

Anti-Bullying Policy

Introduction

UWC Maastricht is an international school comprised of students and staff from over 100 nationalities. We are a deliberately diverse population committed to international and intercultural understanding, learning from and with our community members.

We strive to be open and create a culture that is inclusive and therefore bullying behaviour is completely contradictory to everything we stand to be, captured in our UWC Core Values.

Definition

When we speak about **bullying**, we refer to the *repetitive and intentional* hurting of one person by another, where the relationship involves an *imbalance of power*. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological and can be through:

- *deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying;*
- *cyber-bullying;*
- *identity-based bullying such as homophobic, racist, cultural, religious, appearance and gender based bullying*
- *bullying of those with disabilities, illness or special educational needs*
- *misuse of peer pressure to get others to carry out bullying acts*

In addition, in the context of these procedures placing a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour.

This means that **bullying is not** an isolated or once-off incident of intentional negative behaviour, including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private message. These incident do not fall within this definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's code of behaviour. A single incident can have a serious effect on a pupil and may also constitute harassment. Harassment is any form of unwanted conduct related to any of the discriminatory grounds (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community).

This policy aims to set out our commitment to safeguard all community members through:

Prevention

- **A positive and proactive approach** to diversity, inclusivity and alignment with our school mission and core values.
- **Clear, supportive relationships** whereby staff, students and parents feel able to disclose information and discuss bullying behaviour.
- **Clear communication** on expectations through our Personal and Community Code of Conduct and our anti-bullying policy.
- **Use of external agencies**, when appropriate, for prevention.

Effective handling of any issues arising:

- **Consistent reporting and monitoring** of incidents.
- **Effective investigation and action** on incidents.
- **Programme of support** for those affected.
- **Use of external agencies**, where necessary and in line with Dutch law, for support.

What UWC Maastricht does:

1. Prevention

For students:

- Pastoral curriculum that develops positive student attitude on all issues covered within the anti-bullying policy and beyond.
- Consistent messages from teachers/tutors on acceptable conduct aligned with our Community Code of Conduct.
- Positive relationships developed between staff and students so students feel trust in disclosing any issues that arise and feel that action will be taken.
- Students understand school protocol for reporting bullying behaviour.
- Bullying awareness week celebrated across the school.
- Follow up days/events on specific discrimination areas using agencies with expertise to support this programme.
- Variety of lines of communication available to students who wish to disclose.

For staff:

- Role-modelling appropriate behaviours.
- Trained in identification of warning signs and intervention procedure.
- Deal with low-level incidents effectively to avoid escalation.
- Maintain regular, open lines of communication with parents to allow information flow both ways.

For parents:

- Parent information from admissions on our policy and how parents and the school can work together to prevent bullying and support if any incidents occur, especially where the child is too young, is an English Language Learner or has special needs and may not be able to disclose information to staff at the school themselves.
- Information to be included in the parent presentations at the start of each year.
- Information in a parent handbook for reference year-round.
- The school works closely with the Parent Support Group, parent year representatives and the Participation Council.

Information to include in the parent guide or to be available on request:

- School policy.
- School procedures.
- Communication lines.
- Information on definition and types of behaviour.
- Warning signs for both victim and perpetrator.

2. Effective handling of any issues arising

For students:

- Receive support from a member of staff that the student trusts, knowing that the member of staff will work with a team addressing the bullying issue.
- To be informed about the investigation and follow-up procedures.
- To receive any intervention support as recommended by Student Support Department, with parental consent.
- A regular review of their case and closure when agreed by all parties.

For staff:

- Understand and follow the school protocol for reporting, investigating and dealing with any bullying issues that arise.
- To follow procedures as set out in flow diagram.
- Maintain confidentiality within the team that handles the issue.
- To teach and treat each child without discrimination even if you are aware of a bullying issue existing.
- To follow up advice of Student Support Department.
- Consider the language and cultural context of any issue and approach in action and communication.

For parents:

- Receive regular communication on issues arising in a timely and sensitive manner.
- Requested to maintain confidentiality within the team that handles the case and for all action to be coursed via the school.
- To have direct meetings with pastoral team, Student Support Department and school leadership as appropriate.

Last review: December 2017