

Safeguarding Briefing

November 2020

During the week 16 -20th November we marked Anti-Bullying Week in school, including wearing odd socks on Monday to bring attention to the campaign.



The Anti-Bullying Alliance defines bullying as: the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.

Put simply this means any situation where your child is being deliberately and repeatedly hurt by other people and they find it hard to defend themselves. This could be face to face, online, in school or in the community.

It may be physical, or it could be verbal or emotional. For example, your child might be pushed around by others, called names or be excluded from friendship groups. Children may also target aspects about people they feel are 'different' – this could include disability, race, faith, gender, sex, sexuality, poverty, talent, skin conditions, allergies, or situation at home. Children are influenced by the home, community, and society they grow up in, by the things they see, read, and hear, and the people around them.

We all have a role to play in creating communities where children feel safe and valued, where we stand up to prejudice and are united against bullying. Most children will experience or witness bullying during their school years: they may be the target of bullying, may be involved in bullying others, may stand by while others are being bullied or may take positive action to stop bullying.

Advice for parents

It is a fact of life that your child will not be liked by everyone. They will probably be on the receiving end of name calling or negative comments, may occasionally feel left out or alone, will make friends and lose friends and have arguments and disputes. They may be involved in physical fights and may get in the occasional spot of bother for hurting someone else. It's important to prepare them for this and work through strategies for handling these situations.

For example, if someone calls them a name – do they retaliate, shrug it off or tell a teacher?

- What might be the outcome of any of these decisions?
- How can they handle an argument?
- Do we have to be right all the time?
- How can we be a peacemaker and resolve a disagreement?
- As much as it hurts when people no longer want to be our friend, what can we control or what else might we do?
- What can we say or do if someone wants to fight with us?

Working through these scenarios will help your child to feel confident and prepared. You know your child and their situation best, refer to the Bullying temperature check (below) and work with them to consider next steps. If your child has been seriously harmed or is at risk of serious harm this is a safeguarding issue and you should seek immediate help (e.g. call 999 and/or your local children's services team).

We are all capable of bullying behaviour. What is important is that we recognise it and endeavour to stop it, and where we have hurt others, learn to take action to put things right.

If you have been told by others that your child is showing bullying behaviour, it's important to stay calm and ask for examples of the things they have said or done and the impact this has had on others. This is your opportunity to explore with your child what has happened, the impact this has had, whether there is anything that has upset or hurt them that has led to that behaviour, what needs to change and the actions they can take to show they are sorry. Many children who bully others are in a difficult place themselves and will need help to explore how they are feeling, what led to the behaviour, and what needs to change.

BULLYING TEMPERATURE CHECK

My child seems happy and content. They like to go to school and have good relationships with other children and staff. While they have the occasional situation where others say or do unkind things to them, or they have said or done unkind things to others, they have been able to resolve the situation (including saying sorry if they have hurt someone else).



My child is sometimes sad and can be reluctant to go to school. While they mention one or two friends they seem to have regular fall outs with other children and have mentioned a number of situations where children have said or done unkind things to them, or they have said or done unkind things to other children. They seem unsure how to resolve these situations and I am not sure they are receiving enough help.



My child is often sad or upset and does not like school or their usual activities. They do not seem to have friends and I am concerned that other children often say or do unkind things to them. They urgently need help to resolve the situation and to enjoy their school and social life.

