

Policy on Student Behaviour and Relationships (Updated October 2024)

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1. Alignment with Guiding Statements

ISA is a kind, inclusive and reflective environment. We expect to be treated with kindness, and to treat others kindly. ISA staff, students and families are not temporary guests; while they are here, they belong and help others feel included.

These are high ideals, and we make mistakes as we learn to implement them over time. ISA students reflect on their mistakes and their successes; they make restitution when needed. We seek a restorative approach to mend relationships.

We want all students to thrive in and positively contribute to the school community. The school encourages them to develop the values of the IB learner profile to enable them to become effective global citizens.

2. Scope

This policy primarily applies to all ISA students; families are expected to support our approach, and staff should model it. We expect visitors to conduct themselves in a way aligned to who we are as a school.

3. Relationship to Other Policies, Procedures and Guidelines

3.1 External Guidance

Refer to [Equality Act 2010](#) and the [Scottish Government Behaviour Plan for Pupils](#). Refer to [Included, Engaged and Involved Part 1: A Positive Approach to the Promotion and Management of Attendance in Scottish Schools, 2019](#) for the Scottish government's approach to exclusion. See also [GIRFEC](#).

3.2 Superordinate Policies

This policy is subordinate to [Board Policy 5: Students and Study \(Updated May 2024\)](#) and [Board Policy 9: Child Protection \(Updated March 2025\)](#)

3.3 Parallel Policies

This policy acts in conjunction with the [Inclusion Policy \(Updated October 2024\)](#), the [Academic Integrity Policy \(Updated April 2024\)](#), and the [Gender Inclusion Policy \(Updated October 2024\)](#)

3.4 Subordinate Procedures

[Middle/High School Behaviour Flow Chart \(Procedures\)](#)

3.5 Subordinate Guidelines

[Policy on Student Behaviour and Relationships \(Updated October 2024\)\)](#)
[Elementary School Student Conduct Guidelines](#)
[Student IT Conduct Guidelines](#)
[Residential Trip Conduct Guidelines \(updated Sept 2024\)](#)
[Anti-Bullying Guidelines \(August 2023\)](#)

- ☐ Middle School Behaviour Matrix (Guidelines)
- ☐ Academic Integrity Guidance - Middle & High School (Updated April 2024)
- ☐ Academic Integrity Guidance - Preschool & Elementary School (Updated April 2024)
- ☐ Guidelines for Use of AI Tools at ISA
- ☐ Mobile Personal Electronic Devices Guidelines (Updated August 2024)
- ☐ Playground Behaviour Guidelines (Updated March 2025)
- ☐ Bus Conduct Guidelines (Updated Oct 2024)
- ☐ Grade 12 Privileges Guidelines (updated August 2023)
- ☐ Guidelines for Parents Raising a Concern (Updated January 2024)
- ☐ Guidelines for Student Dress (Updated Oct 2022)
- ☐ Restorative Practice Guidelines (May 2024)

4. Roles and Responsibilities

The head of school and the leadership team are responsible for implementing this policy and reviewing it from time to time.

All staff are responsible for modelling the values of the IB learner profile which underpin the behaviour policy. Families are expected to support ISA values and our approach to behaviour.

We expect students to become open minded and principled citizens of our ISA community. Above all we want them to be caring; and when things go wrong, reflective.

5. Rules for Behaviour and Conduct Guidelines

5.1 Approach

At ISA we use many different words for a formal description of how things are done: they could be agreements, contracts, charters, guidelines or codes. In this section, we will refer to them as 'rules' because it is a term everyone understands.

At ISA, rules exist to facilitate and safeguard. For example, rules facilitate games; games are not possible without them. Rules in a science or design lab safeguard staff and students. From principle, it is not obvious how to handle hazardous substances.

However, as a school that values student voice and agency, and the values of the IB learner profile, we think carefully about where and how we use rules. Ultimately, students learn to regulate their own behaviour using principles to help themselves and others thrive in diverse communities. As with their academic studies, they learn through practice, and make mistakes, which require reflection. Hierarchical rules for control enforced by punishment do not encourage voice and agency, and minimise the opportunity to practise self-regulation and principled action. They are unlikely to provide a safe space for reflection.

With a new class, teachers may create 'classroom rules' which help facilitate effective learning, and keep students safe. Strictly speaking most of these rules are norms co-created by teachers and students and not tied to punishments. In the case of safety,

there may need to be direct and immediate consequences - such as removing a student from an activity. Rules may also ensure safety in play spaces and on school transport and trips.

However, the school takes great care to avoid too many prohibitions (such as 'no cycling in corridors' or 'no drugs in the toilets'), not because we accept such things when they happen, but because we trust our community to already share many assumptions about principled behaviour in a community facility. We will not accept as a defence for fighting or theft (for example) that students had not been told that such acts were offences, that there were no written guidelines prohibited them or that they knew others doing similar things.

