Anti-Bullying and Anti-Cyberbullying Policy

Key Contact Personnel

Leadership Staff Responsible for Policy: Paul McLean, Headmaster
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Designated Lead: AIS-Salzburg Administration

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Related Policies:	AIS-SCPP (Child Protection Policy) AIS-Salzburg Equality and Diversity Policy AIS-Salzburg Code of Conduct Staff Recruitment Policy Student and Parent Handbook Whistleblowing Policy

This policy will be reviewed and updated annually and following any new legal requirements.

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Statement of Intention

This policy is based upon a number of resources and standards of best practice. Fundamental to these are the laws and regulations of the Austrian national, provincial and local government, accreditation standards relevant to the topic, and various international organizations and institutions that support international schools in the development, review and implementation of anti-bullying policies, procedures and practices.

This policy is developed in order to achieve an all-school approach which is considered essential in addressing the issue of bullying and cyberbullying. The administrators, teaching-faculty members, resident-care staff, non-teaching staff members, parents, guardians and students all have a vital role to place in maintaining a safe and secure environment at AIS-Salzburg that allows all members of the community to thrive within an environment that is safe, protected, responsible and respectful. In developing and implementing this policy, the entire school community dedicates itself to the better realization of our mission and beliefs in providing a secure and professionally safeguarded environment, the proper and responsible nurturing of our students' social, physical and personal development, furthering self-discipline, mutual respect and integrity and the establishment of a community guided by care and compassion.

Bullying—in any form—has no place at AIS-Salzburg and must be safeguarded against with appropriate policies and procedures. Our students and community must be protected against such unacceptable actions, words and attitudes with robust effort, appropriate communication and behavior modeling. In addition, support must be provided whenever incidents of bullying or cyberbullying are reported, suspected or divulged.

Policy Objectives

- This policy and related procedures are intended to provide an outline of what AIS-Salzburg will do as a community to address adequately all forms of bullying.
- This policy is to be agreed to and adopted by all members of the school community including school staff members, parents and guardians as well as the students enrolled.
- AIS-Salzburg is dedicated and committed to developing an anti-bullying, all-school culture where any and all forms of bullying of students and adults are not tolerated in any form.
- This policy is to help establish and maintain a positive school community ethos and climate whereby respect, care and trust is established throughout our programs and typifies all our actions.

Links with Other School Policies and Procedures

This policy links up with a number of other school policies and procedures, practices and action plans including:
- *Student Code of Conduct*
- *Child Protection Policy (General)*
- *Equality and Diversity Policy*
- *Sports, Athletics and Recreation Policies*
- *Whistleblowing Policy*
- *Admissions Policy and Procedures*
- *Staff Recruitment Policy*

Links to Relevant Legislation

There are a number of relevant pieces of national, provincial and local legislation that provide the parameters for this policy against bullying and cyberbullying. Depending upon the situation, these may apply:
- Austrian Criminal Law (*Strafgesetzbuch*)
- Austrian School Ordinances (*Schulunterrichtsgesetz*)
- Salzburg Province Youth Ordinances (*Salzburger Jugendgesetz*)

- Salzburg Province Child and Youth Assistance Law (*Salzburger Kind- und Jugendhilfegesetz*)
- Austrian National Private School Law (*Privatschulgesetz*)

Links to Relevant International Standards and Organizations

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child - https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx
Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools: Standards for Child Protection
Childnet International - www.childnet.com
The Anti-Bullying Alliance -
Think U Know - www.thinkuknow.co.uk
The Internet Watch Foundation - www.iwf.org.uk
The Anti-Bullying Alliance - www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/mental-health-0
UNESCO: School Violence and Bullying: Global Status Report - www.unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000246970
Educare Staff Training Program - www.educare.co.uk

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of:
- The headmaster and administration to communicate this policy to the school community, to ensure that disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, and that a member of the school's senior leadership has been identified to take overall responsibility for this policy.
- All staff, including the administrators, teaching-faculty members, resident-care staff and non-teaching personnel to support, uphold and implement this policy accordingly.
- Parents/Guardians to support their children and work in partnership with the school.
- Students to abide by this policy.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the terms bullying and cyberbullying will be defined separately and distinctly. However, both are forms of the unacceptable concept of bullying which can have severe consequences for a victim.

