

# ISB Anti-Bullying Policy

[ISB policies](#) are designed to provide all members of our learning community with a clear picture of the philosophy, values and learning practices of the school. This particular policy is intended to provide an overview and guiding principles for learning at ISB but should not be viewed in isolation and instead as one piece of a comprehensive framework designed to foster a positive school culture that acknowledges and celebrates diversity.

ISB School Board. Latest review: May 2022  
Next review planned for: May 2024

## Defining bullying

The Danish Center for Educational Environment (DCUM) and the Mary Foundation share the following definition of bullying:

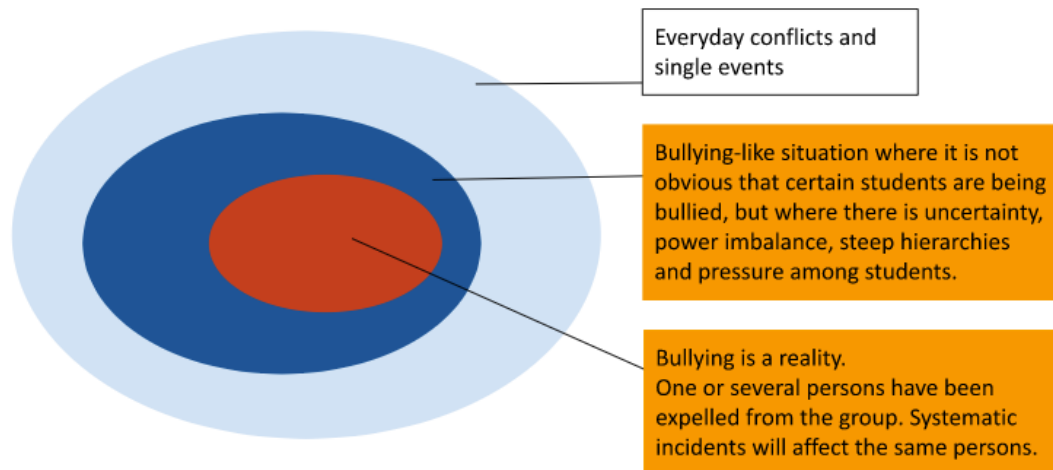
*“Bullying is not about individuals but about the dynamics in a group. It is actions both deliberate and unconscious - that lead to others being ostracised from the group. Bullying occurs in groups lacking common interests or goals and involves different types of actions that stigmatise the person who is being excluded. Bullying stems from a culture of insecurity, usually in social contexts where individuals cannot exclude themselves.”*

(The full definition (in Danish) can be found here: <https://dcum.dk/media/3223/hvadermobning20212.pdf> )

Bullying is not to be seen as one person’s doing, but to be viewed as and dealt with in the context of a group. Bullying can take different forms: It can be verbal, emotional or physical - and it can also take place online as cyber bullying.

Research from eXbus (Exploring Bullying in Schools) at Aarhus University points to bullying as a destructive culture and patterns that unfold in an interaction with many different forces. This does not mean that the individual child / young person or their parents do not play a part in the bullying that occurs, or that individuals can’t be held responsible for their actions - but it means that there is far more than the individual actors that mean something in relation to where and how bullying occurs. (..) For this reason we must look at more than the individuals if we are to solve the problem more efficiently. Nevertheless, what we see is that - almost automatically - individuals are pointed out when bullying is understood and explained.  
*(This section has been translated and taken from “4 tegn på mobbemønstre” by Stine Kaplan Jørgensen, Emu)*

Bullying and unsafe communities is a complex phenomenon, and it can be difficult to assess when actual bullying takes place. It is important to act when the social interactions are under pressure, the community is unsafe and before certain students are targeted.



*(Model/Source: DCUM)*

To understand bullying, we need to look beyond the victim and the bully. We need to observe and note patterns in a group's mutual interplay and positions. Bullying is a group phenomenon, and we must look at changing the collective group dynamics to prevent bullying from taking place.

