evidence that a student has knowingly and deliberately fabricated an allegation or has retaliated against someone for reporting a concern or participating in an investigation, the matter may be addressed under the Behaviour Policy and, where relevant, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

11. Parent Communication

Parents/carers will normally be informed when a bullying concern involving their child is substantiated, requires significant investigation, or results in ongoing support or intervention. Communication will be timely, proportionate and mindful of the privacy of other students. Where informing a parent/carer could place a child at greater risk, compromise a safeguarding investigation or conflict with safeguarding advice, the DSL will determine how and when communication should take place.

12. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Reports of bullying will be handled sensitively. Information will only be shared with those who need to know in order to safeguard students, investigate concerns and provide appropriate support. Students must not be promised absolute confidentiality. Where a disclosure raises a safeguarding concern, relevant information will be shared with the DSL and, where necessary, appropriate external agencies in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

13. Safeguarding and Immediate DSL Referral

Where a report of bullying indicates a possible safeguarding concern, including child-on-child abuse, sexual harassment, sexual violence, serious discriminatory abuse, coercion, exploitation, threats of significant harm or serious online abuse, staff must not undertake their own investigation beyond establishing the immediate information needed to keep the student safe. The concern must be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and managed in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Immediate safety and medical needs must always be addressed first.

14. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
All Staff	Be role models of respectful behaviour. Challenge and report unkind or bullying behaviour immediately.
SLT & Phase Leaders	Oversee implementation and ensure consistency. Review data and ensure appropriate responses.
Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs)	Oversee serious or persistent cases. Ensure compliance with safeguarding policies.
Parents and Carers	Encourage open conversations about school life. Report concerns and support the school's approach.

Students	Treat others with kindness and respect. Report bullying they see or experience.

Leadership Team

The Head of School will:

- Ensure implementation of this policy.
- Promote a culture of respect and inclusion.
- Monitor bullying trends.
- Ensure appropriate staff training.
- Report significant concerns to Governors.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

The DSL will:

- Assess safeguarding implications.
- Maintain safeguarding records.
- Liaise with external agencies where necessary.
- Support investigations involving safeguarding concerns.

Pastoral Leaders

Pastoral staff will:

- Investigate concerns.
- Support students involved.
- Maintain records.
- Communicate with parents.
- Monitor outcomes.

All Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Modelling respectful behaviour.
- Challenging inappropriate behaviour.
- Reporting concerns promptly.
- Recording incidents accurately.
- Supporting students.
- Promoting inclusion and wellbeing.

Staff must never ignore reports or signs of bullying.

Students

Students have a responsibility to:

- Treat others with respect.
- Report bullying.
- Support peers appropriately.
- Avoid retaliatory behaviour.
- Contribute to a positive school culture.

Parents and Carers

Parents are expected to:

- Support the values of the school.
- Encourage respectful behaviour.
- Report concerns promptly.
- Work collaboratively with the school.
- Support agreed interventions.

15. Investigation Procedures

All reports will be investigated appropriately and proportionately.

Investigations may involve:

- Student statements
- Witness statements
- Staff statements
- ClassCharts records
- Screenshots
- Digital evidence
- Safeguarding records
- CCTV footage

The school will:

1. Gather information.
2. Review evidence.
3. Assess risk.
4. Determine findings.
5. Implement support.
6. Apply consequences.
7. Monitor outcomes.

Parents will be kept informed where appropriate.

When a concern is reported:

Step 1 - Immediate safety and wellbeing needs will be addressed.

Step 2 - Relevant staff will gather information.

Step 3 - Students involved will be interviewed separately.

Step 4 - Witnesses may be interviewed.

Step 5 - Parent communication will occur where appropriate.

Step 6 - A decision will be made regarding:

- Whether bullying occurred.
- Required interventions.
- Support measures.
- Sanctions.

Step 7 - Monitoring and follow-up will take place.

All incidents will be recorded on the school's management information system.

16. Support for Students Who Experience Bullying

GES will provide support which may include:

- Immediate reassurance
- Safe spaces
- Check-in meetings
- Counselling support
- Peer mentoring
- Wellbeing interventions
- Pastoral monitoring
- Safety planning

Support will continue until the school is satisfied that the bullying has ceased and the student feels safe.

17. Support for Students Displaying Bullying Behaviour

The school recognises that students engaging in bullying behaviour may also require support.
Interventions may include:

- Reflection activities
- Restorative conversations
- Counselling
- Behaviour mentoring
- Behaviour plans
- Parent meetings
- Social skills programmes
- Ongoing monitoring

Support does not remove accountability or consequences.

