



Bullying

and PSHE Education

Professionals' Pack

2023

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Introduction

This pack aims to support education providers to deliver quality PSHE education around bullying through identifying the curriculum links within the PSHE Associations' Spiral Curriculum and the Department for Education's statutory guidance and developing staff's confidence and competence on the subject matter to support them to facilitate PSHE education on this topic within their own setting.

The Department for Education's statutory guidance states that:

- Pupils can also put knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts.
- Schools should show flexibility to respond to local public health and community issues to meet the needs of pupils
- Should be addressed sensitively and clearly

Children and young people need to be taught to manage risks, make safer choices and recognise when pressure from others threatens their personal safety and wellbeing.



Safe Learning Environment

A safe learning environment enables children and young people to feel comfortable to share their ideas without attracting negative feedback. It avoids possible distress and prevents disclosures in a public setting and enables professionals to manage conversations on sensitive issues confidently.

We have created a guidance document to support professionals to create this safe in their own setting.



No. 01 – Ground Rules

Create in collaboration with the group . As the facilitator role model the agreed ground rules.



No. 02 – Collaborate with DSL

Let them know when the session is being delivered to ensure the correct support is in place should any disclosures be made.



No. 03 – Staff Confidence

Check Staff confidence levels. If anyone is in panic zone it is not safe or appropriate for them or the participants to teach on the topic. This pack should help professionals to move from panic zone to learning or comfort zone



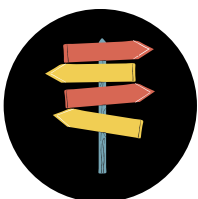
No. 04 Learning Techniques

Use scenarios and stories to help participants engage with the topic. Refer to the third person rather than you e.g. what could this character do?, or people of about your age....



No. 05 – Difficult Questions

Questions are an important part of learning. Sometimes a child or young person will ask a difficult question. As with all questions the first thing is to value the question whilst either allowing time to consider an appropriate answer or to deflect an inappropriate question.



No. 06 – Signposting

It is absolutely essential, that included in the lesson, is information about different organisations and people that can provide support both within the organisation and outside of it.

A more detailed version of this page is available by emailing either Natalie or Ellie

Best Practice Principles

Do not use scare/fear or guilt tactics

It is a common misconception that if a child or young person is shocked or scared by what they see in images, videos used in sessions, they will avoid the behaviour in the future.

Whilst young people will often say that they like 'hard-hitting' material and that it engages them more effectively, in fact when experienced in a safe setting (in this case a classroom or youth space), shocking images become exciting (in a similar way to watching a horror film or riding a rollercoaster) and this excitement response can block the desired learning. Equally, for anyone who has previously been affected by something similar, it can re-traumatise them or they can block the message as it is too close for comfort, which again prevents the intended learning. It also presents a scenario which is more likely to make young people think 'that won't ever happen to me' than the desired 'that could be me' response.

The adolescent brain is still developing which means that the perception of messaging and how they react to them is different to our experiences as adults. Furthermore, because their brains are still developing, they often live "in the moment;" when an unhealthy situation arises, they'll make decisions based on what they're feeling then and there, instead of making a reasoned, logical decision.

The pre-frontal cortex or critical thinking/reasoning part of the brain is the last section to develop.

You can find out more about the teenage brain [here](#).

Young people should be informed of risks in a balance and measured way through an approach that supports them to make informed, healthy, safe decisions and empower them to believe they can act on "good choices."

Top Tips:

- Evidence shows that shock and scare tactics just don't work.
- Check resources (including external agencies) for images or scenes that might be shocking, harrowing or scary for the age group – remember that children and young people will have a much lower threshold for what might worry them.
- Remember the purpose of the session is to educate not entertain. Just because young people might watch scary films in their own time, does not mean using similar films within PSHE Education will promote learning.
- Make sure there is a range of examples, case studies and consequences, most of which do not focus on the most dramatic or extreme outcomes.

