



# **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

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.

Where bullying exists outside the confines of college the Headteacher has the ability to implement sanctions (see Behaviour Policy).

**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:

- 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 and social networking sites
- Cyberbullying** - this is becoming widespread, technology has provided a new medium for ‘virtual’ bullying, which can occur 24/7, with a potentially bigger audience. The college will always suggest to parents that any type of cyber-bullying should be reported to the police.

Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a Child Protection concern where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm.

**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, ID lessons 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.
- Incidents of bullying are dealt with as per our Behaviour Policy and Consistency & Consequence Policy.

### **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 Deputy Headteacher/Student Support Services. The incident will be recorded electronically.

### **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 SIGNpost staff, House Leader and Behaviour Leader.
2. If the incident continues, the parents should be invited into college to see the relevant Behaviour Leader, PD Tutor, House Leader or Deputy 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 Deputy Headteacher/Student Support Services. Further counselling takes place to both bully and victim.

4. If an incident of bullying occurs through technology – mobile phones, social networking sites etc the police may be informed as this is a criminal offence.
5. 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 students' files and added to student Log.
6. Serious incidents must be recorded and copies given to Behaviour Leaders and Deputy 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. Where bullying outside college is reported to college staff, it can be investigated. It may be appropriate to notify external agencies such as the Police. Other strategies may also be used;

- 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

## **Bullying and Criminal Law**

Under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2013 and the Public Order Act 1986. If college staff feel that an offence may have been committed assistance will be sought from the police e.g. It is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety or which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.

This policy does not stand alone and should be used alongside the following Policies:

Safeguarding Policy	Procedures for Assessing Risk
Anti-bullying Policy	Induction and Code of Conduct for Staff
Racial Incident Policy	Intimate Care Policy
Harassment and Discrimination Policy	Safer recruitment Policy and Practice
Use of Physical Intervention Policy	Confidentiality
Educational Visits Policy	One to One Working
Intimate Care Policy	Children in Care
E-safety Policy	Equality
Health & Safety Policy	SEN Policy
Drug and Substance Mis-use Policy	
Behaviour Management Policy	
Child Looked After Policy	
Attendance Policy	

This Policy was updated on .....

This Policy will be reviewed .....