18. Restorative Practice

Where appropriate, GES may use restorative approaches to:

- Repair relationships.
- Promote understanding.
- Encourage accountability.
- Restore trust.

Restorative conversations are not suitable in every situation.

They will only be used where:

- Students feel safe.
- Participation is voluntary.
- Power imbalances have been addressed.
- Staff determine the process to be appropriate.

Restorative practice will not replace sanctions where serious bullying has occurred.

Restorative approaches will not be used where safeguarding concerns make them inappropriate.

19. Sanctions

Sanctions will be proportionate to the nature, seriousness and frequency of the behaviour.
Possible sanctions include:

- Verbal warning
- Reflection activity
- Written apology

- Loss of privileges
- Detention
- Service to the school community
- Removal from activities
- Internal suspension
- Fixed-term suspension
- Behaviour contract
- Permanent exclusion in the most serious cases

Serious discriminatory, safeguarding-related or repeated incidents may result in more significant sanctions.

20. Record Keeping

All reported incidents will be recorded and monitored.
Records will include:

- Date and time
- Nature of incident
- Students involved
- Actions taken
- Parent communication
- Outcomes
- Follow-up measures

Data will be analysed regularly to identify trends and inform prevention strategies.

21. Monitoring and Evaluation

Incident data is monitored regularly to identify:

- Termly analysis of reported incidents and trends.
- Regular student voice surveys to evaluate student wellbeing.
- High-risk locations
- Emerging online issues
- Repeated concerns
- Parent feedback and concerns
- Vulnerable groups
- Ministry updates
- Safeguarding Leads and Heads of Phase will review incident data to assess the effectiveness of interventions, identify patterns and inform future prevention strategies.

The policy will be reviewed annually and updated in response to the above and will involve feedback from staff, students, and parents.

22. Links to Other Policies

This policy operates in conjunction with:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Inclusion and SEND Policy

- PSHE & RSE Curriculum Overviews
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Wellbeing Policy
- Complaints Policy and Procedure

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All students from Foundation Stage to Year 13.
- Teaching and non-teaching staff.
- Governors.
- Volunteers.
- Visitors and contractors.

The policy applies:

- During the school day.
- On school premises.
- During educational visits.
- During residential trips.
- During extracurricular activities.
- On school transport.
- Online or through electronic communication where behaviour affects members of the GES community.

Policy Control and Compliance

This policy applies across all GES campuses and phases. It aligns with safeguarding expectations, student wellbeing requirements, behaviour expectations, online safety principles and school improvement priorities. It supports consistent systems for prevention, reporting, investigation, intervention and monitoring.

POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Senior Leadership Team and approved by Governors.

An earlier review may occur if:

- Regulatory requirements change.
- Safeguarding guidance changes.
- School monitoring identifies emerging concerns.
- Significant incidents indicate a need for revision.

Appendix 1 – Types of Bullying

Physical Bullying

This may include:

- Hitting
- Kicking
- Pushing
- Tripping

- Spitting
- Damage to property
- Theft of belongings

Verbal Bullying

This may include:

- Name-calling
- Insults
- Threats
- Offensive comments
- Humiliation
- Mocking

Emotional Bullying

Examples include:

- Deliberate intimidation
- Manipulation
- Isolation
- Public humiliation
- Fear-inducing behaviour

Relational Bullying

Examples include:

- Excluding others
- Spreading rumours
- Friendship manipulation
- Encouraging others to reject or ignore someone

Discriminatory Bullying

This may relate to:

- Race
- Nationality
- Religion
- Culture
- Disability
- Medical conditions
- Language
- Learning needs
- Physical appearance
- Family circumstances

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is a growing concern and can be particularly harmful due to its ability to reach a large audience rapidly.

Examples include:

- Harassing messages

- Social media abuse
- Anonymous messaging
- Sharing hurtful content
- Impersonation accounts
- Sharing images without consent
- Exclusion from online groups
- Online threats
- Recording and sharing incidents
- AI-generated images or content intended to humiliate or harm

Cyberbullying may occur through:

- WhatsApp
- Snapchat
- Instagram
- TikTok
- X
- Discord
- Gaming platforms
- Email
- SMS
- Any future digital platform

Artificial Intelligence

Students must not use AI tools to:

- Create harmful content
- Manipulate images
- Create deepfakes
- Impersonate other individuals
- Ridicule staff or students

The creation or distribution of harmful AI-generated content may result in both behavioural and safeguarding responses.

The school may investigate cyberbullying occurring outside school where it impacts the wellbeing, safety or education of members of the GES community.