Best Practice Principles

Knowledge, Skills and Values

Topics explored in PSHE education, relate directly to a child's or young person's life, when they might find themselves in a tricky situation or "crunch" moment – and need to make a quick decision; for example, a child who is dared to run across the road by their friends, or a teenager who is being pressured to start a fire. They will need to recall learning from PSHE education at that moment to help them make a decision.

They will, of course, require knowledge e.g., of the legality (or not) of their actions. However, in order to make a safe decision in the moment, they will also need skills to negotiate with their peers to resist pressure from others, to exit the situation (if they choose to) and access appropriate help or support if necessary. They will need a strong sense of their own values, to make the right decision and the confidence to stick to it.

Knowledge on its own won't necessarily stop someone from trying things. In many cases young people end up in situations where they know what they are doing is "wrong", but they do it anyway, as they lack the essential skills or attributes to help them effectively manage the situation.

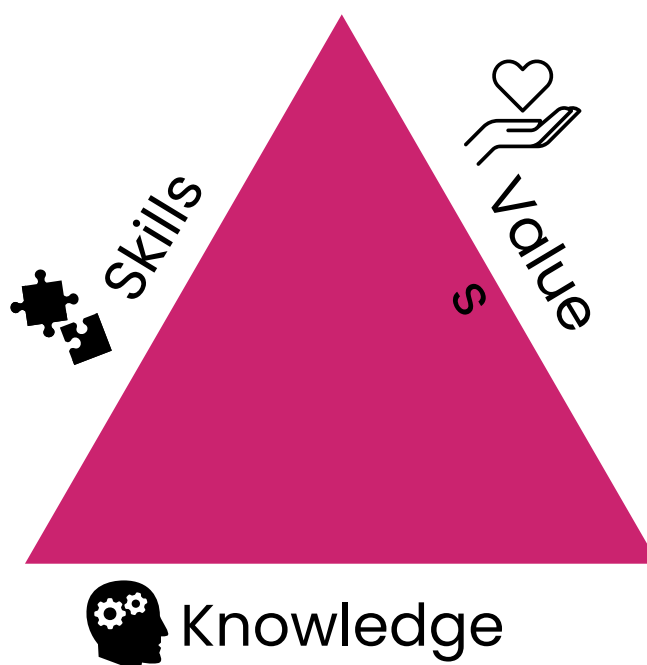
To ensure that sessions are balanced it is important to know the purpose of the activity and create a balanced session that increases or enables reflection on knowledge, skills and values.

The definition of each of these is:

Knowledge: gaining new information on a topic

Skills: gaining new skills on a topic

Values: reflecting on, and potentially altering, your own values in relation to a topic



Tips for Communication

Communication difficulties

Special provision should be put in place to support conversations with children, young people or adult learners who:

- have communication difficulties
- are too young
- are unable to communicate
- cannot or will not explain

You should refer to the child, young person or adult learner's behaviour plan and the information available from any assessments. This may include visual cues to help facilitate discussion, such as picture exchange communication cards.

Mencap has published further information on [communicating with people with learning difficulties](#).

The National Autistic Society has also published [tips to communicate more effectively with an autistic person](#).



The table below shows the learning opportunities from the relevant PSHE Association core themes which can be linked to bullying.

Primary

PSHE Association

Key Stage 1

| | |
|-----|--|
| R10 | That bodies and feelings can be hurt by words and actions; that people can say hurtful things online |
| R11 | About how people may feel if they experience hurtful behaviour or bullying |
| R12 | That hurtful behaviour (offline and online) including teasing, name-calling, bullying and deliberately excluding others is not acceptable; how to report bullying; the importance of telling a trusted adult |
| R21 | About what is kind and unkind behaviour, and how this can affect others |

Key Stage 2

| | |
|-----|---|
| R19 | About the impact of bullying, including offline and online, and the consequences of hurtful behaviour |
| R20 | Strategies to respond to hurtful behaviour experienced or witnessed, offline and online (including teasing, name-calling, bullying, trolling, harassment or the deliberate excluding of others); how to report concerns and get support |
| R21 | About discrimination: what it means and how to challenge it |

