

Cyber-Bullying Policy

Definition of Cyber-Bullying

Cyber-bullying is an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual using electronic forms of contact repeatedly over time against a victim who cannot easily defend himself/herself.

By cyber-bullying, we mean bullying by electronic media such as:

- Bullying by texts or messages or calls on mobile phones
- The use of mobile phone cameras to cause distress, fear or humiliation
- Posting threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating material on websites, to include blogs, personal websites, social networking sites.
- Using e-mail to message others
- Hijacking/cloning e-mail accounts
- Making threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating remarks in chat rooms, to include, but not limited to Facebook, Teams, YouTube and Instagram.

Legal Issues

Cyber-bullying is generally criminal in character. There are laws in the UAE that apply to cyberspace:

- It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information in any media including internet sites.
- Defamation, which is often at the core of cyber bullying, is potentially a criminal offence in the UAE. Not only does the UAE have extensive provisions within its Penal Code (Federal Law No. 3 of 1987), but it also has the benefit of the Cyber Crimes Law (Federal Decree No. 5 of 2012 on Cyber Crimes).

Our Policy educates its pupils both in the proper use of telecommunications and about the serious consequences of cyber-bullying and will, through Moral Education, International Primary Curriculum, ICT lessons and assemblies, continue to inform and educate its pupils in these fast changing areas. Al Murooj trains its staff to respond effectively to reports of cyber-bullying or harassment and has systems in place to respond to it. Al Murooj endeavors to block access to inappropriate web sites, using **firewalls, antivirus protection** and **filtering systems** and no pupil is allowed to work on the internet in the Computer Room, or any other location within the school which may from time to time be used for such work, without a member of staff's permission. Where appropriate and responsible, Al Murooj audits ICT communications and regularly reviews the security arrangements in place.

Whilst education and guidance remain at the heart of what we do, Al Murooj reserves the right to take action against those who take part in cyber-bullying:

- All bullying is damaging but cyber-bullying and harassment can be invasive of privacy at all times. These acts may also be criminal acts.
- Al Murooj supports victims and, **when necessary**, will work with the Police to detect those involved in criminal acts.

- Al Murooj will use its power of confiscation where necessary to prevent pupils from committing crimes or misusing equipment.
- All members of the School community are aware they have a duty to bring to the attention of the Heads of School, Vice Principal or Principal any example of cyber-bullying or harassment that they know about or suspect.

Guidance for staff

If you suspect or are told about a cyber-bullying incident, follow the protocol outlined below:

- When asking to look at content on a student's personal device it is good practice to do so with 2 adults present and inform the parents as soon as possible.

Mobile Phones

- Ask the pupil 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 pupil to save the message/image.
- Inform a member of the Senior Leadership Team (Principal, Vice Principal, Heads of School) and pass them the information that you have.
- If possible and with the student's agreement a screen capture image may be sent to the staff's school email account. Use of other transfer systems such as SMS, Bluetooth, etc., to a personal phone or device of a staff member is not allowed.

Computers

- Ask the pupil to get up on-screen the material in question.
 - Ask the pupil to save the material.
 - Print off the offending material straight away.
 - Make sure you have got all pages in the right order and that there are no omissions.
 - Inform a member of the Senior Leadership Team (Principal, Vice Principal, Heads of School) and pass them the information that you have.
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- Normal procedures to interview pupils and to take statements will then be followed particularly if a child protection issue is presented.
 - 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.
 - Use of other transfer systems such as SMS, Bluetooth etc. to a personal phone to device of the staff member is not allowed.

- If you believe you or someone else is the victim of cyber-bullying, you must speak to an adult as soon as possible. This person could be a parent/guardian, or a member of staff at Al Murooj School.
- Do not answer abusive messages but save them and report them
- Do not delete anything until it has been shown to your parents/guardian or a member of staff at Al Murooj School (even if it is upsetting, the material is important evidence which may need to be used later as proof of cyber-bullying)
- Do not give out personal IT details
- Never reply to abusive e-mails or messages in chat rooms or other social media
- Never reply to someone you do not know
- Stay in public areas in chat rooms

Guidance for Parents

It is vital that parents and the school work together to ensure that all pupils are aware of the serious consequences of getting involved in anything that might be seen to be cyber-bullying. Al Murooj informs parents of the cyber-bullying policy and the procedures in place to deal with cyber-bullying.

- Parents can help by making sure their child understands the school's policy and, above all, how seriously Al Murooj takes incidents of cyber-bullying
- Parents should also explain to their children legal issues relating to cyber-bullying
- 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
- If the incident falls in Vacations Al Murooj reserves the right to take action against bullying perpetrated outside the school which spills over into the school.

E-safety at Home

Several sites offer helpful advice to parents, particularly with respect to how they can best monitor their child's use of the computer at home. Important and useful information can be found on the following Links:

- <https://www.kidscape.org.uk/advice/advice-for-parents-and-carers/internet-safety-and-onlinerisk/protecting-your-child-online/>
- <https://www.imom.com/7-ways-to-protect-your-child-online/#.XFSEvFwzblU>
- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

School Administration