A.   Bullying
The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) defines bullying as having three important components:
1. ***repeated aggressive behavior*** that involves unwanted, negative actions;
2. involves ***a pattern of behavior*** repeated over time;
3. involves ***an imbalance of power*** or strength;
all of which result in the victim feeling that they are unable to defend themselves.

Forms of bullying covered by this policy include:
- physical assault and threats of harm
- verbal bullying
- emotional or psychological bullying (including social isolation or neglect)
- cyberbullying (any form of bullying behavior via electronic means)
- sexual bullying
- prejudicial bullying related to protected characteristics including gender, race, religion (or lack thereof), belief, ethnicity, language, nationality, or cultural heritage
- bullying related to special needs or disabilities
- bullying related to sexual orientation

There are typically five key components to bullying:

1. There is an intention to harm: bullying is deliberate behavior that sets out to upset and cause distress.
2. There is a harmful outcome: one or more people are hurt physically or emotionally/psychologically.
3. It is persistent and repeated: bullying involves repeated acts of aggression and hostility. An isolated aggressive attack between equals, is not usually bullying.
4. It is direct or indirect: bullying can involve direct acts of aggression, such as hitting someone, as well as indirect acts, such as spreading rumors.
5. There is unequal power: bullying involves the abuse of power by one or several people, who are more powerful or perceived as being more powerful, often due to their age, physical strength, belonging to a majority group or psychological resilience.

B. *Cyberbullying*

Online platforms can be a tool for individuals or groups to bully or intimidate/threaten others directly or indirectly. Cyberbullying is a form of bullying, and as such, targets of cyberbullying can be hurt, upset, humiliated, afraid, and in some cases, may lead to a greater risk of self-harm and suicidal behaviors. Over a quarter or all young people aged between 7 and 16 say they have been bullied online, with one in 13 admitting to have bullied others. Cyberbullying can include sending offensive, upsetting and inappropriate message by phone, text, instant messenger, through gaming website chat functions, social media sites and apps, including 'tagging' people and deliberately blocking people in a group or sending offensive or degrading photos or videos to others or the general public.

Technology is an integral part of how young people today build and maintain friendships and other relationships. The responses a young person may receive through online communication can have a significant effect upon their self-image, confidence, and social status. Many difficulties surround addressing cyberbullying due to its 'hidden' nature. It is often very difficult to remain aware of such bullying if it occurs electronically, unless the victim comes forward and makes a disclosure.

Cyberbullying can include a variety of types of bullying:

- *Exclusion* - purposefully leaving someone out by not inviting or excluding them from engagement.
- *Harassment* - a pattern of sustained and constant hurtful or threatening online communication with the intention to harm the victim
- *Outing/Doxing* - openly revealing sensitive or personal information about someone without their consent or purposes of embarrassing or humiliating them.
- *Trickery* - targeting and lulling a victim into a false sense of security in order to abuse them later.
- *Cyberstalking* - this can include monitoring, persistent and frequent false accusations and/or threats to the victim.
- *Fraping* - this is when a bully uses another's social networking accounts to post inappropriate content with their name.
- *Masquerading* - when a bully creates a made up profile or identity online with the purpose of cyberbullying someone. This can involve the creation of fake email accounts and social media profiles.
- *Dissing* - the spreading of cruel information by a bully about their victim through public posts or private messages to ruin their reputation or relationships with others.
- *Trolling* - when a bully seeks to intentionally upset others by posting inflammatory comments online with malicious or harmful intent.
- *Flaming* - posting or directly sending insults and profanity to the victim as a direct attack intended to initiate an online fight or conflict.

