

ANTI-BULLYING

Policy Statement



- Replaces original Anti-Bullying Policy created in January 1998.
- Takes into consideration all relevant legislation
- Recommended by the Department of Education

Summary:

This policy outlines procedures to be employed to combat bullying within the school community.

This rewrite of the original policy contains important amendments.

M Houston

Additional Notes:

Policy Number: 2003/1.2

History:

- Original Created January 1998
- Adopted by the BOG February 1998
- Complete rewrite November 2003
- Distributed to Staff November 2003
- Rewritten (version 2) between September 2004- November 2004
- Staff training in the policy January 2005
- Adopted by Governors November 2004
- Revised with minor amendments June 2005
- Modified June 2008
- Modified May 2011
- Modified February 2012
- Revised with amendments September 2014
- Revised with amendments November 2015 in consultation with staff and pupils
- Revised May 2018

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENTS			PAGE NO
1.	1.1	Introduction	3
	1.2	Rationale	3
2.	2.1	What is Bullying?	3-5
	2.2	Information for pupils: What can you do if you are being bullied?	5
3.	3.1	If you know someone is being bullied	5-6
	3.2	Information for parents: As a Parent	6
4.		School strategies	
	4.1	As a School (we will:)	7
	4.2	Action to be taken when bullying is suspected	7-8
	4.3	Examples of Strategies already used in Ulidia	8
5.	5.1	Support for the Target	9
	5.2	Support for the Aggressor	9
	5.3	Disciplinary Steps	9-10
6		Monitoring and Review of the Policy	10

ULIDIA INTEGRATED COLLEGE ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

1 1.1: INTRODUCTION

Bullying behaviour affects everyone, not just the aggressors and the targets. It also affects those other children who watch or witness, and less aggressive pupils can be drawn in by group pressure. Bullying behaviour is not an inevitable part of school life or a necessary part of growing up, and it rarely sorts itself out.

It is clear that certain jokes, insults, intimidating and threatening behaviour, written abuse and violence are to be found in our society. No one person or group, whether staff or pupil, should have to accept this type of behaviour. Only when all issues of bullying behaviour are addressed will a child best be able to benefit from the opportunities available at the College.

1.2: RATIONALE

Ulidia Integrated College believes that its pupils have the right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without the fear of being bullied.

All institutions, both large and small, contain some numbers of pupils with the potential for bullying behaviour. If a school is well structured and organised, it can minimise the occurrence of bullying incidents. The College also has a clear policy on the promotion of good relationships, behaviour and safeguarding and child protection; the College believes that bullying behaviour is a form of anti-social behaviour, is wrong and will not be tolerated.

It is important therefore that the College has a clear written policy to promote this belief, where both pupils and parents/carers are fully aware that any bullying complaints will be dealt with firmly, fairly and promptly.

2 2.1: WHAT IS BULLYING?

"Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour repeated often over a period of time, where it is difficult for the victim to defend him or herself"

Department of Education 1999

We define bullying as deliberately hurtful, unacceptable behaviour that is recurrent and/or persistent and also where a more powerful pupil or group of pupils target a more vulnerable pupil or group of pupils with the intention of causing hurt.

All bullying issues are taken seriously by the College including those based on:

- Race
- Religion
- Culture
- Gender
- Perceived sexual orientation
- Sexual Identity
- Disability

- Nationality
- Minority groups eg. Travelling community
- Special Educational Needs
- Class or social background
- Appearance

At Ulidia Integrated College, we consider the following when dealing with instances of bullying behaviour:

- The intention behind words and actions
- Patterns of behaviour
- The balance of power between the target and the aggressor.

Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour. It can be:

- **PHYSICAL** A child can be physically punched, kicked, hit, spat at, etc. Pupils may have their property damaged or stolen. Physical threats may be used by the aggressor in order that the pupil hands over property to him/her.
- **VERBAL** Verbal bullying can take the form of name calling, insulting or repeated teasing. It may be directed towards gender, sexuality, ethnic origin, physical/social disability, or personality, etc.
- **INDIRECT** Indirect bullying may include spreading nasty rumours and excluding someone from social groups and/or activities, including encouraging others to bully.
- **CYBERBULLYING** This may include sending abusive, threatening or hurtful texts, emails or messages and the misuse of social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter and Snapchat. This includes posting abusive, threatening or hurtful messages both publicly and privately, using images and/or photographs to embarrass and humiliate and online behaviour designed to intimidate.

