

Everyone at Unity College has the right to feel happy, secure, safe and included. Only when these are present with all members of our college community are we able to achieve maximum potential.

Fact:

There is bullying in all colleges regardless of age-range, type, locality or composition of intake.

Where bullying exists within the college the victims must feel confident to initiate the anti-bullying systems within the college. It is our aim to build on our anti-bullying ethos within college, challenge negative attitudes about bullying behaviour and help bullied pupils.

Bullying is defined as:

“Deliberately hurtful behaviour that may be repeated over a period of time, making it difficult for the person concerned to defend him/herself. Bullying can be physical, verbal or indirect”. Bullying can include racial, sexist and homophobic bullying.

Bullying can take many forms. The 3 main types are:

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| Physical | - | hitting, kicking, taking belongings etc |
| Verbal | - | name calling, insulting, making remarks etc |
| Indirect | - | spreading stories, exclusion from social groups, are being made the subject of malicious rumours, sending malicious emails or text messages on mobile phones etc. |

The purpose of the Anti-Bullying Policy

- To create a secure and safe college environment free from threatening behaviour.
- To work towards an attitude of intolerance by the college community of any unkind words or actions.
- To provide systems which make it easy for pupils to report incidents confidentially.
- To provide systems which make it easy for staff to record incidents and consequently deal with those incidents sensitively and effectively.

What Unity College will do:

- Identify strategies for pupils, parents and staff to help them deal with bullying incidents.
- Use the curriculum, assemblies, college council, PSCH and other pastoral opportunities to reinforce the ethos of the 'anti-bullying' college.

- Encourage pupils to report any incidents of bullying to an appropriate adult within college.
- Investigate and record all reported incidents of bullying.
- Discuss bullying issues appropriate to the incident and not the pupils' age and level of understanding using the most appropriate strategies.
- Offer help, support and advice to victims.
- Deal with the situation using appropriate behaviour modification measure including sanctions.
- Seek to ensure that all pupils know the difference between bullying and simply 'falling out'.
- Monitor incidents of bullying and take appropriate actions when patterns emerge.

Evaluation

The implementation of this policy will initially be evaluated annually by the Headteacher and the Senior Leadership Team in consultation with staff and pupils. Reports will be made to the Governing Body.

Responsibilities of College Staff re Bullying

A decision will need to be taken initially about the level of seriousness of the incidents concerned, before beginning the anti-bullying process. If the bullying includes racial abuse it should be reported to the Assistant Headteacher Student Support Services. The incident will be recorded on a Racial Incident Form.

Procedures

1. After the first known incident, both the bully and the victim should be counselled by the PD Tutor, teacher identifying the bullying incident, PD Leader (relevant to House) or Youth & Community Staff.
2. If the incident continues, the parents should be invited into college to see the relevant PD Tutor, PD Leader or Assistant Headteacher Student Support Services. A strategy should be developed with the consent of both sets of parents / carers concerned to deal with the problem. (Written evidence should be placed in students files)
3. If the incidents still continue, the parents / carers are brought in to see the Assistant Headteacher Student Support Services. Further counselling takes place to both bully and victim.
4. Inclusion and Exclusion procedures may be used where appropriate.

Recording incidents

1. The person dealing with the incident should record information for student files.
2. The bully and / or victim may also record the events in writing.
3. Discussions with both parties should be fully documented by the person dealing with the incident as soon as possible after the event.
4. The parents / carer should be contacted by the person dealing with the incident and given an explanation of the incident.
5. All the above must be filed in the pupils files.
6. Serious incidents must be recorded and copies given to PD Leaders and Assistant Headteacher Student Support Services.

Guideline for Teachers and Other Staff

Watch for early signs of distress in pupils - deterioration of work, regular illness, isolation, the desire to remain with adults, lateness for lessons and college, low self-esteem, bruises and cuts, avoidance of college. All of these may be symptomatic of other problems but may be signs of bullying.

- Be aware and willing to listen.
- Treat information seriously.
- Record each incident precisely and be seen to do this.
- Offer the victim immediate support and help by putting the colleges' procedures into operation.
- All observed incidents of bullying must be stopped immediately. They must then be dealt with either immediately or at a later more appropriate time.
- The child who is bullying must be made aware that his/her actions are considered to be bullying and that these are hurtful to the victim.
- A victim of bullying must not be made to feel guilty because he/she is bullied. The victim, must however, be made aware that some behaviour can easily be used as an excuse for bullying.
- If bullying is happening to children to and from college, parents should be informed. Try to keep the child who is bullying at college until everyone has left.
- Make sure all students are aware that bullying (verbal, physical or indirect) is not tolerated in the college. Everyone is expected to ensure that it does not happen and has the responsibility to tell.

Five Key Points

1. Never ignore suspected bullying
2. Do not make premature assumptions
3. Listen carefully to all accounts (several pupils saying the same does not necessarily mean they are telling the truth)
4. Adopt a problem solving approach which moves pupils on from justifying themselves.
5. Follow up repeatedly, check bullying has not resumed

Guidelines for Pupils

Some things to do if you are being bullied:

There is safety in numbers:	go around with a friend or two stay with groups of people even if they are not your friends get your friends together and say 'NO' to the bully
Ask for Help!:	tell a teacher tell any other adult you can trust tell them again if the bullying does not stop
Try to do something different:	try not to show you are upset walk confidently even if you don't feel that way inside do not fight back – this can make it worse
Look after yourself:	if you are in danger, get away. Do not try to keep your possessions.

Remember – it is **NOT** bullying when:

- there is no intention to hurt or harm someone
- there is a one-off fight or argument between pupils of equal stature or strength
- there is a good reason why others cannot be included in a group activity
- a pupil is called a nickname with which they are happy

Guidelines for Parents

- Parents should:
- watch for signs – not wanting to go to college, regular minor illnesses and headaches, avoiding friends, coming home with bruises, torn clothing, possessions disappearing.
 - Listen to what your child says; try to establish if the problem really is bullying and not something else.
 - Discuss with your child what you can do.
 - Talk to staff at college. Do this for as long as the bullying continues.
 - Help your child to deal with the problem by him/herself. Be tactful.
 - If your child needs escorting home, agree a meeting place. The college gate may not be the best place.
 - Try not to be over-anxious over protective. It may sometimes be helpful to talk with the bully's parents, but take advice from the college first.
 - Do not promote a simple 'thump back' approach. This will often make things worse.

Bullying outside of College

Bullying often occurs when students are travelling to and from college. It can also occur out of college during evenings, weekends and holidays. When this occurs the following strategies may be useful;

- Contact local police
- Talk to transport companies – if problems are occurring on college buses
- Map safe routes (busy routes) that students can take to make them feel safe
- Talk to students about how to avoid / handle bullying outside the college premises