5.2. Conduct Guidelines

The school has various conduct guidelines (some were previously known as 'codes of conduct'), including general conduct guidelines for middle/high school and elementary school, as well as bus and IT conduct guidelines.

Unlike policy documents, these guideline documents are written for students and their families and show how ISA principles may apply. School sections should draw attention to and discuss these guidelines at least once a year. However, the school will apply the expectations in our values and conduct guidelines, and will look to families for support, regardless of whether we have evidence of a student formally engaging with them.

6. Behaviour in an Inclusive Environment

Student behaviour arises from their interaction with their environment. The school regularly reviews the general environment, and teachers review specific classroom environments to facilitate good behaviour in students with diverse needs.

When a student misbehaves, especially when it is acute or chronic, they are given time to reflect. In various forums, the school will also reflect on incidents of misbehaviour considering how we may modify the general or specific lesson environment so that desirable behaviour is easier. This is quite separate to issues of blame or responsibility: that we may be able to adjust our practices or the environment to encourage positive behaviour and a sense of belonging does not take away the responsibility of students to behave well.

The school makes reasonable and proportionate efforts to promote practices and tools that enable all students to focus and engage, and is willing to constantly learn, adjust and share successful practice - which often varies from one individual to another.

7. Dealing with Misbehaviour

7.1 Restorative Justice

The school takes a restorative approach to relationships following misbehaviour. After any incident, we expect the student(s) involved to reflect, and, if necessary, make restitution and restore damaged relationships. [Restorative Practice Guidelines \(May 2024\)](#)

7.1.1 Actions Against a Student's Own Interests

The effects of some actions, such as failure to complete tasks or even cheating, fall mainly on the student themselves, and have little to no impact on their peers. The school primarily views these as learning issues rather than behavioural issues.


7.1.2 Actions Against the Interests of Others

Sometimes students' actions negatively affect others without them realising it. For example, they may not be aware of how classmates respond to their disruptive behaviours in the classroom. Teachers should encourage students to reflect on their behaviour in terms of its impact on others: less so on the failure to follow an abstract rule.

Other disciplinary issues arise from the interaction between students. Relationships can break down to the extent that a student can feel they are being bullied, and they and/or their parents/carers represent the issue in those terms.

Teachers should respect the strong emotions that may arise from such relationship breakdowns, and listen without prejudice. They should also avoid reaching, and certainly not expressing, conclusions before they have listened to all parties involved. At all points, they should avoid labelling students 'bullies' and 'victims'. They should take care in labelling the behaviour as 'bullying' until they are confident that it is both accurate and useful to do so.

The school takes a restorative approach to such incidents (see 7.1). In some cases, it may take further actions to ensure the psychological and physical safety of students.

Refer to  [Anti-Bullying Guidelines \(August 2023\)](#)

7.2 Actions that May Involve Outside Agencies

Where appropriate, ISA reserves the right to report an in-school incident to relevant outside agencies.

7.2.1 Examination Boards

Examinations expect proper conduct towards completing internal assessments and examinations. The school will make students aware of specific regulations, and give individual advice where it feels that students may be in danger of breaches. However, the school will be principled and report concerns to the examination board when it is necessary to do so.

7.2.2 Police and Social Services

Some student actions both breach ISA values and are possibly criminal. ISA reserves the right to report such incidents to the authorities, and will support others who wish to assert their rights in this regard.

The school takes into account the emotional impact on students and families of external agencies being involved. In the first instance, the relevant principal with input from relevant others, will decide if the issue is of sufficient seriousness to refer. The principal, or delegate, will then ask social services for advice in general terms (without mentioning specific names). The principal will then make a final decision on whether to report the issue.

7.3 Disciplinary Measures Including Permanent Exclusion

Permanent exclusion should be a reasonable and proportionate act consistent with the approach of the Equality Act 2010. It may result from a single incident, if that incident is sufficiently serious - generally this means it could qualify as a criminal offence.

The school does not take a progressive approach to misbehaviour over time (that is, 'three strikes and you are out'). Disciplinary measures such as reflection days, where students work apart from peers either in-school or out of school are responses to current behaviour; they are not preparations for further actions. To have a relationship of trust and cooperation with parents, it is important that it is understood in this way.

When misbehaviour occurs over time, the principal may reflect with the leadership team that the school does not have the resources to manage the effects of those behaviours and that the effect on peers and staff is disproportionately high.

8. Openness and Discretion Dealing With Behaviour Issues

If parents wish to raise a concern on behalf of their child, follow [this link](#) for further advice.