Cyberbullying is one of the most common forms of bullying and often takes place outside school hours. However, very often these incidents that occur outside school, have an impact on pupils in school. Targets of cyberbullying feel fearful of the aggressor/s inside school and this can have a detrimental effect on both their emotional well-being and academic progress.

Some of the measures we may take to deal with cyberbullying in particular include:

- Mediation between the target/s and aggressor/s
- Informing parents/guardians
- Inviting parents/guardians to the College
- Advising PSNI or other agency involvement

INFORMATION FOR PUPILS

2.2: WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU ARE BEING BULLIED?

Remember that **your** silence is the aggressor's greatest weapon. Talk to someone, let them know, **BREAK THE SILENCE**.

- Generally it is best to tell someone you trust straight away. You will get immediate support. This may be an Anti-Bullying Ambassador or an adult you trust.
- Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied and that it is wrong.
- Be proud of who you are. It is good to be an individual.
- Try not to show that you are upset. It is hard but someone who bullies thrives on someone's fear. But remember, ignoring someone does not mean that you do not report the behaviour.
- Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
- Be assertive – walk confidently away. Go straight to a teacher, member of staff or Mentor.
- Avoid retaliating – behaving in the same way may get you in trouble.
- Report online bullying incidents to the social media site involved – they will also take action to help you and this gives you some control over the situation.

Staff will take you seriously and will deal with aggressors in a way which will help end the bullying and will not make things worse for you.

3 3.1: IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE IS BEING BULLIED

BREAK THE SILENCE:

- Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the aggressor. It makes the target feel even more unhappy and on their own.
- Remind the target that the aggressor is in the wrong and encourage them to tell a member of staff.
- Tell the aggressor to stop if you feel it will help.

- Support the target by reporting the incident to an adult immediately. Staff have ways of dealing with the bullying behaviour without getting you into trouble.
- Do not support the aggressor as a means of creating safety for yourself – joining in means that you are mistreating someone too. Standing by is often as bad as joining in.
- Remember you have a responsibility to do something if you see behaviour that you know is hurtful.

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

3.2: AS A PARENT

- Remember that bullying is a repeated pattern. Help your child see that a fall out between friends, not getting on with someone or a one off incident is not necessarily bullying.
- Look for unusual behaviour in your children. For example, they may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to their normal standard.
- Always take an active role in your child's education. Enquire how their day has gone, who they have spent their time with, how lunch time was spent etc. It is important to focus on both positive and negative aspects.
- If you feel your child may be a target of bullying behaviour, inform the College immediately. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- It is important that you advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse and we cannot condone physically aggressive behaviour in school.
- Reassure your own son or daughter there is nothing wrong with him or her. It is not his or her fault that they are being bullied.
- Make sure your child is fully aware of the College's Policy concerning bullying and that they will not be afraid to ask for help.
- Monitor your child's use of social media, preferably through agreement with your child that you can see what they post, send and receive both privately and publicly.
- Model appropriate use of social media through your own online interactions.

SCHOOL STRATEGIES

4 4.1: AS A SCHOOL

WE WILL:

- Include the Anti-Bullying Charter, drawn up by the Pupils' Council, in all pupil planners.
- Encourage the Anti-Bullying Ambassadors to continue to run anti-bullying campaigns, raising awareness during Anti-Bullying Week with various activities and throughout the school year.
- Organise the College community in order to minimise opportunities for bullying incidents and provide increased supervision at problem times.
- Use every opportunity to discuss aspects of bullying and the appropriate way to behave towards each other e.g. during pastoral programmes, Learning for Life and Work and at all other opportunities that present.
- Deal quickly, firmly and fairly with any complaints, involving parents where necessary.
- Review the College Policy and its degree of success.
- The College Staff will continue to have a firm but fair discipline structure. The rules are few, simple and easy to understand.
- Not use teaching materials or equipment which give a bad or negative view of any group because of their ethnic origin, sex, etc.
- Encourage pupils to discuss how they get on with other people and to form positive attitudes towards other people. This includes a review of what friendship really is.
- Encourage pupils to treat everyone with respect.
- We will treat bullying behaviour as a serious offence and take every possible action to eradicate it from our College.

