

## Bullying Guidelines

### ‘Traditional’ bullying

#### 1. What is bullying?

There is no legal definition of bullying but broadly it includes the following elements. There should be:

- unwanted aggressive behaviour;
- an observed or perceived in-balance of power;
- repetition or the high likelihood of repetition of the bullying behaviour; and
- an intention to cause harm or fear.

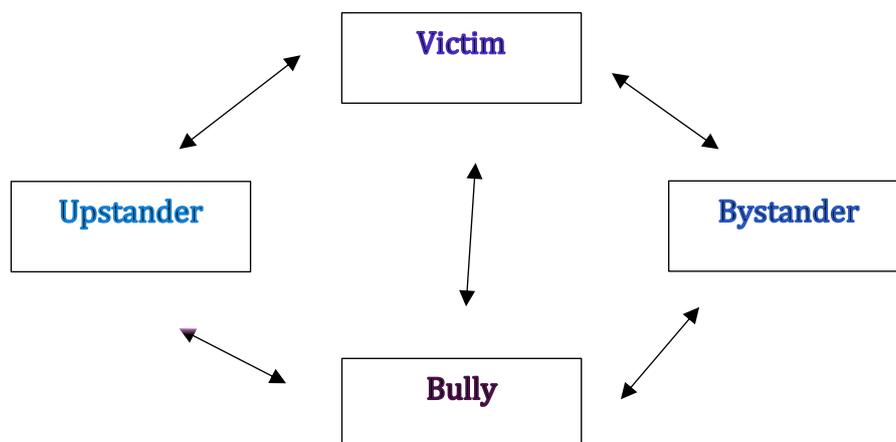
#### 2. What are the different forms of bullying?

Bullying behaviour can come in various different forms, including, but not limited to the following:

- physical – being pushed or shoved;
- verbal – being called names, sworn at, insulted;
- social – being ignored/actively and openly excluded;
- psychological – having rumours spread about you, having threats hanging over you;
- damage – having money or belongings stolen, being forced to hand over money; or
- cyber – intrusive or offensive use of social network sites (see below for more info).

#### 3. What are the different roles in a bullying situation?

There are four different roles in any bullying situation. As well as the bully and the victim, there is usually one or more bystander – the person or people who are aware of the bullying but don’t know what to do about it or are frightened to get involved – and the upstander role, the person or people who decide to take action and help the victim. Being a bystander can be extremely troubling and upsetting and, similar to being the victim, can have long term mental health implications.



#### 4. Some bullying statistics<sup>1</sup>

Bullying is on the increase, particularly for younger children.

- Statistics from 2018 report that 1 in 6 (17% of children) reported being bullied (approximately 4/5 in every class of 28-30 pupils).
- It is more prevalent in younger children (aged 10-12 years) and boys are more likely than girls to experience bullying.

Some of the risk factors include:

- Children from a white ethnic background are most at risk followed by children from a black ethnic background. Children from Asian or Chinese ethnic backgrounds are less likely to be bullied.
- Children with a disability or special educational need are more likely to be bullied.
- Poverty is also a risk factor for bullying.

Types of bullying behaviour:

- 60% of bullying is physical
  - 89% of bullying is verbal; and
  - 18 % of bullying involves theft
- 
- In 2016, 40% of children being bullied had considered suicide<sup>2</sup> and 39% had self-harmed as a direct result of being bullied.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bullying-in-england-april-2013-to-march-2018>

<sup>2</sup> In 2020, 8.2 in every 100,000 boys committed suicide. 3.1 in every 100,000 girls committed suicide an increase of 93.8% since 2012

## Cyber bullying

### 1. What is Cyber bullying?

Again, there is no legal definition of cyber bullying, but broadly it involves the use of electronic media, especially phones and the internet, to intimidate, threaten or upset someone. There should be an intention to upset or harm as well as repetition of the behaviour for it to count as bullying rather than just mis-use of social media.

### 2. What are the different forms of cyber bullying?

Like traditional bullying, cyber bullying can come in various forms and includes, but is not limited to the following:

- texting rude or scary messages by mobile phone;
- sending unpleasant photographs by mobile phone;
- using on-line message boards/chat rooms/social networking sites etc to post cruel or unpleasant messages;
- deleting names/ignoring messages on social networking sites;
- 'flaming' which involves using social media networks to cause a huge row;
- 'impersonation' which involves hacking into someone else's email/social media account and using their on-line identity to send/post vicious or embarrassing material to or about another person; or
- cyber stalking, which involves harassing another person using a social network platform.