Further information: www.cyberbullying.org/what-is-bullying

Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

Signs that a student is being bullied:
- torn, damaged or missing pieces of clothing, books or other belongings
- unexplained cuts, bruises and scratches from fighting
- few, if any, friends with whom he or she spends time
- seems afraid engaging in classes, activities, etc. with peers

- often alone and at a distance from other students or peers
- loss of interest in achievement in school, homework not done, drop in grades
- sad, moody, teary or depressed in the evenings
- frequent claims of illness to avoid classes and other activities
- headaches, stomachaches or other physical problems and disorders
- nightmares, trouble sleeping - often very tired
- anxious and suffers from low self-esteem

Indications of a Student who Bullies Others:
- has a strong need to dominate and subdue other students in order to get their own way
- impulsive aggressive and easily riled to anger
- lack of empathy toward students who are weak, insecure or unpopular
- frequent interruptions in the classroom and desire to dominate discussion with radical opinions
- defiant, aggressive or belittling toward adults and those in authority
- engages in high-risk behaviors, rule-breaking and anti-social behavior which may include vandalism, delinquency and substance abuse
- greater physical strength than that of other students and demonstrates this frequently
- seeks notoriety for opinions and beliefs that are violent, radical or anti-social
- frequently identifies other students by nicknames that they created and are derogatory or in another language
- claims that their personal/social/ethnic/cultural background is superior to others
- seeks comparative and competitive situations in order to beat and dominate others
- has a positive attitude toward violence and the use of violent means
- frequently consumes inappropriate electronic media including pornography and violence and shares this with others in order to shock

Signs and Symptoms of Cyberbullying

Signs that a student is being cyberbullied:
- appears nervous when receiving a text, instant message or email
- seems uneasy about going to classes or engaging in activities with peers
- frequent claims of illness and truancy
- unwilling to share information about online activity
- unexplained anger or depression, especially after being online
- abruptly shutting off or closing computer in mid-use, damaging or losing phone or other electronic devices
- withdrawing from friends, family and common activities during free time
- unexplained weight loss
- suicidal thoughts, comments or interest in self-harm

School Climate

The AIS-Salzburg community recognizes that all forms of bullying—especially if left unaddressed—can have a devastating effect on individuals and their healthy development and well-being. It can create a strong barrier to learning and can undermine the confidence required to be a resident in an international boarding school who feels comfortable and safe within our residences. By effectively preventing and addressing bullying in all of its forms, AIS-Salzburg can help create a safe and respectful environment within which our students are better able to achieve more of their potential.

Given this, the AIS-Salzburg community:
- will monitor and review our anti-bullying policies and procedures regularly.
- will support the staff in their promotion of positive and respectful attitudes in order to help prevent bullying.

- recognizes that some members of our community may be more vulnerable to bullying and its impact than others. Being aware of this will help us develop effective strategies to prevent bullying from happening and provide appropriate support, as required.
- will intervene by identifying and addressing bullying behavior appropriately and promptly.
- will ensure our students understand that bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively.
- will require that all members of the community work together to uphold this anti-bullying policy.
- will work in partnership with parents and guardians, reporting all issues of bullying in a timely and appropriate way, maintaining effective communication through all stages of investigation, conclusion-drawing and efforts to provide continuing support.
- will seek to learn from good safeguarding and bullying policies elsewhere.
- will utilize support from the local authorities and other relevant organizations when appropriate.

Responses to Bullying

The following steps will be taken when responding to any and all incidents, reports or disclosures received by the school staff:

Structural Responses:
1. The AIS-Salzburg school administration will establish a Designated Safeguarding Lead to which all incidents of must be reported.
2. The administration will designate a number of Key Reporters who have been identified by the administration for their experience, trustworthiness, their status among the students as defenders of their interests, are not directly responsible for disciplinary consequences and have excellent communication skills and the authority to follow through with further action. The names of these Key Reporters will be made available to all students, parents and guardians at the start of each school year.
3. AIS-Salzburg will create a Child Protection Team which will have the responsibility of meeting and discussing any incidents, suspicions or disclosures of serious bullying when called together by the headmaster. The Child Protection Team will have defined responsibilities relevant to investigation, discussion, protocoling and suggesting consequences for students involved in proven acts of bullying.
4. The administration will make it clear to all school staff members that they are required to act whenever they witness, receive a report or disclosure or otherwise form a reasonable belief that bullying has occurred or is occurring and that failure to respond provides adequate grounds for dismissal from employment.

