

Anti-Bullying Policy

A. OBJECTIVE

This institution is committed to providing a safe, nurturing, and positive environment that maximizes the learning experience and opportunities for all students. Each member of the school community is expected to assume personal responsibility for their own emotional and physical safety and that of others. Bullying, harassment, or intimidation toward any student is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated.

This protocol sets out clear practices and procedures for handling both observed and reported incidents of bullying. This document is an updated version of a previous ITJ Palomar protocol and has been developed in alignment with ISP Safeguarding Policies, *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, and SEP legislation (<https://escuelalibredeviolencia.sep.gob.mx/acosoescolarink>) to ensure a consistent and effective approach across the school.

B. DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying is any intentional, targeted, and repeated behaviour occurring within a context of power imbalance—whether physical, social, economic, or age-related. It generally occurs away from adult supervision and aims to dominate, exploit, or harm another student. Bullying can occur at any age and in any setting, whether at home, at school, or through digital platforms and technologies (cyberbullying).

Bullying may manifest in various forms:

- Verbal abuse: use of language to harm, humiliate, or intimidate, including insults, teasing, blackmail, or belittlement based on personal characteristics.
- Physical abuse: use of force to injure, threaten, or control another person. This includes hitting, pushing, unwanted contact, stalking, sexual aggression, or damage to personal belongings.
- Emotional abuse: behaviours intended to undermine confidence, create fear, or socially isolate the victim. Examples include threats or intimidation through aggressive gestures, deliberate exclusion, spreading rumours, or damaging reputation.
- Cyberbullying: digital platforms used to intimidate, threaten, or harm others. Examples include abusive messages, sharing harmful content, identity theft, exclusion from games or online groups, creation and dissemination of offensive images or videos, harassment through social media, chats, or gaming, creation of hate sites or fake accounts, among others.

Bullying may also intersect with discrimination, particularly when motivated by disability, race, religion or beliefs, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

According to ITJ, key elements of bullying include a coercive power imbalance, severity and repetition, and the ability to create in the victim a reasonable fear of significant harm to physical or mental wellbeing, personal property, or academic performance. Staff must focus on behaviours rather than labels, as roles of victim, perpetrator, or bystander are dynamic and may change over time.

C. SCOPE AND PROCEDURES

The school aims to foster a strong anti-bullying culture in all areas of school life. Preventive measures are implemented in accordance with SEP guidelines.

1. Peaceful Conflict Resolution

The school establishes and enforces a clear anti-bullying policy with concrete examples to ensure the entire community understands which behaviours constitute harassment. Rules and expectations are set for students, staff, and community members to promote a safe and consistent environment. Teachers provide supervision during key times (recess, arrival, dismissal) to identify and intervene in a timely manner. Staff guide students through incidents, encouraging responsibility and awareness of consequences. Students are encouraged to assume personal responsibility and engage in discussions and activities promoting peaceful conflict resolution.

2. Socioemotional Skill Development

Learning opportunities are provided to develop prosocial skills (communication, cooperation, empathy) during homeroom sessions. Social–emotional learning programs such as Second Step are integrated into the curriculum. Peer support systems are established to reinforce respect and collaboration. Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) and deputies are available for student guidance and support. At the beginning of the year, each student selects a trusted adult (Go-To Person) with whom they can speak if concerns arise. Parent training programs are provided to support their children’s socioemotional development.

3. Inclusive Environment

A culture of welcome and care is promoted, including student voice through safety surveys. Awareness campaigns and school activities reinforce values of respect and inclusion. Students are encouraged to report bullying without fear of retaliation. Incidents are investigated consistently, including during off-campus activities.

4. Democratic School Management

All reported incidents are recorded, investigated, and monitored to ensure transparency and accountability. Rules, policies, and preventive measures are communicated clearly to the entire school community. Sanctions are applied fairly and consistently. Parent feedback is collected to improve prevention strategies. Shared responsibility for the school climate is fostered through collaborative initiatives among students, staff, and families.

D. RESPONSE AND SCHOOL PRACTICES

All bullying incidents must be reported and investigated, even if no formal complaint is made by the victim. The reporting system documents the who, what, where, when, why, and how of each situation. Reports may be submitted through the Go-To Person, email, message, phone, in person, or via parents/peers.

Staff Response Protocol: When staff intervene, they must act immediately to stop the behaviour, focus on the conduct rather than the student, and ensure the safety of all involved. Peer mediation is not recommended in bullying cases due to the inherent power imbalance. Investigations are conducted promptly, with students interviewed separately to prevent further victimisation.

Support for the victim focuses on safety, reassurance, and participation in counselling or peer support. For the alleged aggressor, staff guide reflection using first-person statements and promote personal responsibility by reinforcing rules, expectations, and accountability. Consequences are applied in accordance with the Student Handbook.

All incidents are reported to the section director and DSL via safeguarding forms or the *My Concern* platform. Severe or repeated cases are referred to the senior leadership team, following safeguarding procedures and SEP protocols. Confidentiality is maintained, and parents of both victims and alleged aggressors are notified immediately to ensure early intervention.

E. PROCEDURES FOLLOWING A BULLYING REPORT

If a bullying incident is reported, the following procedures will be adopted:

- The staff member to whom the incident was reported or who first observed the situation will take control, providing reassurance and support. Students will be moved to a safe location if needed.
- A member of the Section Leadership or Safeguarding Team will be informed as soon as possible.
- Victims will be interviewed individually and asked to provide a written account of the events. Support will be offered if needed. Leading questions must be avoided and only factual information collected.
- The alleged aggressor and other involved parties will also be interviewed individually and asked to provide an immediate written account.
- The incident will be recorded and kept in the files of all involved students and in safeguarding records.
- The school principal will be notified and will intervene if the bullying is severe or persistent and requires a higher-level response.

- The victim will be interviewed separately from the alleged aggressor, reassured that retaliation is inappropriate, and offered support for self-care strategies and/or access to Human Development support.
- The alleged aggressor will be interviewed separately, reminded why the behaviour was inappropriate and harmful, and offered guidance to modify conduct along with the corresponding disciplinary sanctions.
- Parents/guardians of all parties will be informed and may be invited to school to discuss the matter. Their support will be sought. A way forward will be agreed, including disciplinary measures and possible therapeutic support.
- In very serious cases and following the principal's intervention, a report may need to be filed with the corresponding authorities such as the Secretariat of Public Education (SEP), and their protocols followed.

F. REMEDIATION AND CONSEQUENCES

Remediation strategies may include behaviour contracts, family meetings to establish agreements, consultation with psychologists to assess mental health, and training in social skills (empathy, anger management, problem solving), apologies, restitution, and reflective classroom discussions.

Consequences vary according to severity and recurrence and may include verbal or written warnings, temporary removal from class, loss of privileges, behaviour reports, parental notification, suspension, or further disciplinary action.

Decisions consider the student's age and maturity, nature and frequency of behaviours, context and relationships, past patterns, school culture, and available support systems.

G. INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS, FAMILIES, AND COMMUNITY

Families are partners in reinforcing expectations and consequences. This may include signing family agreements, attending counselling or educational workshops, and actively participating in socioemotional development initiatives. Mandatory parent workshops offer guidance on the prevention and handling of bullying and related topics.

H. ENVIRONMENTAL MEASURES

The school actively evaluates classroom and school space conditions to prevent bullying, reviews policies annually, communicates behavioural expectations, increases supervision, provides professional training for staff, and promotes collaboration between parents and teachers to maintain a safe and inclusive environment.

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