

Anti-Bullying Policy

Nisai is an inclusive, respectful and supportive learning community where every student has the right to feel safe, valued and able to learn without fear of bullying, harassment or discrimination.

As an online learning provider, we recognise that students interact primarily through digital platforms and communication tools. We are committed to fostering a positive online environment where students can learn confidently, build healthy relationships and access support when needed.

Bullying in any form is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. It can cause significant emotional, social and physical harm and will always be taken seriously. Through a culture of respect, trust and inclusion, Nisai aims to provide a safe and secure learning environment for all. Staff will act promptly to address concerns, support those affected and take appropriate action where bullying is identified.

This policy aims to:

- Prevent bullying and harassment in all forms.
- Promote a culture of respect, kindness and inclusion.
- Ensure concerns are identified and addressed promptly.
- Support those affected by bullying.
- Provide clear reporting, investigation and response procedures.
- Help all members of the Nisai community understand their responsibilities in maintaining a safe learning environment.

Definition

The Department for Education defines bullying as:

"Behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally."

Bullying may be repeated behaviour or a serious single incident that causes significant harm, distress or fear. It can affect anyone and may be motivated by prejudice, discrimination or perceived differences.

Bullying may relate to:

- Race or ethnicity
- Religion or belief
- Disability or additional needs
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Appearance
- Family circumstances
- Socioeconomic background

Bullying is different from occasional disagreements, arguments or conflicts between students. While such incidents may still require support or intervention, bullying typically involves behaviour that is intentional, repetitive or likely to cause significant harm, distress or fear. Nisai will assess concerns on a case-by-case basis and respond proportionately.

Five Key Principles

The Five Key Principles underpin Nisai's approach to preventing and responding to bullying. They help ensure concerns are managed consistently, fairly and effectively, while promoting a safe, respectful and inclusive learning environment for all.

1. Never ignore suspected bullying.
2. Take every concern seriously.
3. Listen carefully before reaching conclusions.
4. Focus on both safety and solutions.
5. Follow up to ensure the behaviour has stopped.

Forms of Bullying

Bullying can take many forms and may occur in person, online or through a combination of behaviours. It may be carried out by an individual or group and can have a significant impact on wellbeing, confidence, sense of belonging and ability to learn. Nisai recognises that all forms of bullying are harmful and will be taken seriously. The examples below are not exhaustive but provide guidance on some of the most common forms of bullying that may be experienced within an online learning environment and wider social settings.

Verbal Bullying

- Insults
- Name-calling
- Derogatory remarks
- Offensive jokes
- Threats

Emotional Bullying

- Intimidation
- Manipulation
- Humiliation
- Deliberately undermining confidence
- Persistent criticism

Social Bullying

- Excluding individuals from activities or groups
- Encouraging others to isolate someone
- Spreading rumours
- Damaging friendships or peer relationships

Discriminatory Bullying

- Racist bullying
- Homophobic bullying
- Biphobic bullying
- Transphobic bullying
- Disability-related bullying
- Religious discrimination
- Sexist behaviour

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is any bullying behaviour carried out through electronic communications or digital technologies. This is the most common form of bullying within online educational environments and is treated with the same seriousness as face-to-face bullying. Examples include:

- Sending abusive, intimidating or threatening messages
- Posting harmful or offensive comments
- Using lesson chat functions to target individuals

- Deliberately excluding students from online groups
- Sharing rumours online
- Repeated unwanted contact
- Sharing personal information without consent
- Sharing screenshots, recordings or images to embarrass another person
- Creating fake accounts
- Impersonating another student or member of staff
- Posting edited images, videos or content intended to humiliate someone
- Using artificial intelligence or digital editing tools to create, alter or distribute images, videos, audio recordings or other content intended to humiliate, intimidate, impersonate or cause distress to another person.
- Harassment through gaming, social media or messaging platforms

Scope of this Policy

This policy applies to all members of the Nisai learning community and covers behaviour that takes place during lessons, on Nisai platforms and through school-related communications and activities. As an online learning provider, we recognise that interactions may occur across a range of digital environments. Where behaviour outside of Nisai's systems has a negative impact on a student's wellbeing, safety or ability to participate in learning, Nisai may take appropriate action in line with this policy and related safeguarding procedures. This policy applies to:

- Live online lessons
- Discussion forums
- Face-to-face mentoring sessions and activities
- Online mentoring and wellbeing sessions
- Learning platforms
- Internal messaging systems
- School-related online events and activities
- Communications between students, staff and families relating to Nisai

Nisai may also investigate bullying that takes place outside its own systems, including social media platforms, messaging applications or gaming environments, where the behaviour:

- Impacts a student's wellbeing
- Affects a student's ability to learn
- Impacts the safety of a member of the Nisai community
- Damages relationships within the learning community

As a national online education provider, Nisai works with students commissioned by schools, local authorities, alternative provisions and other organisations across multiple regions. While Nisai will investigate and address concerns that arise within its provision, partner organisations remain responsible for their wider behaviour and disciplinary processes. Nisai will work collaboratively with commissioners and parents/carers to ensure concerns are managed appropriately.

