

Parents' guide to Bullying (Draft Jan 2017)

What Is Bullying?

Put a definition possibly this one??(taken from Preventing and Tackling Bullying 2014):

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case.

Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures), ridicule, humiliation
- Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, making rude remarks, making fun of someone
- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, throwing stones, biting, spitting, punching or any other forms of violence, taking or hiding someone's things
- Racist: racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, making fun of culture and religion
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive or sexist comments
- Homophobic: because of/or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Cyber: setting up 'hate websites', sending offensive text messages, emails and abusing the victims via their mobile phones or other wireless technology
- Any unfavourable or negative comments, gestures or actions made to someone relating to their home situation, (e.g. a looked after child), disability or special educational needs.

Bullying is not:

It is important to understand that bullying is not the odd occasion of falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional trick or joke is played on someone. It is bullying if it is done several times on purpose. Children sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise it is not classed as bullying. It is an important part of children's development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns, the odd name calling, or

childish prank. We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships.

Where does bullying happen?

It can happen anywhere – in the classroom, in the corridor, in the toilets, in the dining hall, in the playground.

Bullying may also happen out of school. In such cases, the Head teacher is empowered by law (Preventing and Tackling Bullying 2014) to deal with such incidents but must do so in accordance with the school's policy.

At Harden Primary School, we are concerned with our children's conduct and welfare outside as well as inside school and we will do what we can to address any bullying issues that occur off the school premises. We, along with consultation with parents, can do the following:

- Talk to the other parents of children involved.
- Discuss issues with the children.
- Discuss issues with local Community Police Officer about problems in the area.
- Work together with other schools whose children may be involved in bullying off the premises.
- Discuss coping strategies with parents and children.
- Talk to the children about how to handle or avoid bullying outside the school premises

For bullying that happens on the school premises we will work in consultation with parents and can do the following:

- Talk to parents and children involved to find a way forward that everyone is happy with.
- Have regular meetings with victims to build confidence
- Discuss coping strategies with parents and pupils.
- Carryout some targeted work with specific year groups

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate, by different signs or behaviour, that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and investigate further if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go on the school bus/in the taxi
- changes their usual routine/route to school
- begins truanting
- becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning

- begins to underperform in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions that go “missing”
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually “lost”
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money/snack/sandwiches have been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- starts swearing or using aggressive language for no apparent reason
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what’s wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be taken seriously and investigated as soon as possible.

What can you do if you feel your child is being bullied or bullying others?

If you feel your child is being bullied or bullying others then please talk to school. We offer an open door policy and someone is usually available to discuss any issues.

The first point of contact for parents is their child’s class teacher who will follow the positive behaviour and Anti-bullying policy.

Sources of further information, support and help

There is a vast amount of information and guidance available about bullying that can provide a wide range of support and help.

The following list is just a small selection of the support available that teachers, parents and children have found useful.

| Name of organisation | Telephone number | Website |
|------------------------------|---|--|
| Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) | 0207 843 1901 | www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk |
| Anti-bullying Network | 0131 651 6103 | www.antibullying.net |
| Child line | 0800 1111(helpline for children) | www.childline.org.uk |
| Kidscape | 020 7730 3300(general enquiry number) 08451 205 204 (helpline for adults only) | www.kidscape.org.uk www.beyondbullying.com |
| NSPCC | 0207 825 2500 | www.nspcc.org.uk |
| Parentline Plus | 0808 800 2222 | www.parentlineplus.org.uk |
| The Children’s Legal Centre | 0800 783 2187 | www.childrenslegalcentre.com |
| UK Government Website | not available | www.direct.gov.uk |