



AARHUS  
INTERNATIONAL  
SCHOOL

**Aarhus International School**  
**Anti-Bullying Strategy**

# Anti-Bullying Strategy

## International Baccalaureate (IB) Mission Statement

*The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.*

*To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.*

*These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.*

[www.ibo.org](http://www.ibo.org)

## Purpose of the Anti-Bullying Strategy

At Aarhus International School, our Anti-Bullying Strategy is an important framework as we work to provide a safe, happy, healthy, and inclusive school for all members of our learning community. In this effort, and in alignment with the mission and values of AIS, our goal is to support student development and well-being through preventative efforts and interventions, and to work to actively present and respond to cases of bullying and cyberbullying that may arise. The Anti-Bullying strategy at AIS is built on the following principles:

**Community Consensus** – At AIS we work to understand bullying as a complex community problem, not as something that happens in isolation. We have a shared responsibility in both the prevention of and response to potential bullying cases.

**Caring** – All students, adults and members of the school community are responsible for and expected to work together to support student well-being, in a caring manner. “Caring” is one of the school’s core values, as well as one of the ten Learner Profile Attributes, and plays an important part in how we should approach all things at AIS.

**Clarity** – It is important that there is an objective analysis of any difficult situations that may arise. It is important that clarity and transparency guide the process, and that the school works diligently to ascertain a thorough and clear picture of what is happening in a potential bullying or cyberbullying situation. It is accepted that a proper investigation of a complex problem can take time.

**Connection** – At AIS we value our work with parents/guardians, and view them as equal partners. Likewise, we value the voice and opinions of our students. In this spirit, it is understood that no problem – whatever it may be – can be solved in isolation; we must all work together to make positive changes.

**Consistency** – Having a consistent approach is an essential component and something that we are constantly working at improving. Following through on essential agreements and sticking to the long-term plan, school wide, is an important goal to help guide the way we view and respond to potential bullying or cyberbullying cases.

**Communication** – The Anti-Bullying Strategy is intended to work alongside the AIS School-Wide Behaviour Policy. It will be communicated as a part of the policy and also shared online via the school website, making it accessible to the wider school community. It will be introduced to all members of staff, students, and parents/guardians, and updated on a regular basis to ensure best practice

implementation.

Beyond this, AIS' Anti-Bullying Strategy is built upon the foundation of the school's values, Responsible, Caring and Respectful. These values, alongside of the International Baccalaureate Learner Profile, create a common foundation for the core values of the school, and how we expect all members of our school community are working to ensure a positive and healthy teaching environment, with a focus on the well-being and learning of every AIS student.

The Anti-Bully Strategy is intended to meet and further our school's mission and is directly linked to the values of AIS:

<b><i>Our Mission</i></b>	<b><i>Our Values</i></b>
<i>AIS provides a high-quality international education, which enables students to become socially and environmentally responsible citizens, enthusiastic inquirers, and lifelong learners in a challenging and nurturing environment.</i>	Responsible  Caring  Respectful

### **AIS Statement on Bullying & Cyberbullying from the Behaviour Policy**

AIS defines bullying in alignment with UNESCO's International Bureau of Education:

*"A person is bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, and he or she has difficulty defending himself or herself."* Dan Olweus, creator of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, provides this commonly accepted definition for bullying in his book, *Bullying at School: What We Know and What We Can Do* (Olweus, 2005):

This definition includes three important components:

1. Bullying is aggressive behaviour that involves unwanted, negative actions.
2. Bullying involves a pattern of behaviour repeated over time.
3. Bullying involves an imbalance of power or strength (UNESCO, 2016).

There are various types of bullying, including verbal bullying, social/relational bullying, and physical bullying. Verbal bullying includes things like teasing, name-calling, inappropriate sexual comments, and threatening to cause harm, amongst other examples. Social/relational bullying can include exclusion, exerting social control, spreading rumors, or embarrassing someone in public. Finally, physical bullying can take the form of hitting, kicking, punching, pushing, or taking or breaking another person's things, amongst other examples.

Furthermore, AIS defines cyberbullying in alignment with UNICEF, who developed this definition through work with international cyberbullying and child protection experts.

*Cyberbullying is bullying with the use of digital technologies. It can take place on social media, messaging platforms, gaming platforms and mobile phones. It is repeated behaviour, aimed at scaring, angering, or shaming those who are targeted.* Examples are not limited to, but may include things like:

- spreading lies about or posting embarrassing photos or videos of someone on social media
- sending hurtful, abusive or threatening messages, images or videos via messaging platforms
- impersonating someone and sending mean messages to others on their behalf or through fake accounts (UNICEF, 2022)

All Members of the AIS community are expected to treat everyone with consideration, kindness, and respect and in alignment with school values and the IB Learner Profile. We urge that the term “bullying” is not used lightly by any member of our school community. Cases of alleged bullying and cyberbullying will be handled with the utmost care and on a case-by-case basis.

