



Montessori Córdoba
International School

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

(To be read in conjunction with the Behavior Policy)

Principles and Values

As a school we take bullying and its impact seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that known incidents of bullying will be responded to. Bullying will not be tolerated. The school will seek ways to counter the effects of bullying that may occur within school. The values of our school foster high expectations of respectful behavior and we will consistently challenge any behavior that falls below this.

Objectives of this Policy

- All staff, children and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All staff should know what the school policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported.

All of us have encountered bullying at some point in our lives, but we all deal with it differently. The aim of this policy is to work together to ensure that our school is a safe place for children and adults to be; whether the school community is directly or indirectly affected by bullying or not.

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is unacceptable behavior used by an individual or a group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. At Montessori Córdoba it is considered to be:

“Unacceptable hurtful behavior which occurs repeatedly and on purpose.”

Bullying can be short term or continuous over long periods of time. Bullying can be:

Emotional	being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding possessions, threatening gestures)
Physical	pushing, kicking, biting, hitting, punching or any use of violence
Racial	racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
Sexual	unwanted physical contact or sexual comments
Homophobic	because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality



Montessori Córdoba
International School

Direct or indirect Verbal	name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumors, teasing
Cyber bullying	All areas of internet and mobile communications, such as email and internet chat and social media misuse. Misuse of associated technology such as camera and video facilities

Bullying may be related to:

- Race
- Gender
- Religion
- Culture
- SEN or disability
- Appearance or health condition
- Home circumstances
- Sexual orientation, sexism, or sexual bullying, homophobia

Bullying can take place in the classroom, playground, toilets, on the journey to and from school, on trips and in cyberspace. It can take place during school group activities and with families outside school.

Perpetrators and Victims

Bullying takes place where there is an imbalance of power of one person or persons over another.

This can be achieved by:

- The size of the individual
- The strength of the individual
- The social power of the individual
- The numbers or group size involved
- Anonymity – through the use of cyber bullying or using email, social networking sites, texts etc.

Staff must remain vigilant about bullying behaviors and approach this in the same way as any other category of Child Abuse; that is, do not wait to be told before you raise concerns or deal directly with the matter. Children may not be aware that they are being bullied; because they may be too young or have a level of Special Educational Needs which means that they may be unable to realise what others may be doing to them.

Staff must also be aware of those children who may be vulnerable pupils; those coming from troubled families, or those responding to emotional problems or mental health issues which may bring about a propensity to be unkind to others or may make them more likely to fall victim to the behavior of others.



Montessori Córdoba
International School

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Bullying has the potential to damage the mental health of a victim. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

Signs and Symptoms for Parents and Staff

A child may indicate by signs or behavior that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins truancy
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or run away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do make less effort with schoolwork than previously
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or " go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received
- lack of eye contact
- becoming short tempered
- change in attitude to people at home.

These signs and behaviors could indicate other social, emotional and/or mental health problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated



Montessori Córdoba
International School

Outcomes

All known/reported incidences of bullying will be investigated by the class teacher or by a senior member of staff.

Parents of the perpetrator may also be questioned about the incident or about any concerns that they may be having.

The child displaying unacceptable behavior, may be asked to consider genuinely apologising (as appropriate to the child's age and level of understanding). Other consequences may take place. E.g. a parent being informed about their child's behavior and a request that the parents support the school with any sanctions that it takes. Wherever possible, the pupils will be reconciled.

In some cases, outside agencies may be requested to support the school or family in dealing with a child continually demonstrating unacceptable behavior towards others. e.g. Educo.

In serious cases (this is defined as children displaying an on-going lack of response to sanctions, that is, no change in behavior of the perpetrator and an unwillingness to alter their behavior choices), support from SEN department, reduced timetables, or even fixed or permanent exclusion will be considered.

During and after the incident(s) have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be recorded in the Incident Logs and monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

The School Direction will be informed of any incidents recorded in the log along with incidents, communication with families, sanctions and reconciliation.

Prevention

At Montessori Córdoba we use a variety of methods to support children in preventing and understanding the consequences of bullying through class discussions, Health Science lessons, Peace Curriculum, E-Safety talks, Worry Box/Assembly book and the classroom rules.

The ethos and working philosophy of Montessori Córdoba means that all staff actively encourage children to have respect for each other and for other people's property. Good and kind/polite behavior is expected and regularly acknowledged.

Staff will regularly discuss bullying; this will inform children that we are serious about dealing with bullying and leads to open conversations and increased confidence in children to want to discuss bullying and report any incidents and concerns about other children's behavior.



Montessori Córdoba
International School

Staff will reinforce expectations of behavior as a regular theme.

Staff must follow the equality policy; supporting every child in our school. Staff must be careful not to highlight differences of individual children, even if this is done in jest. This gives other children advocacy to use this difference to begin calling names or teasing.

Staff must be vigilant regarding groups of friends together. Friendship groups may bring about the imbalance of power and should be led towards welcoming others to join them and not excluding others from their group.

Staff must reinforce a general message that children do not have to be friends with everyone else, but they must be respectful of everyone else's feelings and be kind to each other.

Children are involved in the prevention of bullying as and when appropriate, ideas may include:

- Agreeing a set of class rules
- Writing a personal pledge or promise against bullying
- writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying
- reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or group
- making up role-plays about what to do through scenarios of bullying
- having discussions about bullying and why it matters that children who use unacceptable behavior towards others are dealt with quickly.

If a child feels that they are being bullied, then there are several procedures that they are encouraged to follow: (not hierarchical)

- Tell a friend
- Tell a teacher or adult whom you feel you can trust
- Write your concern and post it in the worry box/write it in the assembly book
- Tell a parent or adult at home whom you feel you can trust
- Discuss it as part of your class time
- Ring the "*Teléfono contra el acoso escolar: 900 018 018*". and follow the advice given

Recording of Bullying Incidents

When an incident of bullying has taken place, staff must be prepared to record and report each incident.

General incidences of bullying should be recorded on an Incident Form. This would include incidents where staff have had to become involved and speak with children, and/or where parents have raised concerns regarding



Montessori Córdoba
International School

bullying.

All incidents of bullying will be discussed with all relevant staff and parents of the children involved, in order that everyone can be vigilant and that further incidents by the same child/children may be prevented from happening in the future.

Incidents of bullying will be discussed with the School Director.

Advice to Parents

As the parent of a child whom you suspect is being bullied-

- Report bullying incidents to the class teacher, or School Director.
- In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by staff and the School Director notified.
- In serious cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come into a meeting to discuss the problem
- If necessary and appropriate, the police may be consulted
- The bullying behavior or threats of bullying must be investigated, and the bullying stopped quickly
- An attempt will be made to help the child using unacceptable behavior towards others, to change their behavior.

Do Not:

1. Attempt to sort the problem out yourself by speaking to the child whom you think may be behaving inappropriately towards your child or by speaking directly to their parents.
2. Encourage your child to be 'a bully' back.

Both of these will only make the problem much harder to solve.

HELP ORGANISATIONS:

Teléfono contra el acoso escolar: 900 018 018

<https://www.noalacoso.org/>

<https://espanol.stopbullying.gov/>

Servicio psicología Educo