

Anti-Bullying Information for Parents

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What is bullying?

The definition of bullying is when an individual or group of people with more power repeatedly and intentionally cause hurt or harm to another person or group of people who feel helpless to respond. Bullying can continue over time, is often hidden from adults, and will probably continue if no action is taken.

Examples of bullying may include:

- Being called names and teased
- Hitting, slapping or pushing
- Threatening, intimidation and humiliation
- Spreading rumours
- Stealing possessions
- Sending offensive messages online
- Posting hurtful comments on social media

1.5 million young people (50%) have been bullied within the past year

44% of young people who have been bullied experience depression

Types of bullying:

Physical – pushing, poking, kicking, hitting etc.

Verbal – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, belittling

Emotional – isolating others, tormenting, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation

Sexual – unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, homophobic abuse

Online/cyber – posting on social media, sharing photos, sending hurtful messages, social exclusion

Is it bullying?

It is important to differentiate between whether an incident is considered bullying or a relational conflict. Below are the key differences between the two:

Relational conflict:	Bullying:
Occasional	Repeated
Remorse and effort made to resolve	Intentional and no remorse
Power balance	Imbalance of power
Accidental	Hurtful

Incidents of bullying can stem from differences between different groups of students, for example based on appearance, religion or race, gender, identity etc.

People who have been bullied are almost twice as likely to bully others

14% of young people admit to bullying somebody, 12% say they bully people daily

Cyber-bullying.

Cyber-bullying is any form of online bullying, meaning bullying via electronic means. This can be via smart phones, computers, laptops, tablets or online gaming platforms.

Prevention and awareness:

- Talk to your child about who they are talking to online.
- Encourage them to think before sharing things online.
- Negotiate and establish boundaries.
- Get familiar with the social networking sites that they use.
- Ensure your child knows how to block someone on social media and have the necessary security settings implemented.
- If someone online has acted inappropriately towards your child, make sure to investigate the situation and seek help. Contact the **Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP)**.

- Make your child's profile private
- Block and report abusive people and behaviour
- Only invite or accept genuine friends
- Keep passwords private

Effects of bullying.

The psychological effects of bullying may last into adulthood. In the most extreme cases, bullying has ultimately led to children and young people to self-harm and possibly suicide.

Children who are bullied:

- May develop mental health problems such as depression and anxiety
- Have fewer friendships
- Aren't accepted by their peers
- Are wary and suspicious of others
- Have problems settling into school and may not perform as well academically
- Have low self-esteem
- May become socially withdrawn, isolated and lonely
- May be unable to form trusting, healthy relationships with friends or partners in the future

Who is at risk?

A child can be bullied for any reason. If a child is seen as different in any way, or seen as an easy target they can be more at risk. They may be more likely to be bullied if they appear anxious or have low self-esteem, lack assertiveness or are shy or introverted.

Is your child bullying someone?

- **Explain** to your child how bullying can make people feel
- **Make them aware that what they're doing is not acceptable.** Children and young people don't always realise what they're doing is bullying, or understand how much their actions have hurt somebody else
- **Help them realise how what they've done will have affected the other person.** You could ask them how they think the other child is feeling, and to remember how they've felt when someone has said or done something unkind to them
- **Work with your child** to find out why he/she bullied
- **Explain what you're going to do next**, such as telling their school, and what you expect your child to do now
- **Ask them whether they have any questions** about why their actions need to change
- Other children and young people bully due to issues in school or home, or they may also have been bullied. Alternatively, they may feel they need to bully to fit in

Twice as many boys as girls bully (66% of males vs. 31% females)

24% of young people who have been bullied go on to bully

Signs of bullying.

It may be difficult to tell whether your child is involved in a bullying incident. He or she may be acting as a bully, being bullied, or may be affected from witnessing other people being bullied. It is important to look out for these signs if you suspect your child is involved in bullying:

- Bruises or signs of physical assault
- Broken or missing possessions
- Becoming more isolated – not talking or spending more time alone
- Changes in eating habits
- Changes in behaviour – becoming aggressive or lashing out
- Sleeping badly
- Worrying about going to school
- Decline in academic performance

If you suspect bullying, it is important to act as early as you can as it may be the cause of unwanted stress and anxiety in your child





What you can do.

Bullying is never acceptable; and should always be taken seriously. It is never your child's fault if they've been bullied

- If your child says they are being bullied **speak calmly and reassuringly and discuss** what the next steps should be
- **Ask your child** what they have already tried to do to stop it.
- Children may not tell their parents as they are frightened that they will approach the school regarding the matter, make a fuss and make things worse, so it is a good idea to **ask your child what they think could be done to stop the bullying**

What your child can do.

- **Walk away** from the situation, avoid and inform others.
- **If it is someone they previously classed as a friend, politely but firmly end contact.**
- **Firmly ask them to stop.**
- **Tell a peer mentor or older student** if this is an option in the school.
- **Report the bullying** to a teacher or tutor.
- **Report the bullying** to an Anti-Bullying Advocates (staff with teal lanyard).

The school's policies.

Every member of our learning community is entitled to be part of a happy and safe school where they can flourish. We will not tolerate bullying in our school and will do all we can to eradicate bullying in all its forms.