KS1-2

SA2: Kind and unkind behaviours

| | |
|-------------|--|
| Foundation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise that behaviour which hurts others' bodies or feelings is wrong. |
| Core | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify when people are being kind or unkind – either to us or to others. • Give examples of how our feelings can be hurt. • Describe how this may make us feel angry, worried or upset. |
| Development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify what teasing means and how people who are teased might feel. • Give reasons why teasing or name-calling is not acceptable. • Identify what we can do if others are excluding us or being unkind. |
| Enrichment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain what is meant by hurtful behaviour and bullying (including verbal, physical and emotional, e.g. omission/exclusion). • Recognise that this can happen online. • Describe and/or demonstrate what we can say or do if we or someone else is being bullied. • Identify trusted adults to tell if we think we or someone else is being unkind to us or we think we are being bullied. |
| Enhancement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain that all bullying is abusive and some can be prejudice-based (e.g. because of someone's skin colour, religion, the way they look, their disability or their family setting). • Recognise that this is unacceptable behaviour and that a trusted adult needs to be told about it. • Identify different positive responses we can take towards unkind behaviour and bullying. • Describe what we can do (including whom to tell) if we witness or experience hurtful behaviour or bullying. |

DfE Statutory Guidance:

By the end of Primary pupils will know:

| | |
|-----|--|
| RR6 | About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help |
| M8 | That bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing |
| OR2 | That the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous. |
| M9 | Where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), including whom in school they should speak to if they are worried about their own or someone else's mental wellbeing or ability to control their emotions (including issues arising online). |
| IS3 | How to consider the effect of their online actions on others and know how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online and the importance of keeping personal information private. |
| IS5 | That the internet can also be a negative place where online abuse, trolling, bullying and harassment can take place, which can have a negative impact on mental health. |
| RR7 | What a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive. |

PSHE Association

Key Stage 3

| | |
|-----|---|
| R38 | To recognise bullying, and its impact, in all its forms; the skills and strategies to manage being targeted or witnessing others being bullied |
| R40 | About the unacceptability of prejudice-based language and behaviour, offline and online, including sexism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, racism, ableism and faith-based prejudice |
| R41 | The need to promote inclusion and challenge discrimination, and how to do so safely, including online |

Key Stage 4

| | |
|-----|---|
| R31 | The skills and strategies to respond to exploitation, bullying, harassment and control in relationships |
|-----|---|

SEND

KS3-4

SA3: Prejudice & Discrimination

| | |
|-------------|---|
| Foundation | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Respond to stimuli about people who are different to us in different ways. |
| Core | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Describe what it means to treat others in a kind and fair way.Recognise that everyone is unique and special and no one should be treated unfairlyRecognise that prejudice and discrimination in any form are unacceptable. |
| Development | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Identify some examples of different forms of prejudice and discrimination we may have seen/heard about (e.g. based on religion, gender, age, race, disability, sexual orientation).Describe how and where to seek help if we think someone is behaving in a discriminatory way towards us or others. |

| | |
|-------------|---|
| Enrichment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain what stereotyping means. • Demonstrate simple constructive strategies for responding to prejudice and discrimination. • Give reasons why we should expect to be treated with respect by others. |
| Enhancement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise that stereotypes based on religion, gender, age, race, disability or sexual orientation, can cause harm (e.g. how they might normalise nonconsensual behaviour or encourage prejudice). • Explain how we should show respect to others and others' beliefs, including people in the wider community. |

SA4: Managing Pressure

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Encountering | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to stimuli which depict kindness and unkindness. |
| Foundation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe and give examples of what it means to be kind and unkind. • Identify some of the ways of telling a trusted adult if someone is being unkind to us |
| Core | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain what is meant by teasing, hurtful and bullying behaviour. • Explain how we do not need to put up with someone being unkind, hurtful, abusive to, or bullying, us. |
| Development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify different types of bullying (including online) and what the impact of bullying might be. • Identify strategies to help us if we are being bullied, including online. • Describe how to recognise the difference between friendship groups and gangs; describe some of the risks of becoming part of a gang. |

| | |
|-------------|---|
| Enrichment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe strategies that can be used if someone is using pressure to persuade us to do something, including online. • Recognise the responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and hurtful behaviour. • Identify trusted adults/ services that can help us if we or someone we know has been the target of unkind, hurtful, abusive or bullying behaviour, including online. |
| Enhancement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain ways of safely responding if we experience or witness unacceptable behaviours. |

