

# Urmston Grammar

## Anti-Bullying policy

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### Definition

Bullying is the repeated negative behaviour that is intended to make others feel upset, uncomfortable or unsafe

*Courtesy of the Diana award*

## 1. Introduction

At Urmston Grammar, we encourage our students to take pride in all that they do, participate fully in the academic and wider school community and show empathy to all other members of their community.

We are an inclusive school whose ultimate aim is to support all students in gaining the best possible start to their adult life. Bullying can be a significant barrier to this for students. This is true for the victim, the perpetrator and any bystanders to any circumstances that involve bullying.

Students should:

- feel suitably secure that they can grow and develop in safety, free from prejudice or discrimination;
- have a voice, knowing that they are listened to and that their views are important;
- be treated with respect by all members of the school community;
- feel a sense of belonging to the Urmston Grammar community;
- feel valued by the Urmston Grammar community;
- recognise that their needs are at the heart of all we do as a school.

## 2.Purpose

In any circumstances of bullying, it is vital that incidents are dealt with quickly and effectively. By providing a consistent approach, Urmston Grammar will work with sensitivity to support students involved in bullying. We will also consider the individual circumstances of each situation to ensure the most positive outcomes.

- We will seek to minimise the circumstances where bullying occurs by cultivating a school ethos that makes clear that bullying is unacceptable.
- We will encourage an environment where students are confident to report bullying that they are subjected to or witnesses of. We will provide a range of tools and mechanisms to make this reporting possible.
- We will provide a safe and secure environment, where it is the norm for community members to treat each other respectfully.
- We will use sanctions as appropriate, but will also ensure that perpetrators receive education about their actions, working restoratively where suitable.
- We will ensure that victims of bullying are provided with a quality education and not held back by these circumstances.
- Our staff will take all forms of bullying seriously and will intervene to prevent or curtail incidents.

### **3. Forms of bullying**

Bullying can take a range of forms, including but not limited to the following examples

#### **Verbal**

The repeated negative use of speech, verbal and non-verbal gestures to intentionally cause harm to others (Including use of swearing or discriminatory language)

#### **Indirect**

The repeated actions towards others that are intended to hurt others, without the use of verbal or non-verbal gestures. This may include isolation of a student from a friendship group, damaging or stealing property or physical intimidation.

#### **Physical**

The repeated negative use of bodily contact with the intent to cause harm. This can include punching, kicking, restraining or spitting at somebody.

#### **Cyberbullying**

The use of social media or other electronic media to bully a person. Commonly this involves sending threatening or intimidating messages or can involve isolation of a student from an online friendship group. (see section 4)

#### **Sexual and sexist bullying**

This can take physical or non-physical form, where sexuality is used as a means of causing harm or hurt. It can take place directly (to the victim) or indirectly (behind the victims back or as a form of cyberbullying).

There is a risk of escalation in sexual and sexist bullying of escalation to abuse (See **Peer on peer abuse** policy)

#### **Racist bullying**

Bullying in any form on the basis of race or ethnicity will not be tolerated at Urmston Grammar. Bullying may take a physical or non-physical form and can occur directly or indirectly. It is important that any incidents are reported at the earliest opportunity to ensure a swift response to manage the situation.

There must be a clear understanding that racist or racially aggravating comments will not be passed off as a joke or banter.

## **LGBT Bullying**

This can be particularly damaging as young people may find it difficult to report. It is often directed at victims while they are at a sensitive phase of development where they are still consolidating thoughts and feelings about themselves.

It is absolutely vital that the use of sexual, sexist, homophobic or transphobic languages is not passed off as 'banter' amongst friends. For example the use of the word 'gay' as a derogatory term is unacceptable and should always be challenged. Similarly, jokes about rape or sexual assault can cultivate an atmosphere in which that behaviour is somehow normalised or viewed as acceptable.

## **4. Cyberbullying**

While all bullying is disturbing and unacceptable, cyberbullying brings additional challenges and potential distress to victims. There is the risk of bullying becoming anonymised, coupled with the issue that the bullying can persist even in the safety of home.

Cyberbullying also endures through repeated viewing and ongoing commentary which can add to the abuse already suffered.

Often in cyberbullying, the perpetrator does not see that what they may consider harmless fun or 'banter' is having a significant and ongoing negative impact on the victim.

## **5. Forms of cyberbullying**

### **Denigration of character**

Sharing false or damaging information/false rumours/gossip about another person, or sharing photos with the intention of mocking the victim.

### **Flaming**

Using extreme or offensive language and insults. The purpose of such behaviour is to cause a reaction and enjoy the distress caused and exhibited by the victim.

### **Catfishing**

Creating fake profiles on social media, apps or other online portals.