4.2 ACTION TO BE TAKEN WHEN BULLYING IS SUSPECTED

If bullying behaviour is suspected we will talk to the suspected target, the suspected aggressor and any witnesses. If any degree of bullying behaviour is identified, the following action will be taken:

- Help, support and counselling will be offered to the target and/or aggressor, as is appropriate to do so.
- Mediation between the target and aggressor, if appropriate to do so.
- Disciplinary steps.

We aim to find a positive way forward and to focus on changing behaviour so that similar behaviour does not reoccur.

4.3 EXAMPLES OF STRATEGIES ALREADY USED IN ULIDIA INTEGRATED COLLEGE:

Anti-Bullying Ambassadors
Student Council
Peer Mentors
Peer Buddy System
Pastoral programmes to include LLW lessons
Pastoral System
An open and expressive communicative environment
Counselling
National Bullying Awareness Week
Anti-Bullying School Campaign
Blue Friday

In order to safeguard and protect all students, the following strategies are used where appropriate to help address and resolve the issues between students. This list is not exhaustive and reasonable alternatives will be considered and put in place where appropriate and/or necessary.

- Mediation between the young people involved.
- Alternative arrangements may be put in place at break and lunch time for either/both the target/aggressor.
- Alternative arrangements to and from school will be agreed with parents/carers of either/both the target and aggressor.

The college is committed to doing all that is reasonably possible to ensure that young people are protected from harm and that bullying behaviour is addressed and dealt with suitably.

5 5.1: WE SUPPORT THE TARGET IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS

- By offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with their Form teacher, Head of Year, Head of Pastoral Care or another member of staff if they choose.
- By informing the target's parents/carers.
- Offering support through the Independent School's Counselling Service.
- Offering the support of an Anti-Bullying Ambassador and/or Travel Prefect.
- Offering continuing support when they feel they need it.
- Arranging for them to be escorted to and from the College premises.
- By taking one or more of the disciplinary steps to prevent further bullying.

5.2: WE ALSO DISCIPLINE YET TRY TO HELP THE AGGRESSOR IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:

- By talking about what happened to discover why they became involved.
- Informing the aggressor's parents/guardians.
- By continuing to work with the aggressor in order to get rid of prejudiced attitudes as far as possible.
- By taking one or more of the disciplinary steps to prevent further bullying. Accepting the sanction issued demonstrates that the aggressor acknowledges the behaviour is wrong and is committed to changing it.

5.3: DISCIPLINARY STEPS

Bullying behaviour by its very nature, can sometimes be difficult to identify and resolve immediately. As a guideline, we follow the steps outlined overleaf in order to address and change the behaviour.

Depending on the severity of the incidents, some of these steps may be bypassed and a more serious sanction issued immediately.

Parents/Carers' support is integral to a positive resolution. We contact parents when and where it is appropriate to do so.

Step	Action	Staff Involved
1.	Aggressor will be warned officially to stop the behaviour.	Head of Year/Head of Pastoral Care
2.	The aggressor's parents/carers will be informed and the issues discussed.	Head of Year/Head of Pastoral Care
3.	Tuesday detention is issued.	Head of Year
4.	Head of Year detention is issued.	Head of Year
5.	SLT detention is issued.	Head of Pastoral Care
6.	Saturday detention is issued.	Head of Pastoral Care/Vice Principal/Principal
7.	Fixed period of suspension.	Vice Principal/Principal

Bullying behaviour that continues after a period of suspension has been issued, will result in a further and longer period of suspension.

If the behaviour continues after this point, a consultation meeting will be arranged with the Board of Governors and representatives from the Education Authority which may result in permanent expulsion.

6 MONITORING AND REVIEW OF THE POLICY

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored by the Principal, Head of Pastoral Care and team of Heads of Year. The policy will be reviewed regularly and as required by the Senior Management Team.