DfE Statutory Guidance:

By the end of Secondary pupils will know:

| | |
|-----|--|
| RR3 | How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice). |
| RR5 | About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help. |
| RR6 | That some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control. |
| RR2 | Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships. |
| II | The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships |
| IS2 | How to identify harmful behaviours online (including bullying, abuse or harassment) and how to report, or find support, if they have been affected by those behaviours. |

Key Stage 5

| | |
|-----|---|
| R19 | To recognise and manage negative influence, manipulation and persuasion in a variety of contexts, including online |
| L11 | To recognise bullying and harassment in the workplace in all its forms and ways to seek or provide support to resolve the situation |

NYA Youth Work Curriculum:

| | |
|-----|---|
| 14 | Valuing each individual and their differences |
| 15 | Supporting young people in understanding their prejudices and valuing diversity and equity |
| 16 | Creating safe spaces and groups where oppressive behaviours and views are challenged |
| HR4 | Helping young people to understand and negotiate the difference between online and offline worlds |

Useful Resources

Please check all resources are suitable for your settings and children before use

Bullying

Books:

Reading Well

Information, stories and advice to support children's mental health and wellbeing. Books have been chosen and recommended by leading health professionals and co-produced with children and families. All books are available at Staffordshire Libraries

Videos:

Staffordshire Police

Short video which describes what Cyberbullying is.

Lesson Plans:

Anti-Bullying Alliance

Suitable for Primary ages. These resources tackle the issue of face to face bullying and bullying that takes place online

Educate and Celebrate/Educate Against Hate

Lesson plan for Key Stage Two on hate crime and the communities and individuals that can potentially be targets

Locally:

Stoke and Staffordshire Violence Reduction Alliance

Comic book, animation and accompanying lesson plan that aims to support children to recognise the different types of bullying and its impact.

Parents & Carers

Kidscape

Supporting autistic children who are experiencing bullying. A guide for parents and carers

DEVELOPING SUBJECT KNOWLEDGE



BULLYING

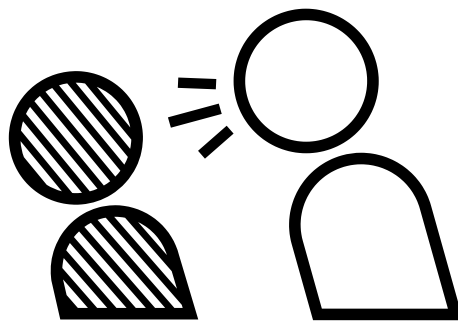
Bullying

Bullying is described as “the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.”

Bullying can be:



Physical

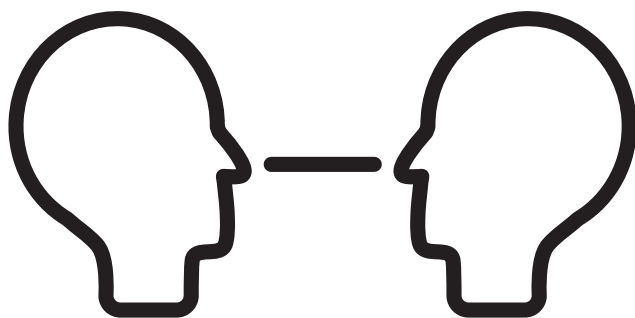


Verbal

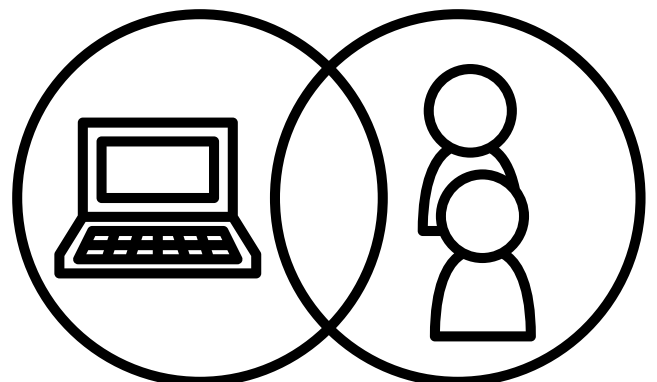


Psychological

It can happen:



Face-to-face



Online

Bullying can take different forms.

