

ACS Behaviour Policy

Please note:

In countries where ACS International Schools is operating outside of the United Kingdom the UK regulatory framework will provide the foundation for best practice as far as this policy is concerned. All ACS schools will operate in compliance with the relevant legislation of the country in which they are operating.

ACS International Schools is committed to protecting individual's personal data, and aims to remain at all times fully compliant with data protection laws and guidance from the relevant regulators. ACS further commits to ensuring that the planning and writing of all policies and procedures that involve the handling of personal data are guided by the principle of privacy by design, and that individuals' rights to have their data safeguarded are a paramount consideration in ACS' pursuit of all its operational and strategic practices.

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1. Introduction

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the

- [Independent School Standards Regulations \(ISSR\) Part 3, para. 9, \(December 2014\);](#)
- [Behaviour and discipline in schools, \(January 2016\);](#)
- [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges, May 2018;](#)
- [Searching, screening and confiscation: Advice for headteachers, school staff and governing bodies, January 2018](#)

and with the guidance provided in

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2020;](#)
- [The National Minimum Standards, \(April 2015\);](#)
- [Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, \(April 2017\)](#)

and

The Independent Schools Inspectorate Commentary on the Regulatory Requirements, September 2020.

- 1.1 The policy is applicable to ACS International Schools as an organisation and to all divisions in each of its schools including EYFS settings.
- 1.2 In this document the term ACS is used to encompass the whole organisation and each of its schools. Information about student behaviour and behavioural guidelines pertinent solely to specific campuses and divisions within the organisation is published in the handbooks annually. These are available on PowerSchool Learning and by request from divisional secretaries.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

- 2.1 ACS recognises that all adults, staff (including temporary staff), volunteers and administrators, have a full and active part to play in modelling and maintaining appropriate standards of discipline and behaviour in our school.
- 2.2 ACS believes that behaviour is a key contributor to student welfare and to ensuring school is a safe, welcoming and effective learning environment for all our students.

- 2.3 The positive climate of ACS is a direct consequence of the behaviour of the people comprising our school community. Respect for people and respect for property form the foundation upon which behavioural guidelines are modelled. It is assumed that all members of our school community support these principles and help to promote desirable behaviour.
- 2.4 Teachers and administrators in school routinely handle most minor behavioural problems. ACS will involve parents with more serious issues.

3. Purpose

The purpose of the ACS Behaviour Policy is:

- 3.1 to provide clear and consistent guidance to all ACS community members about the standards of behaviour ACS expects of its students.
- 3.2 to emphasise ACS' commitment to its vision and to its four core values, of which behaviour is an integral part.
- 3.3 to guide ACS' aspiration to produce effective learners, confident individuals and caring contributors as described in the Expected School-wide Learning Results articulated in the school's vision.

4. Promotion of Positive Behaviour

- 4.1 ACS promotes its vision and its Expected School-wide Learning Results through its curricular and co-curricular programmes and through its celebration of values education and its definition of learning as growth and development in knowledge and understanding, skills and dispositions.
- 4.2 Examples of ACS practices designed and intended to promote and support positive behavior and support students' development of and understanding of habits of mind and social interactions that are respectful and supportive of one another include the IB learner profile, Responsive Classroom ethos and practices, and the Four C's. ACS seeks to cultivate an awareness in the mind of every student of the importance of respect for and understanding of one's peers and teachers.
- 4.3 Specific codes of conduct for ACS campuses and divisions, and disciplinary procedures that may be followed as a consequence of a student's breach of those codes of conduct, are contained in divisional handbooks and published on the divisional pages on PowerSchool Learning. All divisional practices are compliant with the ACS Student

Behaviour Policy.

5. Attendance and Punctuality

- 5.1 Regular attendance at school is required by law. Attendance is taken twice daily in Early Childhood and Lower School, and at the beginning of each lesson in Middle School and High School. Disciplinary action will be taken against any students who are discovered to be truanting or who are repeatedly late. Parents or carers will be contacted to discuss possible reasons and school support systems that could help.
- 5.2 ACS recognises that research supports the belief that attendance and punctuality are contributors to academic and personal success and expects students to attend school regularly and on time unless there are accepted reasons for absence or tardiness.
- 5.3 ACS publishes an attendance policy that outlines attendance procedures and expectations. It is expected that students and their families will familiarize themselves with this policy and with the school's daily schedule.
- 5.4 Attendance procedures have been changed. ACS recognises that parents have a right to keep their child in the distance learning programme and attend school from home even where the child is entitled to return to on-campus learning.
- 5.5 Attendance codes introduced by the relevant local authorities will be used to mark presence or absence from classes.
- 5.6 Fines and other sanctions against parents and carers whose children do not attend school have been suspended at the time of writing. ACS will monitor this situation, and will act in accordance with statutory duties and advice from the relevant authorities with regard to reporting and enforcement of school attendance.

