

# Supporting your child: relationships at school

A briefing for  
parents and carers

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# Dimensions of bullying behaviour

The following 3 dimensions help us to define bullying behaviour:

- Bullying is always intentionally hurtful, physically, emotionally or mentally;
- It is also a repeated experience, rather than an isolated incident;
- It also involves an inequality of power, such that it is difficult to reject, resolve and deal with the hurtful behaviour.

# These behaviours are not bullying...

- Teasing between friends where there is no deliberate intention to cause hurt.
- Conflicts and disputes involving 'tit for tat' hurtful behaviour.
- Falling out between friends after a quarrel or disagreement.
- Unacceptable behaviour that all parties have consented to and enjoy.

**But they do set in place circumstances which could develop into bullying if not checked and resolved**

# If your child is upset about an incident...

- Find out as much as you can about how they feel, what happened, where and when, who has been told and what has been done (ask them what happened before that which might have led to the incident)
- Reassure her/him that it can be sorted out
- Please remember you only have part of the story
- Help your child report it or contact the school yourself with your concerns – don't assume that the school knows what you know!
- Give the school time to investigate and respond
- Expect some feedback on what has happened, but not necessarily all the details

# The school's response to concerns

- An incident is reported
- Investigation into what happened
- Responses to target, offender, ↓  
witnesses/bystanders
- Notification of parents ↑
- School considers any implications for school procedures
- Monitoring progress of those directly involved

# What can you do while you are waiting?

- Try to be measured and calm.
- Avoid communicating that your child is helpless or a victim...it makes it harder for them to recover!
- Avoid labelling another child as a bully ...it makes it harder to repair relationships!
- Do not directly approach the other child or their family members – it is important things are dealt with by the school.

# Interventions to resolve bullying and hurtful behaviour

- pupils who have been hurtful need to be supported to understand the impact of their behaviour
- pupils who have been distressed need to be supported and have their skills of resilience and self esteem reinforced
- witnesses and bystanders need to understand their responsibilities and know that incidents have been resolved

# If you think your child has experienced hurtful or bullying behaviour:

- listen carefully and reassure her/him
- explain the importance of telling an adult at school straight away (support her/him to report it)
- work to restore her/his self esteem and self worth
- help her/him to practise/implement any agreed strategy
- help her/him to reconcile, repair relationships and put resolved incidents behind her/him

Sometimes bad things happen but  
you can **BOUNCE BACK**



# If your child has used bullying or hurtful behaviour:

- help her/him understand why their behaviour was unacceptable
- support her/him in co-operating with the school
- help her/him to practise/implement any agreed strategy
- encourage and praise positive change
- help her/him to reconcile, repair relationships and put resolved incidents behind her/him

**This behaviour is unacceptable**  
**Be confident and strong but not a bully**

# What if it happens again?

- Go through the process again!
- The school's prevention strategy hasn't worked so far, so the school will want to step up its action.
- Check the school has followed their published procedures (e.g. Anti-bullying or Behaviour Policy)
- Keep the positive supportive messages flowing ...  
“We can sort this out together...”

# Ensure your children know:

“If you are worried, hurt or in trouble

- there is nothing so bad or so trivial that we can't talk about it...
- if you can't talk to me, you must talk to someone...who else can you identify to talk to?
- if you can't talk face to face:
  - Childline 0800 1111
  - [www.cybermentors.org.uk](http://www.cybermentors.org.uk)”

# Think B4 U Post

**Who can see this?**

**Could someone misinterpret what I am saying?**

**Am I showing a bad side of myself?**

**Am I giving away personal information?**

**Am I angry?**

**Could this upset someone?**

**Could this cause problems now or in the future?**