Preventing Bullying

Preventing bullying is a shared responsibility. Through education, clear expectations, positive relationships and effective support, Nisai works to create a respectful, inclusive environment where concerns are addressed early, and everyone feels safe to learn and thrive.

Nisai actively works to prevent bullying by:

- Promoting a culture of respect, kindness, inclusion and diversity.
- Setting clear expectations for behaviour through the Student Charter, Behaviour Policy and online classroom expectations.
- Teaching online safety, digital citizenship and responsible use of technology.

- Delivering wellbeing activities and providing access to emotional support, mentoring and learner support services.
- Encouraging positive peer relationships and respectful communication.
- Providing students with access to wellbeing support, mentoring, learner support and trusted adults to help identify and address concerns at an early stage.
- Supporting students to recognise, report and respond appropriately to bullying behaviour.
- Delivering awareness activities, including Anti-Bullying Week and online safety campaigns.
- Providing safeguarding, behaviour and anti-bullying training for staff.
- Monitoring online learning environments and communication platforms to identify concerns at an early stage.
- Promoting student voice and gathering feedback on safety, wellbeing and the student experience.

Students are regularly reminded of expected standards of behaviour and how to access support through lessons, wellbeing activities, student communications and awareness campaigns.

Online Conduct Expectations

All students are expected to:

- Communicate respectfully and appropriately.
- Treat others with kindness and consideration.
- Respect privacy and confidentiality.
- Use lesson chats, microphones and cameras appropriately.
- Follow staff instructions.
- Report concerns rather than responding negatively themselves.
- Report bullying or harmful behaviour and contribute to a safe and respectful learning environment. Students should never join in, encourage or share harmful behaviour.

Reporting Concerns

Nisai encourages students, parents/carers, staff and stakeholders to report concerns as early as possible. Early reporting helps ensure concerns are addressed quickly, support is provided and appropriate action is taken to safeguard those involved. All reports will be taken seriously, handled sensitively and responded to in a fair and timely manner.

Students are able to contact the Student Services and Support Team for any discussions or to arrange a wellbeing session to discuss any issues or concerns they are having within the lessons.

Reports can be made through:

- Any teacher or tutor
- Customer & Student Support Team (CaSST)
- Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Parent/carer contact channels

Students will never be criticised for reporting concerns in good faith.

Concerns may be reported by:

- The person experiencing bullying
- A witness
- A parent or carer
- A member of staff
- Another student

All reports will be taken seriously, treated sensitively and reviewed by the Customer and Student Support Team. Concerns will be escalated to the Designated Safeguarding Lead where safeguarding risks are identified or where concerns meet the threshold for safeguarding intervention.

How Parents and Carers Can Support This Policy

Parents and carers play a vital role in helping to create a safe, respectful and positive online learning environment. Working in partnership with Nisai helps ensure that students feel supported both in and outside of lessons.

Parents and carers can support this policy by:

- Promoting Respectful Behaviour
- Encouraging their child to treat others with kindness, respect and empathy.
- Reinforcing the importance of positive online communication.
- Helping their child understand the impact that words and actions can have on others, even in a virtual environment.

Supporting Safe Online Engagement

- Discussing appropriate online behaviour and digital citizenship with their child.
- Encouraging responsible use of social media, messaging platforms and gaming environments.
- Reminding their child not to share personal information, passwords, images or recordings without permission.

Encouraging Open Communication

- Creating an environment where their child feels comfortable discussing worries or concerns.
- Listening calmly and supportively if their child reports bullying, either as a target or a witness.
- Encouraging their child to report concerns to Nisai staff rather than responding to bullying themselves.

Monitoring Wellbeing

- Being attentive to changes in behaviour, mood, attendance or engagement that may indicate a child is experiencing difficulties.
- Supporting their child's emotional wellbeing and seeking assistance when concerns arise.
- Contacting Nisai if they have concerns about their child's welfare or online experiences.