Particular Responses:
All AIS-Salzburg staff members will be informed that their responsibilities in response to any bullying report, suspicion or disclosure include:
1. **Listen** (to the student or students, fellow staff member or your conscience)
2. **Respond** (to the student or students, etc. as outlined in this policy)
3. **Record** (write up the incident/report/disclosure/suspicion on an Incident Report Form)
4. **Report** (your verbal and written statements to the Designated Safeguarding Lead)
- If bullying, in any form, is suspected, witnessed or disclosed to any school staff member, it will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately in both verbal and written form. Such written reports will be protocolled and archived in the school office. All staff members will be provided with an appropriate form on which their report should be written (Incident Reporting Form)
- The school will provide appropriate support for the victim, ensure that they are not at risk of immediate harm, will take the necessary action to ensure that the bullying stops and will involve them through direct communication in any investigation or consideration of consequences.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will interview all parties involved appropriately and without prejudice.
- The DSL will also make any considerations necessary regarding the potential level of threat to the victim and the possible involvement of police or other authorities. The DSL will generally determine the level of seriousness of the incident and the most appropriate required response; putting into effect all further steps necessary to resolve the situation appropriately.
- The DSL will speak with and inform other staff member as appropriate, ensuring the safety of the victim.

- The school will ensure that the parents and guardians are kept informed about the concern and actions taken as appropriate with the general Child Protection Policy and Procedures of AIS-Salzburg.
- Consequences, as identified in the Student Code of Conduct, will be implemented and communicated.
- A program of support to be enacted by all staff members involved will be written and communicated with such staff members as well as the parents or guardians of affected students.

If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or directly involved (e.g., the police if a criminal offense has taken place in accordance to the law in Austria) or if the victim is considered to be at risk of harm. In a case in which the bullying has taken place off campus between:

    A. a resident and non-resident student or students,
    B. resident and other resident student or other resident students,
    C. a non-resident student and another non-resident student or students,
    D. an enrolled student and others,

the DSL will ensure that the incident is fully investigated and appropriate action taken. The DSL may involve other authorities or organizations in such an investigation and determine appropriate consequences with the assistance of the Child Protection Team or without and ensure that appropriate support is implemented from that time forward.

A clear and precise account of bullying incidents will be recorded by the school in accordance with existing procedures (see AIS-Salzburg Child Protection Policy and Procedures). This will include recording appropriate details regarding decisions and actions taken.

Particular Responses to Cyberbullying:
When responding to incidents, suspicions or disclosures of cyberbullying, AIS-Salzburg will:
- Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified.
- Provide appropriate support for the victim of cyberbullying and work with the perpetrator who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.
- Encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation.

Take all available steps possible to identify the person responsible. This may include:

    A. looking at use of the school systems,
    B. identifying and interviewing possible witnesses,
    C. contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary.

- Work with the individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation. This may include:

    A. support reports to a service provider to remove content if those involved are unable to be identified or if those involved refuse to or are unable to delete content,
    B. confiscating and searching students' electronic devices, such as mobile phones, in accordance with the law and the school privacy policy,
    C. requesting the deletion of locally-held content and content posted online if they contravene the school Student Code of Conduct.

- Ensure that consequences are applied to the person responsible for the cyberbullying; the school will take steps to change the attitude and behavior of the perpetrator, as well as ensuring access to any additional help they may need.
- Inform the police if a criminal offense has been committed.
- Provide information to staff and students regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online. This may include:

    A. advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply;
    B. providing advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists;
    C. helping those involved to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain.

Providing Support

Students of AIS-Salzburg who have been bullied will be supported by:
- Reassuring the student and providing continuous pastoral support and monitoring.