6. Drugs, Alcohol and Misuse of Substances

- 6.1 ACS will not tolerate drug use of any sort on school property or during off-site school activities. Any students found to be in possession of drugs, or supplying or taking drugs, including solvents and any other substance that can be misused or is harmful, will be liable to face disciplinary consequences. Students may be required to leave the school permanently if they are found to be involved in drug-related incidents.
- 6.2 Carrying, supplying or taking prescription drugs illegitimately could result in permanent exclusion.
- 6.3 Some over-the-counter drugs can be harmful if misused. We advise

that students should not carry these in school. Families of students who require medication should confer with the school nurse.

- 6.4 ACS understands that it may be necessary for some students to take medication during the school day. Parents should make the school aware of this in writing as soon as their child starts taking the medication. Further details of ACS' support for students on medication is outlined in the Supporting Students with Medical Conditions policy, available on PowerSchool Learning or by request from the divisional secretaries.
- 6.5 Consuming, carrying or supplying alcohol is strictly prohibited. Any student involved in any alcohol-related activity will face disciplinary consequences and may be permanently excluded.
- 6.6 ACS' rules on drugs, alcohol and the misuse of substances apply to students during their travel time to and from school. Students should bear in mind that their behaviour in public is associated with the school and its reputation, and they should conduct themselves appropriately.

7. Bullying

- 7.1 ACS publishes a separate anti-bullying policy. Further details about anti-bullying strategies can be found in divisional handbooks published on PowerSchool Learning.
- 7.2 ACS welcomes people of all cultures from around the world to create a powerful shared experience that shapes the way we teach and learn, and that actively defines our international character. ACS strives to ensure that all students feel safe at school, and accepted into our school community. Our ethos is one of inclusion and equality; bullying of any kind is regarded as a serious breach of our behaviour policy and will be treated as a disciplinary issue.
- 7.3 In particular, behaviour and/or the use of derogatory language that is racist, homophobic or intended to belittle, humiliate or single out others on the basis of their race, gender, disability or any protected characteristics recognised in the Equality Act 2010 will be treated as a serious breach of ACS's values and expectations. Students will face disciplinary consequences and may be permanently excluded for such behaviour. Under English law, behaviours committed against any person or group because of their disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation are hate crimes. Potential hate crimes will be reported to the police (in addition to the school's response). Such behaviours may include:
- threatening behaviour/assault;
 - damage to property (including hate graffiti);
 - inciting others to commit hate crimes (coercion to become involved);
 - online abuse;

- harassment motivated by hate.
- 7.4 ACS does not distinguish between verbal and physical bullying, or between bullying by person or by electronic, online or written means. All bullying, whether directed at students, staff or parents will be treated as a breach of ACS' core values and dealt with as a disciplinary matter.
- 7.5 Respect is an integral part of the ACS curriculum. Students are taught according to ACS core values, and the school takes seriously its duty to promote the fundamental British values that include mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. It is made very clear to students what is expected of them in terms of respecting their peers, members of the public, and staff, and any intentional breach of this will be dealt with as a disciplinary matter.
- 7.6 ACS recognises that students will on occasion behave in a way that causes concern to other students, or act in ways that cause harm to other students. Peer-on-peer abuse is addressed in ACS's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and is informed by *Keeping Children Safe in Education*. However, ACS acknowledges that there are many instances where the behaviour of students towards each other is more appropriately addressed through normal disciplinary procedures that will be covered by ACS' behaviour policy or anti-bullying.
- 7.7 ACS recognises that children are capable of abusing their peers. Such abuse is regarded as unacceptable at ACS and will not be passed off as "banter" or "part of growing up". Some examples of forms of peer on peer abuse are outlined below. This outline is not intended to represent an exhaustive list, and future behaviour trends may inform the list's expansion or modification.
- Verbal insults intended to intimidate others or make them feel worthless, and comments of a sexually explicit nature intended to insult or subjugate others.
 - Bullying, as defined in the ACS anti-bullying policy.
 - Coercion or intimidation.
 - Harmful Sexual Behaviour – children and young people presenting with sexual behaviours that are outside of developmentally 'normative' parameters and harmful to themselves and others.
 - Serious Youth Violence – any offence of serious violence or weapon-enabled crime where the victim is aged 1-19 ('Youth Violence' is defined in the same way, but also includes assault with injury offence).
 - Initiation ceremonies or ritual misconduct.
 - Sexting and sending Youth Produced Sexual Images (the act of sending explicit photographs or messages often via social media or via mobile devices).