Reporting Concerns Promptly

- Informing Nisai as soon as possible if they become aware of bullying or potentially harmful behaviour.
- Providing relevant information or evidence, such as screenshots or messages, where appropriate.
- Working collaboratively with staff during any investigation or support process.

Supporting Positive Resolutions

- Encouraging their child to engage positively with support plans, restorative conversations or wellbeing interventions.
- Reinforcing agreed expectations and strategies at home.
- Helping their child develop resilience, healthy relationships and effective conflict-resolution skills.

Partnership Approach

Nisai believes that preventing and addressing bullying is most effective when students, parents/carers and staff work together. By maintaining open communication, promoting respectful behaviour and responding quickly to concerns, we can create an online learning community where all students feel safe, supported and able to thrive.

Responding to Bullying

Nisai is committed to responding to all bullying concerns promptly, fairly and consistently. When a report is received, our priority is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of those involved, understand what has happened and take appropriate action to prevent further harm. We recognise that every situation is unique and will respond sensitively, providing support where needed while promoting accountability and positive behavioural change. When bullying is reported, Nisai will:

Initial Response

- Acknowledge the concern promptly.
- Assess any immediate safeguarding risks.
- Take action to ensure student safety.

Investigation

Where appropriate, Nisai will:

- Speak with those involved individually.
- Gather evidence.
- Review communication records.
- Consider the views of witnesses.
- Maintain accurate records throughout the process.

Digital Evidence

Evidence may include:

- Chat logs
- Discussion forum posts
- Internal emails
- Screenshots
- Lesson participation records
- Platform activity records
- Available lesson recordings

All evidence will be stored and managed in accordance with data protection requirements and safeguarding procedures.

Communication

Nisai is committed to maintaining open and appropriate communication with those responsible for supporting the student. Nisai will inform parents/carers and the commissioning organisation of any substantiated bullying incident and may do so earlier where concerns involve safeguarding risks, ongoing conflict, significant distress or a need for joint intervention.

The threshold for notification may include, but is not limited to:

- Repeated or persistent bullying behaviour.
- Serious incidents causing significant distress or harm.
- Discriminatory, prejudicial or hate-related behaviour.
- Cyberbullying involving the sharing of personal information, images or recordings.
- Threats, intimidation or harassment.
- Concerns impacting a student's attendance, participation, wellbeing or educational progress.
- Any incident that requires safeguarding involvement or multi-agency support.

Nisai will work collaboratively with parents/carers, commissioners and partner organisations to ensure appropriate support, intervention and monitoring are put in place. Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis and in accordance with safeguarding responsibilities and data protection requirements.

Safeguarding Considerations

While many bullying concerns can be managed through behaviour support and restorative approaches, some incidents may present a wider safeguarding risk and require immediate action. Nisai recognises that bullying can have a serious impact on a student's safety, wellbeing and mental health, particularly within online environments where harmful behaviour can be persistent and far-reaching. All concerns will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, and where there is a risk of significant harm or vulnerability, safeguarding procedures will take precedence to ensure appropriate protection, support and intervention. Immediate safeguarding action may be required where concerns involve:

- Threats of violence
- Hate incidents
- Sexual harassment
- Blackmail or coercion
- Exploitation
- Sharing personal information
- Online stalking
- Self-harm encouragement
- Serious emotional abuse

In such circumstances, safeguarding procedures will take precedence, and external agencies may be involved where necessary.

Nisai recognises that some students, including those with SEND, mental health needs, additional vulnerabilities or limited social support networks, may be disproportionately affected by bullying. Responses and support plans will therefore take individual needs and circumstances into account.

Support for Students

Nisai recognises that bullying can affect everyone involved in different ways. Appropriate support and intervention will be provided to all students involved, using a supportive, compassionate and restorative approach. Support will be tailored to individual need and may include wellbeing support, mentoring, restorative interventions, behaviour support and ongoing monitoring to promote wellbeing, rebuild relationships and reduce the risk of further incidents.

Those Experiencing Bullying

Nisai will:

- Listen carefully and respectfully
- Take concerns seriously
- Provide emotional support
- Offer wellbeing sessions
- Create appropriate support plans
- Monitor wellbeing following the incident
- Work with parents/carers, commissioning organisations and partner schools where appropriate.

Those Displaying Bullying Behaviour

Students who have engaged in bullying behaviour will also receive support to:

- Understand the impact of their actions
- Reflect on their behaviour

- Develop positive relationship skills
- Rebuild trust where appropriate
- Prevent repeated incidents

Nisai believes that accountability, education and support together provide the best opportunity for positive change.

