YAS AMERICAN ACADEMY

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

ACADEMIC YEAR 2026-27

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1. Rationale and Aims

At Yas American Academy, students' social, physical and emotional wellbeing is central to school life. We want every student to feel safe, respected, included, and able to learn. Bullying is not accepted at YAA. Concerns are taken seriously, investigated fairly, and responded to in a way that protects students, addresses harm and supports positive change.

- Build a culture in which kindness, respect, integrity, and inclusion are visible and actively taught.
- Help students, staff and families recognize bullying and distinguish it from peer conflict and other serious misconduct.
- Make reporting routes clear and accessible.
- Intervene early and consistently.
- Provide support to students experiencing bullying, students displaying bullying behavior, and students witnessing it.
- Use the YAA Behavior for Learning Policy and ADEK misconduct framework where disciplinary action is required.
- Escalate safeguarding concerns through the YAA Safeguarding & Student Protection Policy.

2. What is Bullying?

YAA uses the current ADEK definition. Bullying is repeated physical, social, or verbal aggression by a person who feels they are in a position of power against another person perceived as different, weaker, or powerless. It causes physical and/or emotional harm and may be carried out by an individual or a group, in person or online.

Key features: repetition, aggression/harm and a real or perceived imbalance of power.

Cyberbullying is bullying carried out through digital technology, online platforms, messaging, social media, games or other electronic communication.

3. Bullying, Conflict or a Serious Incident?

Term	What it means at YAA	Important response
Peer conflict	A disagreement or breakdown in a relationship where there is not necessarily repeated targeting or a power imbalance.	Staff help students resolve the issue, restore relationships and monitor for recurrence.
Bullying	Repeated physical, social or verbal aggression involving a real or perceived position of power and causing harm.	Anti-bullying investigation, support, monitoring and disciplinary response where appropriate.
Serious one-off incident	A single event may not meet the definition of bullying but may still be serious misconduct, e.g. assault, serious threat, harassment or non-consensual recording.	Immediate response under the Behavior for Learning and/or Safeguarding policies. The school does not need to establish a pattern of bullying before acting on serious misconduct.

4. Forms of Bullying

- Physical: repeated hitting, pushing, kicking, unwanted physical contact, damaging belongings or threats of physical harm.
- Verbal: repeated name-calling, insults, taunting, threats, humiliating comments or persistent teasing.
- Social/relational: deliberate repeated exclusion, spreading rumors, manipulation of friendships, ridicule or humiliation.
- Cyberbullying: repeated harmful messages, posts, images, videos, group-chat behavior, impersonation, exclusion or online harassment.
- Prejudice-related bullying: targeting a person because of, or because they are perceived to have, a particular background, nationality, race, religion, disability/additional learning need, gender or other characteristic.
- Sexualized bullying/harassment: unwanted sexualized comments, gestures, contact, rumors, images or behavior. These concerns may also require immediate safeguarding action.

5. Preventing Bullying at YAA

Prevention is a whole-school responsibility. YAA uses a combination of curriculum, pastoral systems, student voice, supervision and family engagement.

- YAA values and expectations: Be Ready, Be Respectful and Be Your Best.
- Age-appropriate teaching through homeroom, wellbeing, curriculum, assemblies and enrichment.
- Annual anti-bullying awareness activities and workshops.
- Wellbeing check-ins and early identification of changes in student wellbeing or peer relationships.
- Student leadership and ambassador opportunities that promote inclusion and responsible citizenship.
- Digital-safety education, including respectful online communication and safe use of devices.
- Visible staff supervision in social spaces and active follow-up of patterns or hotspots.
- Parent information and workshops where appropriate.
- Staff training on recognizing, recording, responding to and escalating bullying concerns.

6. What Students Should Do

If you are...	What to do
Experiencing bullying	Tell a trusted adult as soon as possible. Be clear about what happened, who was involved, where/when it happened and whether it has happened before. Keep relevant digital evidence where safe to do so. Do not retaliate physically or online.
Concerned about your own behavior	Speak to a trusted adult. Be honest about what has happened, stop the behavior, follow safety instructions and engage with support/restorative work.
Witnessing bullying	Do not join in, encourage, share or forward harmful content. Support the student where safe, report what you saw to an adult and provide an honest account. Intervene directly only when it is safe and appropriate.

7. Reporting a Concern

Students can report bullying to any trusted member of staff, including their Homeroom Teacher, Grade Leader, Phase Lead, counselor/social worker, Inclusion Team, safeguarding staff or Assistant Principal - Pastoral. Students may also use established wellbeing/reporting routes available within their phase.