### **Prevention of Bullying & Cyberbullying**

All Members of the AIS community, from the AIS School Board, to the Pedagogical Leadership Team, staff, students and parents/guardians are expected to play an active role in preventing bullying and cyberbullying. AIS commits to ensuring that awareness of bullying and cyberbullying is an area that is prioritised through both classroom and whole school efforts, such as Anti-Bullying Week in November each school year. The school will work to create relationships and channels of communication where our students feel safe enough to reach out to a teacher or trusted adult in the school building if they are dealing with a bullying or cyberbullying situation. Preventative social-emotional programming will be an essential part of our homeroom curriculum in both PYP4-8 and MYP.

# PREVENTING BULLYING

## RECOGNISING THE SIGNS



We are aware of changes in a child or young person's behavior, mood, school attendance or school performance.

## OPEN COMMUNICATION



We encourage students to talk about their day and express their feelings with caregivers at home. We build relationships and encourage students to share with teachers at school

## SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING



We teach children about the importance of kindness and understanding towards others. We inquire into and teach students what bullying and cyberbullying are.

## SAFE SPACES



We encourage all students to find spaces at home and school where they feel safe and supported.

## COLLABORATION & COMMUNITY



Work with teachers and school staff to monitor and address bullying and cyberbullying incidents. We approach this process with curiosity and in collaboration. We strive to create an inclusive school community.

## POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS



We invest in and prioritise relationship building within the school community – amongst students, staff and families.



## Prevention of Bullying

	<b>Preventative Actions</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
During Lessons	<p>Every class starts the year by making class essential agreements. They are a constant focus and are revisited throughout the year, and when new students arrive in a class. Essential agreements are shared with parents/guardians.</p> <p>ASA &amp; MAC also make Essential Agreements to set the expectations for the programme and all participants.</p> <p>AIS' core values – RCR – and the IB-Learner Profile drive the teaching, learning and environment at the school. All members of the school community act as role models.</p>	All students, all teachers, all members of the school community	Homeroom and subject specialist teachers responsible for driving the creation of Essential Agreements	Year-long
At breaks and lunchtimes	<p>All teachers are responsible for helping students begin their breaks/free play in a positive manner. Teachers on duty/supervision are responsible for ensuring ongoing communication with homeroom teachers on incidents through immediate verbal or written reports, as appropriate.</p> <p>Homeroom teachers can help the group to establish and develop positive social relationships through supporting student play and also specific social-emotional skill-work in homeroom lessons.</p>	All students All teachers ASA Staff	Homeroom, subject specialist teachers, support teachers, ASA Staff responsible for ensuring positive interactions during the course of the school day and implementing relevant preventative curriculum	Year-long

<p>Collaboration between ASA and departments in the school</p>	<p>The staff, who have taught the students during daily lessons, will work to have clear and open communication with the ASA team and vice versa. ASA staff to join in on student wellbeing meetings in PYP4-8 to help bridge this gap.</p> <p>Student transitions – either between class teacher to class teacher or department to department - are handled thoughtfully and in accordance with practices and procedures from the AIS Transition Committee. Confidential handover meetings help guide this process and there is a constant focus on student well-being.</p>	<p>All students All teachers ASA Staff</p>	<p>ASA Staff and Teaching staff responsible for sharing of information and daily communication.</p> <p>Pedagogical Leadership Team to guide the transition process and ensure an ongoing focus on student well-being.</p>	<p>Year-long</p>
<p>On Social Media and digital platforms</p>	<p>Although many actions of cyberbullying occur outside the school walls, we expect an open and honest dialogue between parents/guardians, students and staff about cyberbullying. The school hosts a parent information meeting yearly to educate, inform, and open dialogue on this topic.</p> <p>AIS has a focus on digital media behavior, and this is reflected in our Educational Technology policies.</p> <p>Digital literacy and digital citizenship are built into the homeroom curriculum across PYP &amp; MYP as a preventative measure.</p>	<p>All students, all teachers, all members of the school community</p>	<p>Homeroom and subject specialist teachers responsible for driving the creation of Essential Agreements with respect to social media.</p> <p>School Counsellor and Pedagogical Leadership to partner together regarding content of preventative parent education sessions.</p> <p>MYP &amp; PYP Coordinators responsible for overseeing</p>	<p>Year-long</p>