Bullying is not about weak students but about students who are made weak in the community.

In order to act proactive and prevent actual bullying from taking place, we must be aware of and attentive to the 8 signs of bullying.

#### 8 signs of bullying:

1. When teasing is no longer for fun
2. When conflicts are unsolvable
3. When acts of ostracization becomes systemic
4. When there is a feeling of insecurity in the group
5. When there is a low level of tolerance in the community
6. When there is a lack of empathy
7. When there is an imbalance of power in the community
8. When there are lonely students in the community

*(Source/inspired by DCUM Guide: what is bullying and bullying like situations)*

## Our Philosophy and understanding

Bullying is when someone repeatedly and systematically is being hurt either by words or actions on purpose, by one or several persons. Bullying can take different forms, including, but not limited to:

- Verbal and emotional bullying
- Name calling, use of threatening or provocative language, making offensive remarks, starting rumours or telling lies about someone, leaving someone out on purpose, refusing to talk to someone
- Physical bullying
- Hitting, kicking, taking or hiding another's property, making rude gestures
- Cyber bullying. Using technology—internet, email, cell phones, social media, pictures— to hurt or harm someone else. This could be for example:

- Sending mean text messages
- Posting statements online that are unkind or not true
- Sending or posting pictures that are not yours to share
- Making negative comments online about someone
- Excluding others
- Agreeing with someone who posts something hurtful

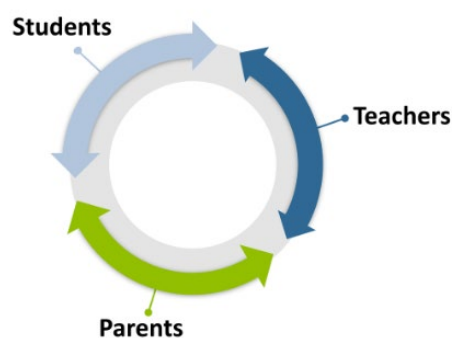
In cases of bullying, the School Leadership Team can be involved at any time. To the utmost consequence, the bully can be expelled from school.

## Implementation

The anti-bullying policy is discussed in all departments. Teachers are working preventively and intervening to uphold a strong positive community in class. Teachers focus on the anti-bullying strategy during team meetings. ISB Board, Kindergarten Parent Committee and class-parents are aware of, and pay attention to, the anti-bullying strategy.

## ISB is committed to

- provide a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our students, so that they can learn in a positive and secure atmosphere
- recognise the importance to focus on group dynamics rather than individuals
- recognise the importance of a caring, friendly, trusting and safe environment as having a direct consequence on students' learning
- build trusting and positive relationship with and between students
- ensure that all students are included and feel that they are an important member of the community in lessons, during breaks and in After School Club
- make sure that all of our students feel treated fairly, with respect and dignity
- recognise that relational competencies is a valuable teacher tool
- create a trusting environment for all our students to tell a member of staff if they experience and/or witness any bullying inside or outside school
- have proactive teachers who intervene early when made or become aware of students not thriving
- make a clear group-based action plan when needed
- meet students, parents and colleagues with positive expectations
- recognise the importance of collaboration between all parties:



Teachers, students and parents are supported by the Wellbeing Coordinators and Leadership team. In cases of bullying, the School Leadership Team can be involved at any time.

## Preventing bullying

*“Teachers extend learning for all students by creating an affirmative and responsive environment that considers student identities and embraces learner diversity from a strength-based perspective.*

*Taking shared responsibility for learning begins by establishing inclusive support structures that value diversity and support equal opportunity for all members.” (IB PYP, 2018)*

As it is our mission that no student feels bullied at ISB, prevention is key. Teachers focus on building relationships with the students and to get to know them at a personal level. Teachers with a close relationship with their students are more likely to notice subtle changes in group dynamics and will be able to deal with these changes at an early stage, thereby preventing actual bullying, or bully-like situations, from taking place.

