



Cyber Bullying Policy 2020-2021

SAMA American Private School

1- Rationale:

SAMA American Private School recognizes that excellence in education requires that technology is seamlessly integrated throughout the educational program. Increasing access to technology is essential for that future. With schools transitioning into distance learning due to the spread of COVID-19, it becomes essential to realize the risk involved in integrating technology with education. We also recognize that technology plays an important and positive role in everyone's lives, both educationally and socially. It is committed to helping all members of the school community to understand both the benefits and the risks, and to equip children with the knowledge and skills to be able to use technology safely and responsibly.

Research into cyber bullying indicates that it is a feature of many young people's lives. Cyber bullying, like all other forms of bullying, should be taken very seriously. It is never acceptable. The policies, procedures and information within this document apply to all wireless mobile devices used at SAMA American Private School, including any other device considered by the Leadership Team to come under this policy.

2- Aims:

The aims of this policy are to ensure that:

- We safeguard the pupils in the real and virtual world
- Students, staff and parents are educated to understand what cyberbullying is and what its consequences can be
- Knowledge, policies and procedures are in place to prevent incidents of cyberbullying in school or within the school community
- We have effective measures to deal effectively with cases of cyberbullying
- We monitor the effectiveness of prevention measures

3- Definition of Cyber Bullying

Cyberbullying involves the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behavior by an individual or group that is intended to harm others.



Cyberbullying can involve Social Networking Sites, emails and mobile phones used for SMS messages and as cameras. In addition;

- It can be used to carry out all the different types of bullying; an extension of face-to-face bullying
- It can also go further in that it can invade home/personal space and can involve a greater number of people
- It can take place across age groups and school staff and other adults can be targeted
- It can draw bystanders into being accessories
- It includes: threats and intimidation; harassment or ‘cyber stalking’; vilification; exclusion or peer rejection; Impersonation; and manipulation
- It includes cyber stalking, e.g. repeatedly sending unwanted texts, defamation
- It includes the circulation of private information or images
- It can be an illegal act as in the UAE to unlawfully disseminate defamatory information in any media

4- Policy procedure:

SAMA American Private School educates students both in the proper use of technology and about the serious consequences of cyberbullying and will, through curriculum links, computing lessons and assemblies, continue to inform and educate its students in these fast-changing areas.

All students and teachers must sign the **Acceptable Use of Technology Agreement** (See Appendix)

All members of the School community are aware they have a duty to bring to the attention of the Head of School any example of cyber-bullying or harassment or misuse of technology that they know about or suspect.

Leaders know to respond effectively to reports of cyber-bullying or harassment and as a school there are systems in place to respond to it.

SAMA American Private School endeavors to block access to inappropriate web sites, using firewalls, antivirus protection and filtering systems.

Whilst education and guidance remain at the heart of what we do, SAMA American Private School will take action against those who take part in cyber-bullying in line with the guidelines in the Anti-Bullying policy. In addition, SAMA American Private School will confiscate devices where necessary to prevent students from misusing equipment.



If an incident takes place in the evening or at the weekend, SAMA American Private School reserves the right to take action against bullying perpetrated outside the school which spills over into the school. SAMA American Private School will keep good records of all cyberbullying incidents on the **School Management Information System**. Hence:

- Students are encouraged to report any suspicions of cyberbullying and have access to the school counsellor.
- Support is offered to victims of cyberbullying including emotional support and reassurance.
- Sanctions are issued in line with our Anti-Bullying policy.

5- Roles and Responsibilities

1- Staff:

- All staff have a responsibility to prevent misuse of equipment and cyberbullying.
- Staff may ask to look at content on a student's personal device, but it is good practice to do so with 2 adults present.

2- Mobile Phones:

- Ask the student to show you the mobile phone
- Note clearly everything on the screen relating to an inappropriate text message or image, to include the date, time and names
- Make a transcript of a spoken message, again record date, times and names
- Tell the student to save the message/image
- Inform a member of the Senior Leadership team and pass them the information that you have

3- Computers/Laptops/iPADS

- Ask the students to get up on-screen the material in question.
- Ask the students to save the material.
- If possible, print off the offending material straight away.
- If possible and with the student's agreement a screen capture image may be able to be sent to the staff's school email account
- Inform a member of the Senior Leadership team and pass them the information that you have.

Normal anti-bullying procedures involves interviewing students, taking statements and following particularly if a child protection issue is presented.

4- Students:

- Should follow the school's code of conduct / behavior policy, when writing online. It is acceptable to disagree with someone else's opinions, however, do it in a respectful way. What is inappropriate in the classroom is inappropriate online.



- Must speak to an adult as soon as possible if they believe someone is a victim on cyberbullying.
- Should not answer abusive messages but save them and report them.
- Should not delete anything until it has been shown to parents or a member of staff at SAMA American private School (even if it is upsetting, the material is important evidence which may need to be used later as proof of cyberbullying).
- Should not give out personal IT details.
- Should never reply to abusive e-mails or messages in chat rooms or other social media.
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5- Parents

- It is vital that parents and the school work together to ensure that all students are aware of the serious consequences of getting involved in anything that might be seen to be cyberbullying.
- Parents can help by making sure their child understands the school's policy and, above all, how seriously SAMA American Private School takes incidents of cyber-bullying.
- Parents should also explain to their children legal issues relating to cyberbullying.
- If parents believe their child is the victim of cyber-bullying, they should save the offending material (if need be by saving an offensive text on their or their child's mobile phone) and make sure they have all relevant information before deleting anything.
- Parents should contact the school as soon as possible. A meeting can then be arranged with a member of the Senior Leadership Team.