We ask that every member of our learning community signs an anti-bullying pledge at the start of every year. By signing this pledge, students, staff, parents/carers and members of the Governing Body agree to the following:

1. To value difference and treat others with respect.
2. To avoid becoming involved in bullying incidents or being a bully and to support anyone who has been or is subjected to bullying.
3. Be vigilant in terms of bullying in places around the school where there is less adult supervision.
4. Be aware of the school's policies with regards to anti-bullying and immediately report all incidents.
5. To talk about concerns regarding bullying and work with the school to stop bullying.
6. To speak out against verbal, relational, physical and cyber bullying.
7. To be a good role model at home, school and in our community.

Any member of our learning community can report incidents of bullying either in person, by email, over the phone, or online by completing the form on Frog. The Inclusion Team and every member of the Strategic Leadership Team, together with other staff and students in school, are trained as Anti-Bullying Advocates and are available for students or parents to talk to for advice, guidance and support. Anti-Bullying Advocates can be identified by their teal lanyards.

As a Stonewall School, our Student Wellbeing Committee have set the following expectations for all students:

- I will accept everyone, whoever they want to be.
- I will understand and support those who choose to disclose their sexuality, whatever it may be.
- I will be brave and challenge discrimination and prejudice whenever it is encountered.
- I will educate any person who shows intolerance.
- I will respect different peoples' views but not be afraid to challenge those who hurt others.
- I will act maturely and not use inappropriate language; I will challenge those who do.
- I will stamp out stigma and stereotyping.

Anti-bullying procedure.

Are you or somebody you know being bullied?

Please let us know by completing the form available on FROG, tell a member of staff or ask your parents to.

- When an incident of bullying is reported to a mentor/teacher/member of associate staff the Student Support Officer (SSO) will be informed
- The SSO will investigate the incident(s) and take statements from all students involved (if appropriate).
- The SSO will keep a log of all incidents which are reported.
- The SSO will inform parents if they feel appropriate
- **The SSO/Head of Behaviour Support will always try restorative practice, when appropriate, in the first instance.**
- The SSO/Head of Behaviour Support will issue a sanction which reflects the seriousness of the incident. The school does not accept bullying in its school community and the sanction will reflect this.
- The SSO/Head of Behaviour Support may invite parents into school and may offer to mediate between students.
- The incident will be formally logged and further incidents will result in further sanctions.
- After two weeks there will be a follow up phone call after the bullying incident.

Restorative practice

The first method of practice the school will use in response to a bullying incident is restorative practice.

This is a way of working with conflict that puts the focus on repairing the harm that has been done. It is an approach to conflict resolution that includes all of the parties involved.

Experience and evidence at local and national levels has shown that restorative processes have a positive impact in changing school cultures, especially with regard to behaviour and bullying.

The rationale behind this approach is that when offenders reflect upon their harm to victims:

- They become remorseful and act restoratively.
 - Practitioners can focus on the unacceptable behaviour of offenders rather than their moral character.
 - This can lead to healthier interpersonal relations among members of the school community and more effective learning.
- A report by the Department for Education gave whole-school restorative approaches the highest rating of effectiveness at preventing bullying, with a survey of schools showing 97% rated restorative approaches as effective.
 - An independent evaluation of restorative justice in Bristol schools found that restorative justice improved school attendance and reduced exclusion rates.

Our anti-bullying strategies.

- Learners will be encouraged to report bullying and when they do so they will be listened to and taken seriously.
- Every allegation of bullying will be investigated and followed up.
- Any victim of bullying will be well-protected immediately and in the future.
- Any allegations of bullying will be reported to the relevant members of staff.
- Enterprise and SMSC (in mentor time) will be used to discuss bullying and to ensure that all are aware that bullying is never acceptable and that the victim must always report it to parents, staff or friends.
- The parents of all concerned will be informed when relevant and involved in any reported incident and will be expected to support this school policy.
- Use CCTV, in line with the CCTV policy, to identify trouble spots and students involved in bullying.
- Using in-school guidance support to counsel bullies and develop self-esteem.
- Using assemblies, collective learning and mentor time to deliver anti-bullying messages.
- Addressing bullying issues through the CPD program as appropriate with staff.
- Using teaching methods that encourage group and co-operative working, and by using a variety of groups in order to extend working relationships and friendships for the students.
- Working with outside agencies including specialist groups to develop strategies to use with both bullies and victims.



Tips to prevent further bullying.

If your child is being bullied, don't panic. Explain to your child that the bullying is not their fault and together you will sort this out

Try to **establish the facts**. It can be helpful to keep a diary of the events. If the bullying is online, save or copy images and texts.

Find out what you child wants to happen. Help to identify steps you can take; and the skills they have to help sort out the situation. Make sure you always keep them informed about an actions you decide to take

You may be tempted to tell you child to retaliate but this can have unpredictable results. Your child might get into trouble or get even more hurt. Rather – role play non-violent ways they can respond to children that are bullying them. Show them how to block or unfriend people if the bullying is online and help them identify other friends or adults that can support them

Encourage your child to get involved in activities that build their confidence and esteem, and help them to form friendships outside of school (or wherever the bullying is taking place)

Get some advice:

There are many organisations that can give you some advice. Contact them if you are worried about bullying and want to talk to someone.

Contacts for children:

National Bullying Helpline:	0300 323 0169
Childline:	0800 1111
Victim Support:	08 08 16 89 111
Bully Busters:	0800 169 6928
The Mix:	0808 808 4994
www.diana-award.org.uk	
www.bulliesout.com	

Contacts for parents:

NSPCC:	0808 800 5000
Kidscape:	020 7823 5430
Bullying UK:	0808 800 2222
www.ceop.gov.uk	