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a Key Reporter, the DSL or other staff member of their choice.
- Being advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to concerns and build resilience and assertiveness as appropriate.
- Working towards restoring self-esteem and confidence.
- Providing ongoing support; this may include: working and speaking with staff members, offering formal counseling, engaging with parents and guardians.
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organizations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance.

Students who have perpetrated bullying will be supported by:
- Discussing what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change.
- Informing parents and/or guardians to help change the attitude and behavior of the student.
- Providing appropriate education and support regarding their behavior or actions.
- If online, requesting that content be removed and reporting accounts/content to the service provider.
- Consequences in line with the school Student Code of Conduct; this may include official warnings, detentions, removal of privileges (including online access in the case of cyberbullying) and suspensions or expulsions from AIS-Salzburg.
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organizations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this may include involvement from the police or referrals to other social services.

Prevention

The whole school community will:
- Create and support an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration, compassion and care for others, which will be upheld by all.
- Recognize that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the community, including adults and students (peer-on-peer abuse).
- Recognizes the potential for students with disabilities or handicaps to be disproportionally impacted by bullying and will implement additional monitoring support as required.
- Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, including discussion of protected characteristics such as gender, race, cultural background, language, family situation, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexual orientation or appearance.
- Challenge practice and language (including 'banter') which does not uphold the school's mission and beliefs.
- Be encouraged to use technology, especially mobile phones and social media, positively and responsibly.
- Work with staff, the school community and outside agencies to prevent and address concerns including all forms of prejudice-driven bullying.
- Actively create 'safe spaces' for vulnerable young people.
- Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school climate.

Education and Training

AIS-Salzburg will:
- Train all staff, including administrators, teaching-faculty members, resident-care staff, and non-teaching staff, to identify all forms of bullying and take appropriate action following the school's policy and procedures, including recording and reporting incidents.
- Consider a range of opportunities and approaches for addressing bullying throughout the curriculum and other activities, such as through displays, assemblies, peer support, student council, etc.
- Ensure anti-bullying has a high profile throughout the school year and summer program, reinforced through key opportunities such as anti-bullying week.
- Provide systematic opportunities to develop students' social and emotional skills, including building their resilience, self-esteem and assertiveness.

Involvement of Students

AIS-Salzburg will:
- Involve students in the review and modification of the school's policy on bullying and cyberbullying to ensure that they are aware, have input and understand the importance of its implementation in the community.
- Regularly canvas students' and parents' views on the extent and nature of bullying.
- Ensure that all students know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying.
- Ensure that all students are aware of the range of consequences which may be applied against those engaging in bullying.
- Involve students in anti-bullying campaigns in school and in specific, focused instructional opportunities related to the school's anti-bullying policy.
- Publicize the details of internal support, as well as external helplines and websites.
- Offer support to students who have been bullied and to those who are bullying to address the problems they have.

Involvement and Liaison with Parents and/or Guardians

AIS-Salzburg will:
- Take steps to involve parents and/or guardians in developing, revising and updating policies and procedures related to bullying and cyberbullying, to ensure that they are aware that the school does not tolerate any form of bullying.
- Make sure that key information about bullying is available to parents and/or guardians in a variety of formats, including via the school website.
- Ensure all parents and/or guardians know who to contact if they are worried about bullying and where to access independent advice.
- Ensure that the parents work with the school to model positive behavior for students, both on and offline.
- Ensure all parents and/or guardians know about our reporting procedures and how to use them effectively and how to raise concerns in an appropriate manner.

Review and Revision

The school administration will ensure that this policy and procedures are regularly monitored, reviewed, evaluated, revised and consistently applied. Issues identified through a process of review and revision will be incorporated into the school's action planning.

Further Assistance and Communication

The AIS-Salzburg administration would be pleased to offer further support, information and assistance with respect to this policy and procedures as well as their implementation. Assistance can be gained at any time by contacting the school administration at the following email addresses and telephone numbers:

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Latest Revision: August, 2021