

Action Against Bullying

Uxbridge High School regards bullying as intolerable behaviour.

All members (adults and students) of the school will work together to help both the victims of bullies and the bullies themselves. Where necessary consequences will be imposed against those bullies who reject advice and help and who continue to bully others.

What is Bullying ?

Bullying may be distinguished from plain aggression in that it involves the dominance of one student by an individual or a group and usually forms a pattern of behaviour rather than an isolated incident.

It is undesirable behaviour which ranges from petty but persistent irritation of picking on one unfortunate individual to what can be a nasty conflict between groups of children.

Intentional, unprovoked hurt of this type may be physical and/or psychological. Psychological bullying is often harder to detect but the fact that incidents are not reported does not mean that they are not happening. Included in our definition of bullying are repeated racist and sexist acts against others.

The Effects of Bullying

Bullying causes the erosion of self confidence and self esteem. It can lead to students feeling ashamed, guilty, lacking in confidence, depressed, helpless and frequently isolated. Victims of bullies may internalise their feelings or display them outwardly with tantrums or violent outbursts. Bullying can hinder academic progress and can have an impact on the attendance of otherwise studious students.

In very extreme cases it has been reported that victims of persistent bullying have taken their own lives. It can also affect those who passively witness attacks and threats and cause them to become anxious and distressed.

The Aims of Successful Management of Bullying Incidents

To be a school where no individual need "suffer in silence". To promote a secure environment within which students can report incidents confidently knowing that all parties will be protected and reassured until issues are resolved.

To demonstrate at all times that Uxbridge High School considers bullying to be anti-social and unacceptable and takes any incident of bullying very seriously.

To enable staff to respond calmly and consistently to incidents of bullying.

To provide both short and long term positive strategies to assist both the bullied and the bullies.

Strategies to be Employed

All staff are responsible for minimising opportunities for bullying within their own classroom and should be alert to any signs of bullying around the school.

Staff responsibility for action against bullying extends across the whole school and to all students.

Incidents will be dealt with in the following way:

A victim can expect:

- Support, understanding and a thorough investigation of their complaint.
- A responsible adult will take action on their behalf as soon as possible and normally by the end of the same day.

- Sanctuary will be provided in school until the issue has been resolved.
- Every endeavour will be made to ensure that the bullying stops.
- The parents of all those concerned will be informed and involved in the process.
- An offer of counselling.
- There should be an attempt for, and offer of, reconciliation once the issue of bullying has been resolved, (e.g. "Restorative Justice" process).

A bully can expect:

- The adult investigating the allegations will not jump to conclusions.
- A right to a fair hearing.
- If the allegations of bullying are proved correct, parents will be informed, sanctions will be imposed and appropriate action will be taken.
- Counselling will be given.
- An attempt at reconciliation will be made.
- Consequences will be imposed if advice is rejected and bullying resumes.

Information and Referral

It must be recognised that every case is unique and that advice given to students will vary according to circumstances.

Students are encouraged to make their concerns known to an adult.

They can approach:

- Their Personal Tutor
- One of their Guidance Leaders
- A member of the Student Support Team
- A senior member of staff

They can talk to a friend or a Peer Mentor who will be able to direct them to a member of staff.

Depending on the details of the problem there may be the need for referral to, or support from, a senior member of staff when circumstances surrounding the incident prove to be of a serious nature.

Relevant information should be documented and passed to Personal Tutors for future reference.

Also supporting this Policy

The Uxbridge High School student booklet - The A-B-C Pamphlet

The "Restorative Justice" approach involving the "Safer Schools Project" police officer and others.

Drama workshops and assemblies.

National Anti-Bullying Week

Student Questionnaires

Anti-bullying raising awareness campaigns and competitions.

Citizenship programme material.

Peer Mentoring programme

Learning Mentor support

Guidelines for staff dealing with an incident of bullying

Be Available: Provide immediate support for the victim. The teacher receiving the report or noticing the incident is best placed to deal with the situation initially. It is essential that a referral is made to the students' Personal Tutors, the appropriate Guidance Leaders, or members of the Student Support Team, once the investigation is under way.

Investigate: Interview all parties separately and summarise findings. Avoid intimidation, remain objective and work with students in a quiet, secure

place. It is useful to ask students to write reports of the incident, together with witness statements if appropriate.

Respond: At this stage individuals may be brought together to discuss the incident and ways forward.

Respond in a matter of fact way reinforcing the severity of the situation and the school policy. "In this school we do not accept bullying.....".

Further sanctions may be considered e.g. apology (written/oral), parental involvement/contact (phone, letter, interview), lunchtime/break exclusion, but these measures should be instigated by the Guidance Leader.

In some cases a behaviour contract, a Guidance Leader's Report, a Head Teacher's Report, or an exclusion from school for a fixed period may be appropriate. This action will be taken after liaison with a senior member of staff.

Follow Up: Time must be found to check that outcomes are satisfactory, particularly for the victim. If they are not, greater protection of the victim may be required and a higher level of sanction and support put in place for the bully.