- Upskirting (the act of taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm).
- 7.8 ACS believes that all children have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. Children should be free from harm by other children in school.
- 7.9 ACS recognises that children are capable of sexually abusing their peers. ACS is clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up.

ACS commits to minimising the risk of peer on peer abuse by:

- Prevention
- Taking a whole school approach to safeguarding & child protection
- Providing training to staff
- Providing a clear set of values and standards, underpinned by the school's behaviour policy and pastoral support; and by a planned programme of evidence-based content delivered through the curriculum.
- Engaging with specialist support and interventions.
- Responding to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment

Children making a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment will be taken seriously, kept safe and be well supported. If the report includes an online element staff will be mindful of the *Searching, Screening and Confiscation: advice for schools (DfE 2018)* guidance.

Staff taking the report will inform the DSL or a Deputy DSL immediately in line with the procedures outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy.

- 7.10 ACS notes that research indicates that young people rarely disclose peer on peer abuse and that if they do, it is likely to be to their friends. Therefore, ACS will also educate students in how to support their friends if they are concerned about them, that they should talk to a trusted adult in the school, and what services they can contact for further advice.

8. Disciplinary Sanctions

- 8.1 Section 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced a statutory power for teachers and certain other staff to discipline students. In cases where disciplinary sanctions are called for, ACS may use the following measures:
- Meeting with principal, head of school or similar school figure representing school discipline.
 - Discipline entry in school records.
 - Detention during school time or after school with appropriate prior notice given.
 - Suspension from school for a given period.
 - Expulsion from ACS.
- 8.2 The above list is not exhaustive and is provided as a guide only. Sanctions are adapted according to the seriousness and frequency of the behaviour.
- 8.3 The COVID-19 situation requires schools to introduce special measures to ensure the safety of staff, students and visitors. Students are expected to follow all requirements introduced following the return to on-campus learning that are intended to ensure safety and protection of all campus users from possible infection. These measures include hand-washing, sanitising of places and objects, social distancing and other practices. No list can be exhaustive at this stage, but the intention of the examples provided is to inform and educate all users and to follow the guidance of the relevant authorities.
- 8.4 Students who do not follow the requirements may be subject to more immediate discipline sanctions than would be the case in normal circumstances. For example, a student may be sent home for refusing to maintain an appropriate distance, or for lack of care over coughing, sneezing, spitting and so forth.
- 8.5 Students in Early Childhood settings will be supported as much as possible in acting in accordance with the new expectations. ACS recognises the special challenges associated with changes of natural practices young children will face, and will make reasonable allowances for their adjustment to the expectations.
- 8.6 The safety of all campus personnel including students themselves will be the priority when decisions about student behaviour are made.

9. Online Behaviour

- 9.1 ACS publishes a separate Online Safety policy which outlines the expected standards of behaviour of ACS students using online forums to communicate with peers and others.
- 9.2 ACS uses filtering and monitoring procedures as outlined in *Keeping Children Safe in Education (Annex C)*. The ubiquity of 3G and 4G and the prospect of widespread 5G provision in the United Kingdom and Qatar increases the importance of students' ability to recognise when their production and/or use of online content falls short of the standards reflected in the ACS values. ACS commits to continuing to educate students in respectful and courteous behaviour online, and expects equally high standards of behaviour in the online and real worlds.
- 9.3 In particular, the use of devices in online harassment and/or bullying (including sexting and Youth-produced Sexual Imagery), the deliberate exposure of other students to inappropriate material and the use of devices to access content that is forbidden, inappropriate or blocked by ACS filtering will be deemed matters for disciplinary consequences. Students are referred to the ACS Acceptable Use policy (AUP) for more detailed descriptions of expected standards of online behaviour.
- 9.4 Students' and ACS community members' attention is drawn to updates made to the ACS Online Safety policy and Acceptable Use policy, which outline the expected standards of behaviour of ACS students using online forums to communicate with peers and others. These include new expectations about the appropriate use of conferencing forums such as Zoom, and distance learning support technologies such as Seesaw and PowerSchool Learning.

