

ANTI BULLYING POLICY

A. PURPOSE

The Thomas Jefferson Institute expects all employees in our school as well as providers, to recognize that when a student is at risk of being bullied, actions will be taken to reduce the risk of harm.

We recognize that the protection of our students is very important in our school; they are in the best position to identify risky situations and be able to ask for help for themselves or other students.

1. Scopes and Objectives

The Thomas Jefferson Institute aims to:

- Provide a safe and happy environment that encourages growth and learning in our students.
- Outline the system and procedures that we have to ensure that students are safe within the school.
- Raise awareness in all employees and parents about issues related to School Harassment.
- Ensure effective communication between employees and parents in relation to bullying situations.
- Establish effective procedures for collaborators or external providers who encounter any situation related to Bullying.
- Be clear with everyone involved, including students, parents or guardians, about the Anti-bullying Policy.

Student: any student of the Thomas Jefferson Institute, regardless of age, as well as visitors who are minors, are considered as students.

Collaborator: Every member hired by the Thomas Jefferson Institute, regardless of their position or position.

A. SCOPE

The Anti Bullying policy will be endorsed and signed by the General Director.. This policy will be adopted by all levels of the organization.

B. DEFINITIONS

Bullying (or School Harassment) is a situation that occurs between students.

For it to be considered **that a case of bullying is being presented**, the following points must be taken into account:

- There is an imbalance of strength and power
- It occurs only between students
- It occurs in the school environment
- One or more students are exposed constantly and for a long time to negative actions by the same single or several students within the school with the intention of doing harm and making their power over the other visible.

Bullying can have the following manifestations:

- **Verbal:** insulting, humiliating, spreading rumors, or saying hurtful words to hurt a partner.
- **Physical:** hitting, pulling, pinching, biting, pushing, spitting at the other, engaging in behaviors that embarrass them in front of their peers.
- **Psychological:** constantly threatening, manipulating, blackmailing or intimidating a partner, on the grounds of causing harm if he asks for help or tells another person what they do to him.
- **Social exclusion:** ignoring and excluding peers from friendship, coexistence or school activities.

- **Cyberbullying:** Post comments, photos on social networks, cell phone messages or email, containing offensive messages, mocking, or revealing private information of a student; create fake profiles or get hold of app passwords to annoy or impersonate a colleague; take and publish on the internet or distribute by any means, photos or videos of harassment or mistreatment against colleagues.

Bullying places students who suffer, in a situation of vulnerability in relation to those who generate the attacks, which prevents them from fending for themselves. Students who have suffered or are experiencing bullying may present - among other symptoms - poor school performance, depression, anxiety, lack of appetite, stress, or lying to miss school. Disorders that, in very serious cases, can lead to the consumption of alcohol, drugs, diseases such as bulimia and anorexia, self-harm, or even think about taking their own lives.

It is important to consider that the behavior of those who bully others is usually the consequence of situations outside the school that affect them. For example, physical, psychological, emotional or sexual violence, neglect of care, labor exploitation, lack or excess of behavioral limits, or divorce / separation from their parents. Therefore, under no circumstances, those students who bully should be stigmatized as "problem children", "bad", "rude", or any other qualifier, because like the person attacked, they require support and comprehensive protection to avoid suffering damage to their health and integrity.

Bystanders of a bullying situation can be part of the problem. In this case, two types of spectators are identified: passive and active.

Passive bystanders are those students who witness a bullying situation but do not notify any adult, collaborator, or parent. They are those who do not act in any way to try to stop a situation of bullying towards another student, whether or not it is their friend.

Active bystanders are those who approve and support the actions of the bullying person, without directly being the ones who initiate bullying actions. These bystanders unite when the bullying has started an action that attacks the other.

If a bullying situation arises and the participation, passive or active, of other students in a case of this nature is verified, the spectating students may be entitled to a disciplinary consequence. (see Code of Conduct).

Within our school, a bullying situation is not considered:

- Isolated non-repetitive problems with one or more classmates.
- Conflicts between students that are expected for their age and growth.
- Isolated non-repetitive physical or verbal aggressions with one or more partners.

C. RESPONSIBILITIES

General Director

General Director recognizes its responsibility to ensure that the organization understands and follows the guidance provided in this document.

1. General Director, Section Director and Department of Personalized Education:

The Section Director, General Director and Department of Personalized Education of the school will seek to:

- Ensure that the policies are implemented at all levels of the school and are followed by all collaborators.
- Give enough time and resources to promote bullying prevention.
- Give enough time and resources to promote the timely reporting of a bullying situation.
- Ensure that the culture of the school facilitates the filing of a complaint and is handled in a timely and appropriate manner.
- Ensure that the school is a safe and secure place whose objective is to provide spaces free of violence.

D. Procedures

Faced with a possible situation of bullying, students should be encouraged to communicate the situation with an adult they trust, preferably immediately notify a collaborator. If a student has seen a situation where another classmate is a victim of bullying, they must inform a trusted adult in order to give the required follow-up.

When a student reports a bullying situation towards his person or that of another classmate, anonymity will be maintained as far as possible to protect his integrity and well-being.

Students should be encouraged to defend themselves against any form of violence by establishing clear and firm limits, without becoming violent towards those who offend them. Because the school seeks to promote the resolution of conflicts in an assertive manner and in conjunction with its values, if a student defends himself against a physical or verbal offense in a violent way, he may be entitled to a disciplinary consequence.

When the school receives a report of a possible case of Bullying, the case must be referred to the Department of Personalized Education of the corresponding section. This department will be in charge of carrying out the pertinent investigation and follow-up, reporting the corresponding information to the parties involved.

The information related to the monitoring and / or consequences of a bullying situation will only be shared with the family of the student in question, the Department of Personalized Education and Section Director. For the protection of the property of the students, under no circumstances will information on the follow-up and / or consequences be provided to other adults and / or students.

After the decisions that the Department of Personalized Education and Section Director make regarding a case of bullying, the pertinent actions and / or consequences will be carried out. These actions may include disciplinary consequences.

If necessary, the Designated Safeguard Leader and General Director will be involved in decision-making.

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