Parents should normally contact the Homeroom Teacher or relevant Grade Leader first, unless the concern is urgent, serious or safeguarding-related, in which case it may be raised directly with the Phase Lead, Assistant Principal - Pastoral or safeguarding team.

8. How Staff Respond

- Listen calmly and take the report seriously.
- Priorities immediate safety and wellbeing.
- Do not promise absolute confidentiality; explain that information will be shared only with people who need to know.
- Record factual information promptly using the school's designated system.
- Separate students where needed and avoid conducting a joint confrontation before facts are established.
- Notify the appropriate Grade Leader/Phase Lead/AP Pastoral according to seriousness.
- Follow safeguarding procedures immediately if the concern indicates possible maltreatment or risk of harm.
- Ensure the concern is investigated and followed through rather than treating an initial conversation as the end of the matter.

9. Investigation and Recording

Each allegation is considered on its own evidence without prejudging the outcome. The school may:

- Speak separately with the student reporting/experiencing the behavior and the student alleged to have displayed it.
- Obtain witness accounts and staff observations.
- Review relevant school records, digital evidence and CCTV where available and appropriate.
- Consider frequency, severity, context, impact and any real or perceived power imbalance.
- Establish whether the behavior meets the ADEK definition of bullying and whether separate misconduct or safeguarding concerns are present.
- Keep a written record of the concern, investigation, decisions, actions, parent communication and follow-up.

The school will use neutral language such as 'student experiencing bullying' and 'student alleged/found to have displayed bullying behavior' while facts are being established.

10. Support for the Student Experiencing Bullying

- An immediate safety plan where required, including supervision or practical changes to reduce risk.
- A named trusted adult/check-in arrangement.
- Counselor, social worker, pastoral or Inclusion support where appropriate.
- Support to restore confidence, belonging and participation in school.
- Regular follow-up to check that the behavior has stopped and that the student feels safe.
- Parent engagement, unless safeguarding considerations mean that contacting a parent at that point would not be in the student's best interests.
- Referral to external support where a higher level of specialist intervention is needed.

11. Support and Intervention for the Student Displaying Bullying Behavior

Disciplinary action and support can operate together. YAA will seek to stop the behavior, establish accountability and understand factors contributing to it.

- Clear instruction that the behavior must stop.
- Needs analysis and targeted pastoral intervention.
- Counseling/social work support where appropriate.
- Restorative work only when safe, appropriate and agreed; an apology is not used as a substitute for investigation or accountability.
- Behavior targets, monitoring, parent meetings or a documented support plan where needed.
- Inclusion input where additional learning needs may affect behavioral regulation.
- External specialist referral where intensive or longer-term support is required.

12. Witnesses and Bystanders

Students who witness bullying have an important role in keeping the community safe. YAA teaches students not to reinforce bullying through laughing, watching, liking, sharing, forwarding or remaining part of harmful online groups. Students are expected to report incidents they witness and to support peers safely. ADEK's Student Code of Conduct expects students to act as responsible citizens by protecting others from bullying through appropriate intervention and/or reporting.

13. Disciplinary Response and ADEK Behavior Levels

Where bullying or related misconduct is substantiated, disciplinary action is taken under the YAA Behavior for Learning Policy and the current ADEK Student Behavior framework. The classification depends on the behavior and seriousness of the incident.

Behavior	ADEK/YAA treatment
Bullying, intimidation, harassment and/or abuse, including defamation on social media	Identified by ADEK as Level 3 misconduct.
Persistent bullying, intimidation, harassment and/or abuse	May meet Level 4 under the current ADEK framework.
Physical assault without injury	Level 3 under the YAA Behavior for Learning Policy aligned to ADEK.
Physical assault causing injury	May meet Level 4 under ADEK.
Non-consensual capture, possession, viewing or distribution of audio/images/video of staff or students	Level 3; see YAA Mobile Phone and Behavior for Learning policies.
Other conduct associated with bullying	Classified according to the specific ADEK misconduct definition and evidence.

A student does not have to experience repeated bullying before YAA can impose a serious consequence for a serious one-off act. Bullying classification and misconduct classification are related but separate questions.

14. Cyberbullying, Phones and Recording

Online behavior can affect safety and wellbeing at school even where content is created outside the classroom. Cyberbullying is investigated using the same principles as in-person bullying, alongside the school's Digital Safety and Mobile Phone policies.

- Students must not use devices to intimidate, humiliate, threaten, exclude or target others.
- Students must not record, photograph or film others without consent where this breaches school/ADEK rules.
- Students must not possess, view, repost, forward or distribute non-consensual media of staff or students.
- Non-consensual recording/media is escalated immediately as a serious behavior matter and does not simply follow the ordinary 1st/2nd/3rd phone confiscation process.
- Students should preserve relevant evidence without redistributing harmful material and report it to a trusted adult.