### 3. Some cyber bullying statistics<sup>3</sup>

- 1 in 5 children aged 10-15 (19%) had experienced at least one type of cyberbullying in the year ending March 2020;
- Over half (52%) of the children surveyed did not consider the behaviour they had received as bullying;
- 1 in 4 (26%) did not report the behaviour;
- 72% (3 in 4) had experienced on-line bullying whilst at school;
- Name calling and being sent nasty messages were the most common types of cyberbullying; and
- Girls are twice as likely as boys to be involved in cyber bullying (either as victims or perpetrators).

### 4. Illegal behaviours

It is worth remembering that all of the following are not just wrong, but illegal:

- harassment;
- stalking;
- grooming; and
- sexting

## The impact of bullying on children and young people

Experiencing bullying can have serious and sometimes lifelong impacts on individuals. These can include, but are not limited to the following:

- low self esteem - (3/4 of adult mental health difficulties begin in adolescence);
- low mood/depression;
- negative impact on learning in school;
- difficulties sleeping (which again has a significant impact on school performance);
- social anxiety
- reluctance to engage in outdoor activities/sports which ultimately impacts physical health.

NB: As well as the impact on the victim in any bullying incident, there is also a significant impact on the observers who struggle with the sense of having witnessed something wrong and either not having done anything to stop it/not knowing what to do to stop it/being asked not to get involved.

## Things to do if you, or someone you know, is being bullied

1. **DON'T** retaliate! By engaging in the bullying activity you are playing into the bullies hands and putting yourself at risk of saying or doing something that you might later regret.
2. Keep a record, such as a screen shot or have other people witness the bullying behaviour.
3. Try to avoid being alone – bullies will often try to isolate their victims.
4. If you are being asked to do something and it just doesn't feel right, follow your gut instinct and **DON'T DO IT!**
5. Try to spend time with people who treat you properly.
6. Remember that bullying is **NOT** your fault – anybody can fall prey to bullying.
7. Come off-line if necessary.
8. **TELL SOMEONE** – don't suffer in silence. If the person you speak to doesn't do anything to stop the bullying or isn't able to help you, don't give up, go higher until you find someone who can help you.
9. Consider getting counselling support to help you move on from having been bullied.

## Things to do if you are worried your child is being bullied

1. If you notice a difference in your child's behaviour, don't ignore the signs.
2. Try to keep the channels of communication open – side by side conversations are better than face to face 'confrontation', particularly if these conversations can be linked with doing something such as walking the dog, driving somewhere.
3. Be respectful if your child doesn't want you to get involved at first – they may be frightened that your intervention will make things worse.

4. Try to work on a plan of action together so that your child doesn't feel completely out of control and bulldozed by you; if they do, they may struggle to turn to you again should they need your help and support.
5. Have open conversations in the family about bullying or sexting, particularly if this can be initiated following a news event.
6. If you know the bullies parents/family and it feels appropriate it may be worth having an initial conversation with them as they may not be aware that their child is bullying.
7. Contact your child's school to see if they have noticed anything different about your child's behaviour. Keep pushing until you get the answers you need.

## Where to get help

National Bullying Helpline - 0300 323 0169 or 0845 22 55 77

They offer a guide for parents and help and advice for children who are either being bullied or being accused of being bullied. They also offer help for anyone experiencing workplace bullying.

Website: [www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk](http://www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk)

Bullying UK - 0808 800 2222

Bullying UK is part of Family Lives. They offer advice to children and parents as well as adults facing workplace bullying.

Email: [askus@familylives.org.uk](mailto:askus@familylives.org.uk)  
Website : [www.familylives.org.uk](http://www.familylives.org.uk)

Childline - 0800 1111

They also offer a counselling service called 1-2-1 chat.

Website: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

NSPCC - 0808 800 5000

Email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)  
Website : [nspcc.org.uk](http://nspcc.org.uk)

Papyrus - 0800 068 4141 (Hopeline UK)

Papyrus offer support to anyone under 35 who is having thoughts of suicide.

Email: [pat@papyrus-uk.org](mailto:pat@papyrus-uk.org)  
Website: [www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)