Vulnerable Students

GES recognises that some students may experience increased vulnerability to bullying.

This may include students with:

- SEND
- Learning support needs
- Disabilities
- Medical conditions
- Mental health difficulties
- EAL needs
- Social communication difficulties

Students may also experience increased vulnerability due to:

- Race

- Ethnicity
- Tribe
- Nationality
- Religion
- Language
- Family circumstances
- Physical appearance
- Emotional wellbeing needs

Staff must remain alert to the additional barriers some students may face when reporting concerns or seeking support.

Child-on-Child Abuse

The school recognises that bullying may constitute a form of child-on-child abuse.

Where bullying behaviour includes:

- Serious intimidation
- Sexual harassment
- Sexual violence
- Discriminatory abuse
- Coercion
- Exploitation
- Significant emotional harm
- Online abuse

the matter will be managed in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Appendix 2: Roles and Responsibilities Matrix

Role	Prevention	Reporting	Investigation	Support	Monitoring
Board of Governors	✓				✓
Head of School	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Designated Safeguarding Lead	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Head of Primary	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Head of Secondary	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Assistant Heads	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Heads of Year	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Class Teachers	✓	✓		✓	✓
Form Tutors	✓	✓		✓	✓
School Counsellors	✓			✓	✓
Teaching Assistants	✓	✓		✓	
Students	✓	✓			
Parents	✓	✓		✓	

Appendix 3: Sanctions Matrix

Level	Behaviour	Example Responses
Level 1	First incident, low-level verbal behaviour	Restorative conversation, reflection task, apology
Level 2	Repeated verbal bullying or social exclusion	Parent contact, detention, behaviour reflection, monitoring
Level 3	Persistent bullying, discriminatory comments, online bullying	Formal pastoral intervention, behaviour contract, loss of privileges
Level 4	Serious bullying causing emotional distress	Internal suspension, parental meeting, counselling programme
Level 5	Physical bullying or repeated cyberbullying	Fixed-term suspension, safeguarding assessment
Level 6	Serious discriminatory abuse, threats, harassment, child-on-child abuse concerns	Senior Leadership intervention, safeguarding referral, risk assessment
Level 7	Extreme or persistent bullying causing significant harm	Permanent exclusion and/or external agency involvement

Factors Considered When Determining Sanctions

Leaders will consider:

- Age and developmental stage.
- Frequency of behaviour.
- Intent.
- Impact on the targeted student.
- Previous history.
- Safeguarding concerns.
- Level of remorse shown.
- Willingness to engage in restorative processes.

Appendix 4: Primary and Secondary Escalation Pathway

Primary School

Class Teacher → Phase Leader → Head of Primary → DSL (if required) → Head of School

Secondary School

Tutor → Head of Year → Head of Secondary → DSL (if required) → Head of School

Immediate Referral to DSL

The following should bypass normal escalation:

- Child-on-child abuse concerns.
- Serious discriminatory incidents.
- Sexual harassment.
- Sexual violence.
- Online exploitation.
- Threats of significant harm.
- Repeated targeted abuse.

POLICY DISTRIBUTION

This policy will be made available to:

- Staff via the Policy Portal and school website
- Parents via the school website
- Students through age-appropriate guidance and assemblies
- School Governors
- External inspectors and regulatory authorities when required

COMPLIANCE AND LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

GES recognises its responsibility to protect students from bullying and to promote a safe learning environment.
This policy has been informed by the following guidance and expectations:

United Kingdom Guidance

- [gov.uk]Department for Education (DfE): Preventing and Tackling Bullying Guidance.
- Department for Education (DfE): Keeping Children Safe in Education (current statutory guidance).
- [williamlil...tts.sch.uk][gov.uk]UK Safeguarding Expectations regarding Child-on-Child Abuse.,
- [gov.uk]UK Guidance on Online Safety and Cyberbullying.

Qatar Framework

- [edu.gov.qa][qatar-tribune.com]Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) expectations relating to student wellbeing and school safety.,
- [qatarliving.com]MoEHE requirements relating to student dignity and the prevention of physical, verbal and psychological harm.
- [edu.gov.qa][qatar-tribune.com]National expectations relating to safe and inclusive learning environments.,

International References

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- COBIS Accreditation Standards.
- BSO Inspection Framework.

DOCUMENT HISTORY

Date	Author	Summary of Changes
September 2026	Leadership Team	Complete policy review and rewrite aligned to UK safeguarding expectations and Qatar educational requirements
March 2024	Leadership Team	Previous revision
2020	Leadership Team	Updated cyberbullying procedures
2016	Deputy Head	Original policy