### **Cyber stalking**

Repeated messages that threaten harm, intimidate, harass or make somebody feel afraid for their safety.

## **Outing**

Encouraging people to reveal secrets then forwarding information to others, often including the use of screenshots.

## **Exclusion**

The intentional exclusion of somebody from a group, for example a group message function, gaming or social media. This also falls under the category of **indirect bullying**.

## **Online sexual harassment**

Sending unwanted images (Youth produced sexual imagery – see **Safeguarding policy** and **peer on peer abuse** policy) or messages of sexual content. This may also include potential coercion to send images in return or doing something the victim is not comfortable with.

Although some cyberbullying is deliberate and aggressive, sometimes it can be an unintentional cause of upset and the result of not considering the implications of actions.

As a school we see the importance of educating our students about the risks associated with life online,

Students may need reminding that under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication 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. Parents and students should also be aware of the school 'Acceptable Use of ICT' agreement to understand the school rules regarding appropriate use of ICT.

Any case of cyberbullying should be reported to the school and will be investigated as outlined in section **7**

## **6. Sharing concerns**

Bullying can take place in a range of contexts and environments. It may be in lessons, elsewhere in the school day, during extra-curricular activities or on the journey to and from school. With the risks posed by cyberbullying, this range can be extended to home and can take place at any time of day or night.

Everybody in our community has a responsibility to stand up to and act against bullying

### **The responsibilities of students**

Every student in Urmston Grammar has a key role in promoting a positive attitude within the community, to do this they should:

- behave positively, avoiding actions that discriminate against others;
- help change the mindset of others to ensure mutual respect is a foundation of the community;
- be receptive to alternate perspectives if incidents occur;
- avoid being a bystander, reporting things they are uncomfortable with. Allowing a situation to persist risks making what is happening appear acceptable;
- if required, engage positively in restorative practises.

Students can report incidents of bullying (as a victim or a bystander) via a range of means:

- talk to your form tutor, head of year or the pastoral manager;
- talk to somebody with a responsibility for safeguarding (see safeguarding section of the school website);
- speak to any member of the senior leadership team;
- talk to the school nurse;
- talk to any member of school staff that you feel comfortable disclosing to;
- use the confide system to share information online;
- use the online disclosure form on the student's section of the school website.

## **The responsibilities of parents/carers**

Parents/carers play a vital role in allowing school to tackle bullying incidents effectively and sensitively.

We ask that parents/carers:

- report any incidents of bullying at the earliest opportunity to the form tutor or head of year;
- report evidence as factually as possible and free of emotion;
- allow time for investigations to take place;
- reassure the victim of bullying that resolution will be found;
- support the restorative practises which help to educate the perpetrator in a bullying incident.

## **The responsibilities of staff**

All colleagues play a role in promoting a safe and secure environment for all school users.

We expect staff to:

- remain vigilant to incidents of bullying around the school, reporting such incidents as required;
- challenge language in class and the wider school community that is discriminatory;
- actively promote anti-bullying strategies through the teaching of PSE, in form time and as appropriate within the wider curriculum;
- communicate with and update parents at the earliest possible stage when managing a bullying concern;
- act on incidents of bullying efficiently and sensitively (Pastoral Leaders);
- support an educative and restorative approach to bullying;
- support appropriate sanctions in line with the school behaviour policy.

## 7. Investigating a bullying incident

### The 5 As

Assess  
Assure  
Ascertain  
Amend  
Applaud

#### Assess

- Check the immediate safety of the victim
- Ensure the victim is safeguarded from ongoing events
- Share information with all relevant colleagues to ensure support is available in the first instance

#### Assure

- The victim must know that the disclosure of the incident (by them or a witness) is a positive step.
- Other students may also need reassurance if they are linked to the incident.

#### Ascertain

- Students who are victims should be interviewed by a member of staff regarding what has happened, the frequency of events, names of those involved, locations, witnesses and any actions already undertaken (Have they spoken to friends/family/support about what is happening?)
- Witnesses must provide a signed and dated written statement
- Any online evidence (screenshots/messages) should be collected and saved.
- The alleged perpetrator should be interviewed by the Head of Year (Or Head of School in their absence)
- At this stage a conclusion must be drawn about whether bullying has occurred.
- Following the review of all evidence, the decision should be taken about what further action is necessary. When drawing these conclusions, it is important to consider the age and stage of development of the students involved.



## **Amend**

- Any sanction for bullying should be coupled with an educative response – providing support to perpetrators to modify their behaviour.
- Where possible and appropriate, Urmston Grammar seeks to include restorative practises – the opportunity for an apology and the chance to listen to the victim when deciding on appropriate sanctions.

## **Applaud**

- There should be ongoing review of progress for the victim and the perpetrator in a bullying incident.
- Where positive progress has been made this should be acknowledged, including praise for the student and contact with home.