Outcomes and Consequences

Nisai believes that responses to bullying should be fair, proportionate and focused on promoting positive change. Following an investigation, appropriate action will be taken to safeguard those affected, address the behaviour and reduce the risk of further incidents. Outcomes may include supportive, restorative and educational measures, as well as disciplinary action where necessary. Any response will take into account the nature, seriousness and impact of the behaviour, alongside the individual needs of those involved. Where bullying is substantiated, actions may include:

- Restorative conversations
- Behaviour agreements
- Formal warnings
- Removal from specific communication channels
- Restriction of messaging privileges
- Temporary suspension from online activities
- Alternative learning arrangements or temporary removal from interactive learning environments where necessary to protect the safety and wellbeing of others.
- Fixed-term suspension
- Referral to safeguarding processes
- Further disciplinary action where appropriate

The response will always be proportionate to the nature, seriousness and frequency of the behaviour.

Monitoring and Follow-Up

Nisai will monitor bullying incidents to ensure concerns have been resolved and appropriate support remains in place. All incidents will be recorded within the student's Personal Wellbeing Plan (PWP) and any other required safeguarding or behaviour records. Follow-up reviews will take place to ensure concerns have been resolved and that bullying has ceased.

These will generally occur:

- Within two weeks of the incident
- During the following term
- More frequently where risk levels indicate additional monitoring is required

The aim of follow-up is to ensure that bullying has stopped and that all students involved are receiving appropriate support.

Student Voice

Nisai values student voice and will seek feedback on student safety, wellbeing, bullying and support services. Students may contribute to anti-bullying initiatives, awareness campaigns, community expectations and online safety resources.

Roles and Responsibilities

Preventing and responding to bullying is a shared responsibility. All members of the Nisai community have a role to play in creating and maintaining a safe, respectful and inclusive learning environment.

Chief Operating Officer and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The Chief Operating Officer, who also serves as the Designated Safeguarding Lead, has overall responsibility for the implementation and oversight of this policy. This includes:

- Ensuring appropriate procedures are in place for the prevention, reporting and management of bullying concerns.
- Ensuring bullying concerns are managed consistently and effectively.
- Overseeing safeguarding responses where bullying presents a safeguarding risk.
- Monitoring trends, incidents and outcomes to support continuous improvement.
- Ensuring staff receive appropriate training and guidance.

Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for:

- Promoting a culture of respect, inclusion and positive behaviour.
- Supporting the implementation of this policy across the organisation.
- Ensuring appropriate resources and support arrangements are available.
- Reviewing the effectiveness of the policy and associated procedures.

Customer and Student Support Team (CaSST)

The Customer and Student Support Team is responsible for:

- Receiving and responding to bullying concerns.
- Providing wellbeing support and guidance to students.
- Maintaining appropriate records.
- Liaising with parents/carers, commissioners and partner organisations where appropriate.
- Escalating concerns to the DSL where safeguarding risks are identified.

Teaching and Support Staff

All teaching and support staff are responsible for:

- Promoting positive behaviour and respectful communication.
- Modelling appropriate conduct in all interactions.
- Taking concerns seriously and responding appropriately.
- Reporting concerns in line with this policy and safeguarding procedures.
- Supporting students affected by bullying and contributing to preventative education.

Students

Students are responsible for:

- Treating others with respect, kindness and consideration.
- Following Nisai's expectations for online conduct.
- Reporting bullying or harmful behaviour.
- Supporting a positive and inclusive learning environment.
- Engaging appropriately with support and intervention plans where required.

Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are encouraged to:

- Support their child in understanding respectful behaviour and online safety.
- Raise concerns promptly where bullying is suspected.
- Work collaboratively with Nisai to support positive outcomes.
- Encourage their child to engage positively with any support or intervention provided.

Closing Statement

Nisai is committed to maintaining a safe, inclusive and respectful online learning environment for all students. By working together with students, parents/carers, staff, commissioners and partner organisations, we will continue to prevent bullying, respond effectively to concerns and promote positive relationships across our learning community. We are committed to ensuring that every student feels safe, respected, valued and supported to achieve their full potential.

Related Policies and Documents

This policy should be read alongside the following Nisai policies, procedures and guidance, where applicable:

- Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Student Charter
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Attendance Policy
- SEND Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Senior Leadership Team and revised as required in response to legislation, guidance, safeguarding developments, student feedback and emerging online risks.

To be reviewed: September 2027