



DOWEN COLLEGE LAGOS

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY STATEMENT

Our Anti-Bullying Policy

1. This anti-bullying policy applies to all staff, including managers, board of governors, volunteers, students, parents, guardians or anyone working on behalf of Downen College Lagos.

2. Purpose

The aim of the anti-bullying policy is to ensure that students learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable. We are committed to providing a caring, friendly, and safe environment for all of our students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

Persistent bullying can severely inhibit a child's ability to learn effectively. The negative effects of bullying can have an impact on a person for their entire life. The school wishes to promote a secure and happy environment free from threats, harassment and any type of bullying behaviour. Therefore this policy promotes practices within the school to reinforce our vision, and to remove or discourage practices that negate them.

3. What is Bullying?

As opposed to rough play, which could be boisterous, furious, harsh, hoarse, inharmonious, wild, and perhaps uncontrollable, bullying occurs when an individual or a group uses strength or power to hurt someone, either physically or emotionally, by intimidating or demeaning another. Bullying can be emotional, physical, racist, homophobic, verbal, or cyber. It is usually persistent, is often covert, and is a conscious attempt to hurt, threaten, or frighten someone. Students who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences, or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting from school. Bullying can take many forms including:

- a. **Physical bullying** which can include kicking, hitting, pushing and taking away belongings.
- b. **Verbal bullying** which includes name calling, mocking and making offensive comments.

- c. **Emotional bullying** which includes isolating an individual or spreading rumours about them.
- d. **Cyber-bullying** where technology is used to hurt an individual-for instance text messaging or posting messages/images on the internet or any form of social media.
- e. **Racist bullying** occurs when **bullying is motivated by racial, ethnic or cultural prejudice.**
- f. **Sexual bullying** is where someone makes unwanted physical contact or makes sexually abusive comments.
- g. **Disablist bullying** occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against people with any form of disability.

With the advance in new technology, school is aware there is an increased risk of cyber bullying using e-mails, instant messenger, social networking sites, and public websites inappropriately. Therefore our school has an ICT user's policy.

4. Some warning signs that a student is being bullied

- a. Changes in academic performance
- b. Appearing anxious
- c. Regularly feeling sick or unwell. Wanting to visit the nurse regularly. Reluctance to come to school
- d. Clothes/bags torn or damaged
- e. Money/possessions going missing
- f. Unexplained cuts and bruises
- g. Unexplained behaviour changes, e.g. moodiness, bad-temper, tearfulness, unhappiness.
- h. Loss of appetite. Not sleeping. Loss of weight
- i. Being alone a lot
- j. Not very talkative

5. Some reasons why people bully

- a. Desire to appear powerful
- b. Unhappiness
- c. Feelings of inadequacy
- d. Difficulties at home
- e. Learned behaviour (they too have been bullied)

6. How to get help. Who students can talk to if they have any concerns about bullying?

Home Room Tutor, Year Tutor, Subject Teacher, Mentor, Peer Support Group, School Counsellors, School Guidance Counsellor, School Doctor, School Nurse, Hostel Parent, Prefects. Students can feel confident that any of the above will listen to their problem.

7. Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- a. Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff of their choice
- b. Reassuring the student

- c. Offering continuous support
- d. Restoring self-esteem and confidence

8. Students who have bullied will be helped by:

- a. Discussing what happened
- b. Discovering why the student became involved
- c. Establishing the wrong doing and need to change
- d. Informing parents or guardians to help change the attitude of the student

8. Responses will vary depending on the nature of the incident, but may include:

- a. Counselling
- b. Use of a report card
- c. Involvement of external agencies
- d. Monitoring by Home Room Tutor
- e. Peer support/peer mentoring
- f. Formal recording
- g. Use of Behaviour Agreement Contract
- h. Liaison with parents/guardian/social worker
- i. Internal suspension
- j. Fixed term suspension
- k. Expulsion

9. Anti Bullying Procedures

It is made clear that bullying in any form is unacceptable. It will be taken seriously and dealt with promptly.

Staff Responsibilities

- a. To implement procedures to confront bullying in any form.
- b. To listen to all parties involved in incidents
- c. To investigate incidents promptly and as fully as possible
- d. To take appropriate action or to refer to Home Room Tutor/Year Tutor/SMT as appropriate
- e. To record in the appropriate students' files
- f. To share with parents of the victim and bully, incidents of persistent and/or serious bullying
- g. To implement appropriate procedures for a member of staff
- h. To promote the use of a range of learning styles and strategies which challenge bullying behaviour

- i. To promote open management styles which facilitate communication and consultation within the school and with relevant outside agencies when appropriate
- j. To model the values our school believes in from the mission statement
- k. To promote the use of interventions which are least intrusive and most effective

10. Anti-Bullying Strategies

- a. Regular promotion of anti-bullying in assemblies
- b. A duty roster for staff so they can patrol key areas before school, at break, lunch time, and after school
- c. Annual questionnaires to research students' views on how safe they feel in school
- d. Anti-bullying training and retraining for teachers
- e. Use of suggestion box to report any incidents of bullying
- f. One-on-one counseling
- g. Strong teacher-student relationships so students feel comfortable in reporting any issues of concern
- h. Information talks from NGOs
- i. Information leaflet for students and parents about e-safety.

11. Anti-bullying advice to Parents/Guardian

- a. A great deal of bullying is CYBER-BULLYING. Please regularly monitor your child's use of texting, Facebook, Twitter, and other social media sites. Access to these is out of the school's control when your child is not in school
- b. TALK to your child on a regular basis, so any problem is easier to share
- c. LISTEN to what they say
- d. ENCOURAGE your child to feel good about themselves, realising that we are all different and equally important
- e. If you believe your child is being bullied, or is a bully, talk to other adults at home or at school and explore the options. DON'T STAY SILENT
- f. If your child is a victim, assure them that it is not their fault and that you are going to do something to help
- g. Be realistic in your expectations, sometimes on-going problems can take time to resolve
- h. TRY to be co-operative with our school and not be aggressive. Without a good working relationship between parents and the school, the situation could deteriorate, which won't help you or them
- i. OBSERVE child's behaviour always.

12. ALWAYS remember that children can't solve bullying on their own. They NEED the support of parents/carers.

13. Monitoring

The policy will be reviewed a year after development and then every three years, or in the following circumstances as approved by the Board of Governors:

- a) Changes in legislation and / or government guidance
- b) As a result of any other significant change or event.

Signed: Principal / Head of School: Mrs. Adebisi Layiwola

Date: 30th Aug., 2021