It could include:

physical bullying: hitting, slapping or pushing someone

verbal bullying: name calling, gossiping or threatening someone

non-verbal abuse: hand signs or text messages

emotional abuse: threatening, intimidating or humiliating someone

exclusion: ignoring or isolating someone

undermining, constant criticism or spreading rumours

controlling or manipulating someone

making silent, hoax or abusive calls.

Signs of bullying

No single sign will indicate for certain that your child's being bullied, but watch out for:

- belongings getting 'lost' or damaged
- physical injuries, such as unexplained bruises
- being afraid to go to school, being mysteriously 'ill' each morning, or skipping school
- not doing as well at school
- asking for, or stealing, money (to give to whoever's bullying them)
- being nervous, losing confidence, or becoming distressed and withdrawn
- problems with eating or sleeping
- bullying others.

Effects of bullying

The effects of bullying can last into adulthood. At its worst, bullying has driven children and young people to self-harm and even suicide.

Children who are bullied:

- may develop mental health problems like depression and anxiety
- have fewer friendships
- aren't accepted by their peers
- are wary and suspicious of others
- have problems adjusting to school, and don't do as well.
- All children who are affected by bullying can suffer harm – whether they are bullied, they bully others or they witness bullying.

Online Bullying

Online bullying has been increasingly enabled by wider access to the internet and greater use of smartphones, social media and networking applications.

Also referred to as **Cyberbullying**, online bullying is bullying with the use of digital technologies. It can take place on social media, messaging platforms, gaming platforms and mobile phones. It is repeated behaviour, aimed at scaring, angering or shaming those who are targeted.

Face-to-face bullying and cyberbullying can often happen alongside each other. But cyberbullying leaves a digital footprint – a record that can prove useful and provide evidence to help stop the behaviour.

Social media platforms and sites will have reporting systems in place if someone experiences online bullying.

Facebook/Instagram state that...

"We take action when we are aware of content that violates the Community Standards (Facebook) and Community Guidelines (Instagram), like in the case of bullying or harassment, and we are constantly improving our detection tools so we can find this content faster."

Snapchat state that...

"Reports of cyberbullying are reviewed by Snap's dedicated Trust & Safety teams, which operate around the clock and around the globe. Individuals found to be involved in cyberbullying may be given a warning, their accounts might be suspended or their accounts could be shut down completely."

TikTok state that...

"Our Community Guidelines define a set of norms and common code of conduct for TikTok and they provide guidance on what is and is not allowed to make a welcoming space for everyone. We make it clear that we do not tolerate members of our community being shamed, bullied or harassed. We take action against any such content and accounts, including removal."

Twitter/X state that...

"We strongly enforce our rules to ensure all people can participate in the public conversation freely and safely.

As part of these rules, we take a number of different enforcement actions when content is in violation. When we take enforcement actions, we may do so either on a specific piece of content (e.g., an individual Tweet or Direct Message) or on an account."

Cyberbullying can include:

sending threatening or abusive text messages

creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos

trolling – the sending of menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games

excluding children from online games, activities or friendship groups

shaming someone online

setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child

encouraging young people to self-harm

voting for or against someone in an abusive poll

creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name

sending explicit messages, also known as sexting

pressuring children into sending sexual images or engaging in sexual conversations.