15. Students with Additional Learning Needs

YAA recognizes that students with additional learning needs may be particularly vulnerable to bullying. Prevention, reporting routes and support should be accessible and adapted to communication, sensory, social, emotional and cognitive needs.

Where disciplinary action concerns a student with additional learning needs, the Head of Inclusion will be consulted as required by ADEK so that underlying needs affecting behavioral regulation, appropriate adjustments and existing Documented Learning Plans are considered. Support for additional learning needs will not be reduced or replaced by behavior intervention.

16. Safeguarding and Student Protection

Bullying can also constitute or indicate maltreatment. Where a concern reaches the threshold for a student-protection concern, the YAA Safeguarding & Student Protection Policy and required reporting procedures are followed alongside the behavior response. This may include physical abuse, sexualized behavior, coercion, serious threats, exploitation, discriminatory abuse or sustained harmful behavior.

17. Parents and Families

- Report concerns promptly and provide relevant factual information or evidence.
- Avoid encouraging retaliation or direct confrontation between families/students.
- Allow the school to investigate before conclusions are reached.
- Support agreed safety, behavior and intervention plans.
- Inform the school if online or out-of-school behavior is affecting a student's safety, wellbeing or participation at school.
- Work with the school on follow-up so that the impact of interventions can be reviewed.

18. Monitoring and Review

YAA will track bullying concerns and substantiated incidents, including their frequency and severity. Pastoral leaders will review patterns such as location, time, year/grade, type of bullying, recurrence and student groups requiring additional support, while maintaining confidentiality.

- Grade Leaders and Phase Leads monitor individual cases and recurrence.
- The Assistant Principal - Pastoral oversees whole-school patterns and the effectiveness of interventions.
- Safeguarding and Inclusion teams contribute where relevant.
- Findings inform supervision, curriculum, student support, staff training and prevention priorities.
- The policy and effectiveness of implementation are reviewed annually and following significant regulatory change.

19. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
All students	Follow the Code of Conduct, report bullying, do not participate in or reinforce harmful behavior, and engage with support.
All staff	Recognize signs, respond, record, report and follow through concerns; maintain confidentiality on a need-to-know basis.
Homeroom/Class Teachers	Teach expectations, notice changes, respond to disclosures and contribute to monitoring/support.
Grade Leaders / Phase Leads	Coordinate investigations, parent communication, safety plans, follow-up and pattern monitoring.
Counselor / Social Worker / Inclusion Team	Provide targeted support, needs analysis and specialist input.
Assistant Principal - Pastoral	Oversee anti-bullying systems, serious cases, behavior classification, monitoring and whole-school prevention.
Safeguarding Team	Lead where concerns indicate possible maltreatment or risk of harm.
Parents/Guardians	Report concerns, reinforce respectful behavior and work in partnership with school.

20. Related Policies and References

- ADEK School Student Behavior Policy, Version 1.3, November 2025.
- ADEK School Student Protection Policy.
- Ministerial Resolution No. (645) of 2020 on the Policy of Preventing Bullying in Private and Public Schools that Follow the Ministry's Curriculum.
- YAA Behavior Management Policy
- YAA Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

- YAA Digital Safety Policy
- YAA Anti-Bullying Policy.
- YAA Inclusion Policy.
- YAA Attendance & Punctuality Policy

21. ADEK Compliance Cross-Check

ADEK requirement	Where addressed	Status
Educate students and staff to identify bullying	Sections 2-5	Included
School-wide bullying-prevention strategies	Section 5	Included
Recognize vulnerability of students with additional learning needs	Section 15	Explicit
Explain steps for student experiencing, displaying and witnessing bullying	Sections 6, 10-12	Explicit
Staff procedures for responding to bullying	Sections 8-9	Included
Support/interventions for students experiencing and displaying bullying	Sections 10-11	Included
Disciplinary procedures linked to misconduct framework	Section 13	Included
Track and monitor frequency and severity	Section 18	Explicit
Responsible-citizen role of witnesses/reporting	Sections 6 and 12	Included
Safeguarding/maltreatment escalation	Section 16	Included
ALN considered during disciplinary procedures	Section 15	Included
Parent engagement and communication	Sections 7, 10, 11 and 17	Included
Annual review of policy/effectiveness	Section 18	Included

Approval

Approval	Name / Date
Approved by: Principal	30 September 2026
Date	August 2026
Next review	August 2027 (or earlier if required)