

Bullying, inappropriate behaviour and peer pressure **A problem for many young people**

Bullying or harassment of any kind is unacceptable at school. If it does occur, students are encouraged to speak to a member of staff in the secure knowledge that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

School rules, regulations, codes of conduct and boundaries are put in place to ensure they are safeguarded at all times.

People get picked on for lots of reasons. Being bullied can make them dread going to school and can also make them feel depressed, lonely and even suicidal.

Bullying can take many forms from physical or verbal abuse to sexual and psychological bullying. It also includes issues that are less visible, like sending nasty texts or spreading gossip about someone.

- **Emotional bullying** includes: tormenting, excluding someone, anonymous letters/texts, demanding money, demanding coursework to copy.
 - **Physical bullying** includes: punching, kicking, hitting or any use of violence, stealing, damaging belongings.
 - **Sexual bullying** includes: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
 - **Verbal bullying** includes: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, 'putting down'.
 - **Racist bullying** includes: racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
 - **Homophobic bullying** includes: comments about someone's sexuality.
 - **Cyber-bullying** can relate to any of the above but using social media websites (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat), emails, smart phones or other technology. It can include private sexual images being circulated among peers or uploaded online or people being pressured to send inappropriate images (sexting).
- If they are being bullied, let them know they're not alone. They have done nothing wrong. They might feel that there's no way out, but there are lots of ways to get help.

If people are making nasty remarks about them then it may be because they are jealous or do not understand them. Encourage them to speak up for themselves and try to talk to the person who is being nasty towards them. They may not

know how their behaviour is making them feel. If they do not stop tell them to talk to their teacher or school nurse who can help. Asking for help is not a sign of weakness, it's the first step to resolving a situation that's not acceptable.

Everyone has a right to feel safe.

Peer pressure acts on individuals to make them act in the same way as the group. It can include the unspoken pressure to dress in a certain way or to buy a specific brand of mobile phone as well as direct forms of peer pressure such as persuading or bullying someone to do or say something they may feel uncomfortable about (e.g. trying a cigarette, or drug, or committing a crime).

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying by text, instant messaging or email messages. It can be making insulting comments about someone on the internet through a website or through social networking sites. It can also be the uploading of embarrassing videos or photographs by people they trusted on the internet or distributing them by mobile phones.

Tell them not to respond to the messages, but to save them or take a screen shot as evidence.

There are 'report abuse' facilities on many websites. Tell them to inform a member of staff. In some cases they may want to involve the police.

Inappropriate behaviour

Be aware of the way you treat others as well as the way others treat you. Inappropriate behaviour ranges from minor incidents to serious offences. Examples of inappropriate behaviour include rudeness, discrimination, assault and sexual harassment. In some cases it will be very clear what is inappropriate behaviour whilst at other times something may make you feel uncomfortable, but the behaviour is more subtle and difficult to describe. If a person makes you feel uncomfortable, then their behaviour is inappropriate and it is important to speak up.

Examples of inappropriate behaviour

Behaviours that are considered to be inappropriate, concerning or threatening include:

- Angry, aggressive communications (verbal or written).
- Unwanted attention.
- Written material (emails, texts or letters) that suggest a student may be unstable or have mental health issues.
- Sexual harassment (unwelcome sexual conduct of any kind).
- Stalking (repeated attempts to impose unwanted

communication or contact).

- An uttered threat to harm another.
- Using or viewing pornography in a way that contravenes a school's IT Policy and/or affects others.
- Bullying.
- Any act of physical violence, property damage, or production of a weapon.
- Violence.

Equally, if they act in, or think about acting in an inappropriate way it is important for them to get help. Are they being treated badly by someone, or has someone acted inappropriately towards them in the past? Tell them to talk to their teacher or school nurse.

All schools have a Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedures containing more information and guidelines for students who are experiencing a bullying issue.

Contacts

Teacher

School nurse 020 8770 5409

Childline

Call in confidence on 0800 1111.

Stonewall

a charity that campaigns for equal rights for lesbians, gay men and bisexual people.

020 7593 1850

www.stonewall.org.uk

Bullybusters

0800 169 6928.

www.bullying.co.uk

www.nspcc.org.uk

www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Bullying/Pages/Antibullyinghelp.aspx

Samaritans

116 123

www.samaritans.org