



ARCADIA GLOBAL SCHOOL

Online Safety and Cyberbullying Policy
2024-2026

Al Furjan
Dubai, United Arab Emirates



Purpose

The purpose of this policy statement is to:

- Ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our students and young people is paramount when adults, young people or children are using the internet, social media or mobile devices.
- provide staff with the overarching principles that guide our approach to online safety.
- ensure that, as an organisation, we operate in line with our values and within the law in terms of how we use online devices.

The policy statement applies to all key stakeholders: students, staff and parents and anyone else involved in Arcadia Global School.

Our Approach

We believe that:

- children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind.
- children should be able to use the internet for education and personal development, but safeguards need to be in place to ensure they are kept safe at all times.

We recognise that:

- the online world provides everyone with many opportunities; however it can also present risks and challenges.
- we have a duty to ensure that all students and staff involved in our organisation are protected from potential harm online.
- we have a responsibility to help keep children and young people safe online, whether or not they are using Arcadia Global School's network and devices.
- all children, regardless of age, disability, race, religion or belief or gender have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare and in helping young people to be responsible in their approach to online safety.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- appointing an online safety coordinator, this is Zahra Shelke (Digital Learning and Innovation Lead)
- providing clear and specific directions to staff and volunteers on how to behave online through our behaviour code for adults.
- supporting and encouraging the young people using our service to use the internet, social media and mobile phones in a way that keeps them safe and shows respect for others.
- supporting and encouraging parents and carers to do what they can to keep their children safe online.
- developing an online safety agreement for use with young people and their parents/carers.
- developing clear and robust procedures to enable us to respond appropriately to any incidents of inappropriate online behaviour, whether by an adult or a child/young person.

- reviewing and updating the security of our information systems regularly:
 - ensuring that usernames, logins, email accounts and passwords are used effectively
 - ensuring personal information about the adults and children who are involved in our organisation is held securely and shared only as appropriate
 - ensuring that images of children, young people and families are used only after their written permission has been obtained, and only for the purpose for which consent has been given
 - providing supervision, support and training for staff and volunteers about online safety
 - examining and risk assessing any social media platforms and new technologies before they are used within the organisation.

If online abuse occurs, we will respond to it by:

- having clear and robust safeguarding procedures in place for responding to abuse (including online abuse)
- providing support and training for all staff and volunteers on dealing with all forms of abuse, including bullying/cyberbullying, emotional abuse, sexting, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation
- making sure our response takes the needs of the person experiencing abuse, any bystanders and our organisation as a whole into account
- reviewing the plan developed to address online abuse at regular intervals, in order to ensure that any problems have been resolved in the long term.

Virtual Bullying

With more and more of us using email and mobile phones and other electronic devices, bullying does not have to happen in person. Silent phone calls or abusive texts, emails and social networking sites can be just as distressing as being bullied face to face.

Cyber Bullying

This is sending or posting harmful or cruel text or images using the internet or other digital communication devices.

How we as a school deals with Cyber Bullying.

Staff

All incidents should be reported to their direct manager (Year Leaders or a member of the Senior Leadership Team) who will then ensure the person being bullied is being supported, take responsibility for investigating and managing the incident and for contacting the relevant stakeholders, if appropriate.

Pupils

Procedures will be followed in line with the school Bullying Policy guidelines. Pupils should report any incident to an adult that they trust in the school as soon as they feel scared, anxious or worried about an incident.

Seven Categories of Cyber Bullying

1. Text message bullying involves sending unwelcome texts that are threatening or cause discomfort.
2. Picture/video-clip bullying via mobile phone cameras is used to make the person being bullied feel threatened or embarrassed, with images usually sent to other people. 'Happy slapping' involves filming and sharing physical attacks.

3. Phone call bullying via mobile phone uses silent calls or abusive messages. Sometimes the bullied person's phone is stolen and used to harass others, who then think the phone owner is responsible. As with all mobile phone bullying, the perpetrators often disguise their numbers, sometimes using someone else's phone to avoid being identified.
4. Email bullying uses email to send bullying or threatening messages, often using a pseudonym for anonymity or using someone else's name to pin the blame on them.
5. Chat room bullying involves sending menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in a web-based chat room.
6. Bullying through instant messaging (IM) is an Internet-based form of bullying where children and young people are sent unpleasant messages as they conduct real-time conversations online (i.e. MSN, Bebo, Facebook, Twitter, etc.).
7. Bullying via websites includes the use of defamatory blogs (web logs), personal websites and online personal polling sites. There has also been a significant increase in social networking sites for young people, which can provide new opportunities for cyber bullying.

Advice for Parents

- Don't wait for something to happen before you act. Make sure your child understands how to use these technologies safely and knows about the risks and consequences of misusing them.
- Make sure they know what to do if they or someone they know are being cyber bullied.
- Encourage your child to talk to you if they have any problems with cyber bullying. If they do have a problem, contact the school, the mobile network or the Internet Service Provider (ISP) to do something about it.
- Parental control software can limit who your child sends emails to and who he or she receives them from. It can also block access to some chat rooms.
- Moderated chat rooms are supervised by trained adults. Your ISP will tell you whether they provide moderated chat services.
- Make it your business to know what your child is doing online and who your child's online friends are. It is important that parents and carers ensure that their children are engaged in safe and responsible online behaviour.

Suggestions for parents to stay involved

- Keep the computer or other electronic devices in a public place in the house. Periodically check on what your child is doing.
- Discuss the kinds of Internet activities your child enjoys.
- Be up front with your child that you will periodically investigate the files on the computer, the browser history files, and your child's public online activities.
- Search for your child's name online, look at his or her profiles and postings on teen community sites, review web pages or blogs.
- Tell your child that you may review his or her private communication activities if you have reason to believe you will find unsafe or irresponsible behaviour.
- Watch out for secretive behaviour as you approach your child when they are online, such as rapidly switching screens, changing passwords and for attempts to hide online behaviour, such as an empty history file.

Advice for Pupils

If you are being bullied, remember bullying is never your fault. It can be stopped, and it can usually be traced. Don't ignore the bullying. Tell someone you trust, such as a teacher or parent, or call an advice line. Try to keep calm. If you are frightened, try to show it as little as possible. Don't get angry, it will only make the person bullying you more likely to continue.

Text/Video Messaging

- You can turn off incoming messages for a couple of days.
- If bullying persists you can change your phone number (ask your Mobile service provider).
- Do not reply to abusive or worrying text or video messages - your Mobile service provider will have a number for you to ring or text to report phone bullying. Visit their website for details.

Email

- Never reply to unpleasant or unwanted emails.
- Don't accept emails or open files from people you do not know.

Web

- If the bullying is on the school website, tell a teacher or parent, just as you would if the bullying was face-to-face.

Chat Room & Instant Messaging

- Never give out your name, address, phone number, school name or password online. It's a good idea to use a nickname. Do not give out photos of yourself either.
- Do not accept emails or open files from people you do not know.
- Remember it might not just be people your own age in a chat room.
- Stick to public areas in chat rooms and get out if you feel uncomfortable.
- Tell your parents or carers if you feel uncomfortable or worried about anything that happens in a chat room.

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