

## **Anti-bullying Policy**

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*This document comes under the Institut's Child Safeguarding and Protection Policy.*

*Parents play a vital role in the school's bullying prevention and protection policy.*

## 1. Aim of this policy

This policy aims to provide a safe and supportive learning environment for every student in our school. Bullying is a form of school violence with profound negative effects on children's well-being and learning. At Institut Florimont, we firmly believe that every student has the right to learn in an environment that is free of threats and intimidation, therefore we are committed to preventing and combatting all forms of bullying, and actively involve students, teachers and parents to help create and maintain a culture of inclusion and respect.

## 2. Definitions

Bullying is defined as repeated aggressive behaviour involving the systematic abuse of power, perpetrated by an individual or group on a victim who is incapable or too scared to defend themselves. Bullying among students is the most common form of school violence but also the least obvious. Feelings of oppression and humiliation can cause the victim to experience lasting insecurity, both at school and elsewhere, particularly in the case of cyberbullying which can be inflicted on victims 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, wherever they are.

School bullying is defined as a form of repeated and intentional aggressive behaviour which harms another child.

Bullying can be:

- **verbal:** insults, repeated teasing or taunting, name-calling (e.g. a student who regularly calls another student "idiot" at breaktime).
- **physical:** pushing, hitting, damaging personal belongings.
- **social:** deliberately excluding, spreading rumours, inciting others to ignore a student.
- **cyberbullying (bullying online):** circulating hurtful messages or rumours via social media or messaging apps (e.g. sending hurtful or demeaning messages in a class WhatsApp group).

Cyberbullying (see the Institut's Regulation on Technology and Digital Use): this is bullying using digital devices such as mobile phones, computers and tablets. It can be conducted by sending text or picture messages through apps, or online through social media, chat forums or online games where children can see, participate and share content. Cyberbullying includes sending, posting or sharing negative, harmful, false or hurtful content about someone.

The most common examples are:

- Hitting, pushing and other physical violence;
- Teasing, ridiculing or tormenting someone;
- Discriminatory behaviour, making offensive comments and using deliberately hurtful language;
- Spreading rumours;
- Excluding or deliberately ignoring someone and encouraging others to do the same;
- Insulting someone;
- Physically or verbally threatening someone;
- Taking and damaging someone's belongings;

- Making offensive phone calls, sending inappropriate emails and text messages;
- Using social media and messaging apps to harm third parties: this is a criminal offence and must be reported.

**The following are not deemed to be bullying:**

- Isolated episodes of social exclusion or negative behaviour;
- one-off malicious or hurtful actions;
- random acts of aggression or intimidation;
- mutual arguments, disagreements or fights.

**While the above actions, and any bullying situation, can cause great distress and will be taken seriously by the school, they do not constitute bullying unless part of sustained or repeated behaviour.**

### **3. Scope of the policy**

This policy applies to all students and staff at Institut Florimont during school hours on the school grounds as well as during extra-curricular activities, school trips and any event organised by the school, including digital interactions connected with school life.

### **4. Role and responsibilities of students**

Students must report any incidence of bullying to an adult. Students must understand what bullying is, know and follow the school's anti-bullying policy, and understand that reporting it is a positive action. They must also report whether they are a victim or witness of bullying, talk about prevention with staff, collaborate with teachers and ask for help if they need it.

Students must know how to react to a bullying situation: clearly tell the bully to stop (clear message), go and get help, talk to a trusted person and report it to the school.

### **5. Role of parents**

Parents must uphold Florimont's anti-bullying policy by notifying the school of any concerns, cooperating with the school and keep up-to-date with handling incidents. They must support the school's decisions to deal with these situations.

Parents must be aware of the possible signs of a child who is a victim of bullying: refusing to go to school, frequent illness, damaged clothing, loss of confidence, mood swings, isolation, nightmares, loss of appetite, etc.

Parents must take an active role in managing the digital devices they allow their children to use, and monitor how they are used. The use of devices must comply with the law and be age-appropriate, and the minimum age for social media platforms must be observed.

### **6. Role of teachers and other staff**

Teachers must understand and comply with this policy, watch out for signs of bullying to prevent it, take every incident seriously, work with students to establish acceptable behaviour, notify all incidents, and raise student awareness as part of moral and civic education or open class discussions.

Some teachers are also part of a voluntary group of teachers who work with the primary educational psychologist to apply the Pikas method to deal with bullying.

Lastly, teachers must be consistent when dealing with bullying by treating all students with the same respect

and understanding, and demonstrate a healthy relationship with all members of the community to set a positive example to the whole school.

### **7. Consequences and measures taken in response to bullying**

The disciplinary response depends on the severity of the incident. Disciplinary measures can range from a warning, restitution (apology), exclusion from class for a number of hours or days, to permanent expulsion. However any corrective action always includes an educational element to ensure the perpetrator understands the impact of their actions.

### **8. Prevention**

Prevention is vital in creating and maintaining a positive school environment. Our school is committed to:

- **Educating students:** Organising sessions on bullying and the clear message method facilitated by specialists; class discussions on empathy; conflict management and respecting diversity; moral and civic education; reading books on these issues; clear explanation by school administration on what to do when faced with bullying.
- **Raising staff awareness:** Every member of staff will be made aware of the importance of spotting the early signs of bullying and speedy intervention.

### **9. Supporting victims**

Students who are the victims of bullying will have access to support from the primary educational psychologist.

Please refer to the Institut's Child Safeguarding and Protection Policy ("Reporting procedures").

### **10. Conclusion**

Institut Florimont, in concertation with families and students, is intent on eradicating all forms of bullying. We are committed to creating a safe, nurturing environment in which everyone can learn and grow.