Teachers focus on the students’ strengths and to highlight them. They aim for students to be caring, friendly and trusting towards each other. It is important for us to teach them that they are a part of a community and that we all play an important role in making sure that everybody thrives.

Well-being coordinators are always ready to assist teachers with ideas and provide workshops for classes. Well-being coordinators are also here to talk with the students that wish to or if parents/teachers have suggested it.

The student council also plays an important part in preventing bullying, as every year they create a survey containing questions about well-being and student/teacher relationship.

School wide events such as Halloween, Fastelavn and end of year gathering all support the community feeling across school.

Student well-being and bullying prevention are a daily, on-going school-wide focus. The specific approach is different from department to department according to the students’ age and development.

## Preventing bullying in Kindergarten

Preventing bullying begins in kindergarten with teachers working proactively building a positive and strong community where all students feel included and as an important part of the group.

### Steps in tackling bullying

1. Teachers observe a challenge concerning a child/the group. The challenge is discussed among teachers and with the parents.
2. Teachers and/or well-being coordinators observe the class.
3. Teachers and well-being coordinators discuss their observations, and an action plan with focus on group dynamics is made. Leadership is involved, if needed.
4. Initiatives are agreed upon. They can be pedagogical methods, changing groups, or looking at differentiation. It is agreed how long the initiatives will run (usually 4- 6 weeks). The initiatives are thereafter evaluated.
5. Parents are informed about the action plan and initiatives.
6. If needed, guidance and supervision are sought by involving internal or external resources. External resources could be provided by the municipality; special pedagogical advice from PPS (Pedagogical, psychological and health advisory group) or “familieafdelingen” (Family Unit).

## Preventing bullying in PYP and MYP

At ISB, we believe that a caring, friendly, trusting and safe environment is the foundation for students' learning and building self-esteem. PYP and MYP teachers work proactively with this in mind focusing on social and emotional development as well as academics.

Teachers use and teach the students with an appreciative approach to ensure that students feel understood and validated. Homeroom time and advisory in the MYP and morning meetings in the PYP are used to create a community feeling where everybody is involved and important.

ATL skills (Thinking, Social, Communication, Self management and Communication) and learner profile attributes are essential when promoting inclusion and community. What these skills and attributes look, sound and feel like is a focus throughout the Primary and Middle Years.

The anti bullying policy is shared with the classes and its meaning is discussed. Essential agreements are made and revisited throughout the year.

Teachers talk with students about conflicts as soon as they happen and expect students to share their side.

We inform parents about incidents if we assess it is important.

Currently, there are a range of anti-bullying initiatives being facilitated throughout the PYP and MYP, and we are in the process of streamlining and creating more of a shared/common approach.

### Steps in tackling bullying in PYP and MYP

In addition to building on the kindergarten plan, teachers act if they notice any signs of bullying. We also ask students and parents to react by reaching out to homeroom teachers if they witness situations that could be interpreted as bullying.

As soon as informed, the school is responsible for any further actions and the involved parents are informed. Leadership is informed and involved, if needed.

1. Homeroom teachers and or well-being coordinators meet with the involved students to learn the different perspectives on the situation.
2. Students and parents are invited to meetings. Depending on the situation the meetings can be individual or in groups.
3. Teachers and/or Wellbeing Coordinator observe the class both during lessons and breaks.
4. Data is collected and analysed to ensure correct actions.
5. Students / parents and ISB collaborate on an action plan.
6. Initiatives are agreed upon and put into action. The duration (length of time) of the initiatives is also agreed upon, and, thereafter, evaluated by the students, parents and ISB staff. The action plan is a dynamic document, meaning changes can be made throughout the process.
7. Regular check-ins with parents until we agree that the check-ins are no longer needed. The check-ins focus on what works well, what challenges we experience, and what we can do to change them.
8. If needed, guidance and supervision are sought by involving internal or external resources. External resources could be resources provided by the municipality; special pedagogical advice from PPS (Pedagogical, Psychological and Health advisory group) or "familieafdelingen" (the Family Unit).

End of policy