The Office for National Statistics launched a report into Online bullying in England and Wales which found that:

19% children aged 10 to 15 years experienced at least one type of online bullying

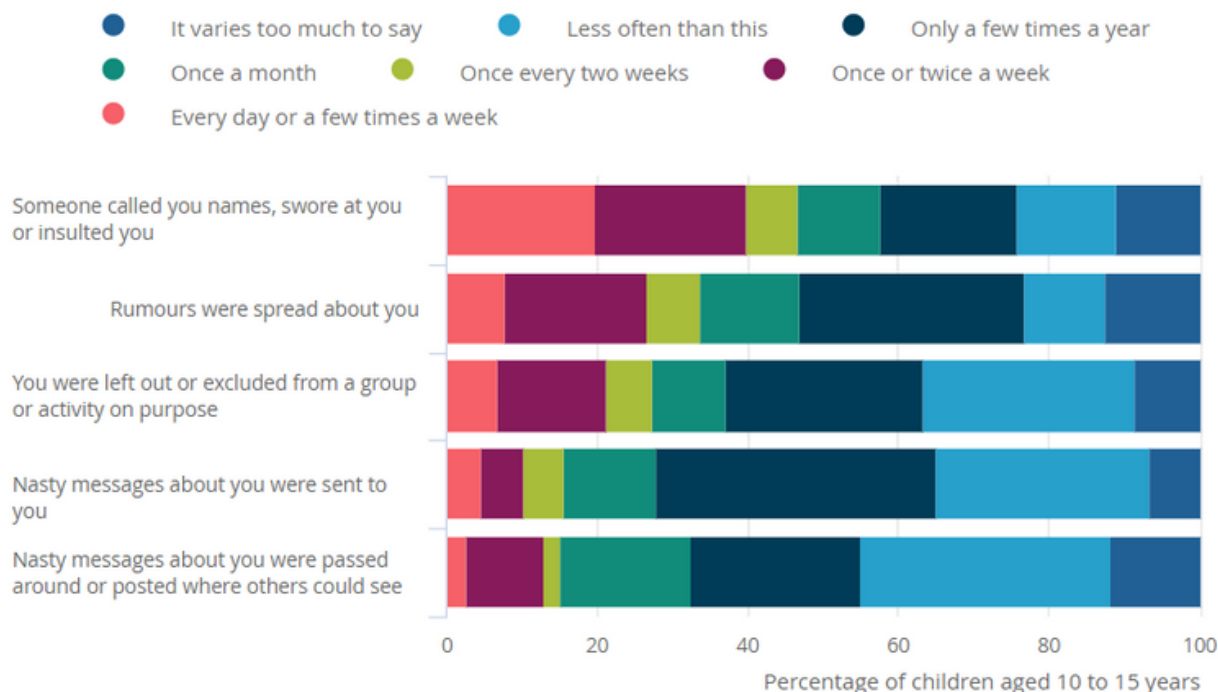
52% of those children said they would not describe these behaviours as "bullying"

26% did not report their experiences

72% of children who experienced online bullying experienced some of it at school or during school time

Figure 2: Being called names, sworn at and insulted was the most frequently experienced online bullying behaviour

Frequency of online bullying behaviours experienced by children aged 10 to 15 years in the previous 12 months, by type of bullying behaviour, England and Wales, year ending March 2020



The Anti-Bullying Alliance provide some specific tips about how anti-online bullying lessons and school activities can be delivered effectively, based on consultation with children and young people:

Education staff need to have some level of understanding of social media platforms that their children and young people are using:

Whilst the age restrictions for social media sites tend to be over the age of 13, this is currently very easy to get around for young people. You may be surprised at some of the content that young people are seeing online, even at primary age. It is vital you have a good understanding of the online sites, apps and games that your pupils are using. You do not need to understand every detail of each social media or gaming platform that a child might be using but the basics would be helpful. Ask yourself 'do I know how to report content on the most popular apps?' and 'Do I know what the new popular apps are being used for?'