			homeroom curriculum outcomes.	
Collaboration with Parents/Guardians	<p>Parents/Guardians are informed about the anti-bullying strategy and the wider Behaviour Policy.</p> <p>At school meetings, we regularly discuss student well-being, behavioural expectations, communication strategies for families and students.</p> <p>Class parent representatives are involved in welcoming new parents and children in the class as a preventive measure in ensuring a positive and caring community</p>	All teachers, All Parents/Guardians	<p>Pedagogical Leadership Team and all teachers responsible for ensuring clear communication of school documentation and agreements.</p> <p>Class parents responsible for acting as positive representatives and guiding the specific culture within each group.</p>	Year-long
Special Arrangements & Interventions focusing on the whole school community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Back to School BBQ</li> <li>• Parent Coffee Mornings in PYP &amp; MYP</li> <li>• Home Language Lessons in PYP4-8</li> <li>• Parent Information Sessions</li> <li>• PTA Events</li> <li>• International Festival</li> </ul>	Pedagogical Leadership Team, PTA, Parent/Guardian Volunteers & Teachers	All members engaged in the planning and delivery of these events are responsible for focusing on promoting healthy school and classroom communities.	Events held throughout the course of the school year.
Preventative frameworks & safeguarding	<p>All members of staff will complete a safeguarding course for international schools and be knowledgeable about safeguarding practices and procedures.</p> <p>All members of staff will read AIS Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and be knowledgeable about the heightened reporting obligation (skærpet underretningspligt).</p>	All members of staff at AIS	Pedagogical Leadership Team and Designated Safeguarding Leads to ensure that new members of staff are given access to the course and relevant resources.	Yearly, will relevant refresher courses

## Responding in Cases of Bullying or Cyberbullying Cases

In bullying or cyberbullying cases, AIS will handle each case individually, and with care.

Members of the school community who wish to report a suspicion of bullying or cyberbullying, are asked to approach their nearest point of contact in the system. For students, this would mean speaking with a teacher or parent/guardian whom they trust. Parents/Guardians should always first raise the issue with the child's homeroom teacher before escalating further to a member of the Pedagogical Leadership Team. Members of staff are asked to report their concerns to their nearest trusted leader. Any suspicion of bullying or cyberbullying-related behaviour will be investigated as soon as a concern is presented to the school or reaches a relevant member of staff.

If a parent/guardian would like to make a "formal" complaint of bullying or cyberbullying, they must do so in writing, including the child's homeroom teacher and relevant programme Principal.

Initially, the following steps will be followed:

- An evaluation of the case from several angles – gathering of information and open-minded listening to all parties' perspectives; relevant parties will be spoken to, including students and teachers in the class; A review of behavioural patterns or behaviour notes will take place
- An analysis of the situation and processes - focus will go on understanding the social dynamics and functioning of the class/group
- On the basis of this information, interventions and initiatives will be identified and put into practice
- The vulnerable student or students who have been bullied will be actively supported in the ongoing process

The school may need to take immediate steps to stop the bullying here and now, until a more long-term action plan can be initiated, and the efforts of it have begun to work. An initiation of a written plan to address the situation will be developed within 10 days of a formal report of bullying, which is found to have substantial cause for action. The written plan must include documentation of the following:

- Any immediate/temporary measures being implemented during further investigation,
- The plan to work with the dynamics of the class community,
- How affected students and parents/guardians will be informed about interventions, the action plan itself and any revisions to the action plan throughout the process, and
- How and how often the school will follow up on the action plan to make relevant adjustments.

The Responsive Measures, as detailed in the School-Wide Behavior Policy, will be followed throughout this process and incidents of a bullying and cyberbullying nature will be treated as Level Three/Direct Referral to the Head of School. The Head of School, together with the relevant programme Principal, will guide and oversee the response process and take responsibility for ensuring the implementation of interventions.

The homeroom teacher and relevant programme Principal will play an active role in investigating any claims of bullying and ensuring the well-being of students who are involved. The vulnerable student(s) will be actively supported throughout this process. Communication is very important and informing parents/guardians, and inviting them in for an open dialogue whenever possible, will be a priority.

## Complaints

If students or parents/guardians do not agree with the school's assessment or do not think that the efforts the school has in an eventual action plan are sufficient, they should follow the procedures and protocols detailed in the Aarhus International School Complaints Policy, available on the school website.

### **Accessibility, Evaluation, Review and Revision**

The Anti-Bullying Strategy will be available to all members of the school community, online via the school's website, where all of the most recent policy documents are published, as well as upon request. It will be evaluated alongside student well-being surveys, work of the school-wide Work Environment Committee, and with respect to feedback and reports from students, teachers and parents/guardians.

The written Anti-Bullying Strategy will be reviewed by the Work Environment Committee and the Pedagogical Leadership Team regularly. It will be reviewed by the whole teaching staff according to the AIS Policy Review Cycle as a part of the School-Wide Behaviour Policy. The written strategy will be revisited and revised as necessary outside of the official review, in line with new updates from the Danish Ministry of Education, the International Baccalaureate, and changing circumstances in the school.