10. Searching and Confiscation

- 10.1 Following guidance set out in *The Education and Inspections Act 2006*, and the UK Council for Child Internet Safety's document *Sexting in Schools and Colleges: Responding to incidents and safeguarding young people*, ACS members of staff are authorised to use confiscation as a disciplinary sanction if it is lawful. This means that staff may confiscate or seize items in the possession of students that are illegal, or banned by the school. It is our first priority to ensure that students are in a safe and secure environment when they are in our care, and any items that may jeopardise the safety of other students or themselves will be taken off students without notice.
- 10.2 A teacher, or someone who has lawful control of the child, can search a student with their permission to look for any item that the school's rules say must not be brought into the school. Heads of school and other members of staff authorised by them have the power to search a

student without the student's consent if they suspect they are in possession of "prohibited items". Prohibited items that can be searched for without consent include:

- knives or weapons
- alcohol
- illegal drugs
- "legal highs"
- stolen items
- e-cigarettes, tobacco and cigarette papers
- fireworks
- pornographic material
- articles that have been or could be used to commit an offence or cause harm.

10.3 *The Education Act 2011* allows for staff seizing an electronic device to examine any data or files on the device if they have reason to believe the data may represent a risk of harm to the device holder or to others or that it may cause disruption to the smooth running of the school. These data or files may be handed to an appropriate agency before returning the item.

10.4 Any cigarettes or other tobacco products including e-cigarettes confiscated in school will be destroyed.

11. Use of Force and Physical Restraint

11.1 Nowhere in ACS is corporal punishment to be used or threatened. However, section 93 of *The Education and Inspections Act 2006* enables school staff to use such force, including physical restraint, as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a student from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- commit any offence (or, for a student under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older student);
- cause personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any student (including him- or herself); or
- prejudice the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any students receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

11.2 ACS does not encourage the use of force and it will be used very rarely and only in special circumstances. There is no definition of when it is reasonable to use force, and every situation will have to be judged by the person in charge at the time. The degree of force used should be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result.

- 11.3 All staff at ACS have the authority to use force when reasonable, and this extends to any other person whom the head of school has given responsibility to be in charge of students. Staff can also use this power when they are lawfully in charge of students but off the school premises (for example, on a school trip).
- 11.4 Following serious incidents involving the use of force, the school will speak to the parents of the student concerned. ACS Heads of School, or the appropriate divisional representative authorised by them, will decide whether or not a given incidence of the use of force should be reported to parents.
- 11.5 All serious incidents involving the use of force and/or physical restraint will be documented by the school.
- 11.6 ACS recognises the difficulty staff would face engaging in any kind of physical contact with children outside of an emergency, during the period social distancing is required. ACS will support staff to its utmost ability in introducing alternative measures to physical contact when dealing with students.

12. Dress Code and Appearance

- 12.1 ACS does not have a school uniform. However, the school expects students to respect the need for appropriate attire to be worn at all times on school premises, when travelling to and from the school, and when on school approved visits off site.
- 12.2 Clothing that is inappropriately revealing, that carries offensive or suggestive images or messages, and clothing that is unfit to wear owing to its physical state may result in the wearer being instructed to change.
- 12.3 ACS has not suspended its dress code expectations during the COVID-19 situation, and the code continues to apply both to distance learning and on-campus presence. Students are required to attend lessons appropriately attired. This includes following national guidance on the use of masks and other Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) where directed.

13. Complaints

- 13.1 ACS has a standard complaints procedure that is published on the school website. Parents are encouraged to take any complaints to a staff member or to the Head of School. ACS will do everything in its power to help resolve conflict or complaints swiftly and effectively.

14. Links to Other ACS Policies

14.1 This policy is associated with and should be read in conjunction with the following ACS policies:

- Anti-bullying Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy



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