## **7.1 Additional information with reference to cyberbullying**

In circumstances where bullying has occurred online, we ask that victims keep screenshots of evidence to aid the school investigation.

When managing issues specific to cyberbullying, school may:

- Confiscate phones and delete content as appropriate
- Contact the service provider or host (e.g. the social media site)
- Contact the police (if content is illegal in nature)

We will also advise the victim on next steps:

- Advise them not to reply or retaliate to the perpetrator
- Provide them with appropriate contact details for service providers.
- Advise on changing contact details, blocking contacts, leaving a group chat.

## **8. Recording the incident**

- All information will be initially collected by the Head of Year
- All information will be recorded on CPOMS – including full details of the incident(s)
- All bullying incidents will also be recorded on the schools SIMs system
- Any racial bullying will be recorded as a racist incident.
- Any bullying that persists will be recognised from school records and managed in line with the school behaviour policy.

## 9. Resolving bullying

There can be a variety of reasons why somebody may choose to exhibit bullying behaviour. It may be a result of their own past experiences or current emotional state. As a school we see the educative response to bullying actions as being fundamental to our approach in managing incidents.

Where possible, if lengthy or high impact sanctions can be replaced in part by an educative and restorative response, we will always seek to do so. This can also be beneficial in making a positive resolution more likely.

All parties involved should consider the needs of others. This is particularly prescient when there is an imbalance of power over disadvantaged students.

### Potential strategies

- Staff led discussion between perpetrator and victim, with an empathetic outcome and sincere apology
- Teacher discussion with the perpetrator
- Discussion between Pastoral Leader and parents of the perpetrator to manage a positive move forward.

### **Persistent bullying and serious incidents**

These will be dealt with in line with the school's behaviour policy and may include detentions or internal exclusions.

In the most serious cases, involving serious threatened or actual violence against another pupil, a fixed term or permanent exclusion may be used. Fixed term or permanent exclusions may also be considered as a result of actions that equated to persistent and defiant poor behaviour.

## **10. Preventing bullying**

As part of our safeguarding mechanisms, bullying can be prevented by taking away the opportunity to act in such a way. We can also however, educate our students to create an ethos where bullying is viewed as unacceptable.

As a school we will:

- educate students through PSE about the risks and dangers of bullying behaviour and cyberbullying;
- seek opportunities across the breadth of the curriculum to promote co-operative behaviour, friendship skills, conflict resolution, tackling prejudice and negotiation skills;
- raise awareness through assemblies, poster campaigns and other events such as anti-bullying week;
- include anti-bullying as a key part of Year 7 transition activities;
- provide posters for form rooms about where support can be sought;
- provide a noticeboard centrally that provides information and support about where help can be found both internally and externally; (Including the confide button on the school system)
- advice and guidance on bullying and cyberbullying is also published on the school website;
- teachers will challenge language used around that school that is discriminatory.

## **11. Staff support and training**

The policy will be reviewed periodically and updated as required to ensure it remains effective. Staff training will be provided to support implementation of the policy.

Teachers and support staff will know that support can be found from colleagues with specific skills in dealing with bullying (Pastoral leaders and SLT)

## 12. Assessment and review

- Student voice will be utilised to review student behaviour as part of the school council.
- Any feedback from staff, parents/carers or students will be passed to the Head of School for consideration.
- The recording of all behaviour incidents on internal school systems will allow for review of the effectiveness of this policy
- Schools have a statutory obligation to report on bullying incidents to the local authority and as part of the national census.

## 13.

### Outside agencies offering support

<b>Childline</b>	0800 1111 / <a href="http://www.childline.org.uk">www.childline.org.uk</a>
<b>NSPCC</b>	0800 800 5000
<b>Samaritans</b>	08457 90 90 90
<b>Anti bullying alliance</b>	<a href="http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk">www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk</a>
<b>Diana award</b>	<a href="http://www.antibullyingpro.com">www.antibullyingpro.com</a>
<b>Kidscape</b>	<a href="http://www.kidscape.org.uk">www.kidscape.org.uk</a>
<b>Stand up</b>	<a href="http://www.standuptobullying.co.uk">www.standuptobullying.co.uk</a>
<b>Bullying UK</b>	0808 800 2222 / <a href="http://www.bullying.co.uk">www.bullying.co.uk</a>

### Cyberbullying support

**Childnet international** [www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com)

Specialist resources for young people, raising awareness of online safety and self protection. Includes updated cyberbullying guidance.

**Think U Know** [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

Resources for students, parents/carers and teachers and teachers by CEOP (Child exploitation and online protection)

**Digizen** [www.digizen.org](http://www.digizen.org)

Online safety information to help keep children safe in the digital world.