Education Staff should acknowledge that many children and young people know much more about these platforms than they do:

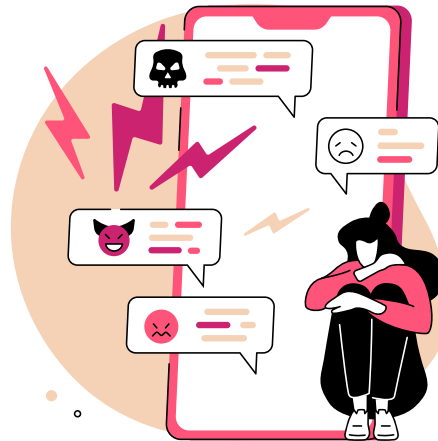
The trends and platforms that young people use can change very quickly. The most important thing is to listen. Try to use open questions and don't jump to conclusions about the type of content pupils are posting.

Let young people take the lead: Young people shared that they wanted education settings to listen to them and allow them to share what they do online. This would give them some time to talk about all the positive things that they do online and then give them space to raise the fears they have or even to highlight things that they might not have realised were things that may leave them exposed.

Include everyone: We know that some groups are more likely to experience online bullying than others. It is vital that we support all children and young people to understand about online bullying and safety. For some children that might take more time or a differentiated approach.

Trolling

Internet trolls are people who want to provoke and upset others online for their own entertainment or to push a specific agenda. They may make an intentionally inflammatory, rude or upsetting statement online to elicit a strong emotional response or to steer a conversation off-topic.



Trolling is distinct from other forms of cyberbullying or harassment. It is not normally targeted towards any one person and relies on other people paying attention and becoming provoked.

Online trolls are most likely to be found on:

- Anonymous online forums – As there's no way of tracing who someone is, trolls can post very inflammatory content without repercussion. This is especially true if the forum has lax or inactive moderation
- X (Formerly Twitter) – X also has the option to be anonymous, and has become a hotbed for internet trolls. Frequent Twitter trolling methods involve hijacking popular hashtags and mentioning popular Twitter personalities to gain attention from their followers.
- Comment Sections – The comment sections of places such as YouTube and news websites like the Sentinel are also popular areas for trolls to feed. You'll find a lot of obvious trolling here, and they frequently generate a lot of responses from angry readers or viewers.

Signs someone is Trolling

It can sometimes become difficult to tell the difference between a troll and someone who just genuinely wants to argue about a topic. However, here are a few tell-tale signs that someone is actively trolling.

- Off-topic remarks - Completely going off-topic from the subject at hand. This is done to annoy and disrupt other posters.
- Refusal to acknowledge evidence: Even when presented with hard, cold facts, they ignore this and pretend like they never saw it.
- Dismissive, condescending tone: An early indicator of a troll was that they would ask an angry responder, "Why you mad, bro?" This is a method done to provoke someone even more, as a way of dismissing their argument altogether.
- Use of unrelated images or memes: They reply to others with memes, images, and gifs. This is especially true if done in response to a very long text post.
- Seeming obliviousness: They seem oblivious that most people are in disagreement with them. Also, trolls rarely get mad or provoked.

The list above is by no means definitive. There are a lot of other ways to identify that someone is trolling. Generally, if someone seems disingenuous, uninterested in a real discussion, and provocative on purpose, they're likely an internet troll.

Tips for responding to Trolling



Trolls seek out emotional responses and find provocation amusing, so replying to them or attempting to debate them will only make them troll more. By ignoring a troll completely, they will likely become frustrated and go somewhere else on the internet.

If a troll becomes “spammy” or begins to clog up a thread, you can also opt to report them to the site's moderation team. Depending on the website, there's a chance nothing happens, but you should do your part to actively dissuade them from trolling on that platform. If your report is successful, the troll may be temporarily suspended or their account might be banned entirely.



Stereotypes, Prejudice & Discrimination²⁷

Stereotypes are an idea or belief many people have about a thing or group that is based upon how they look on the outside, which may be untrue or only partly true. People may bullying another because they do not conform to a particular stereotype.

Prejudice comes from the words 'to judge before'. It means to form an unfavourable opinion or feeling about a person or a group of people without a full examination.

Discrimination is making a distinction against a person or thing based on the group, class or category they belong to, rather than basing any action on individual merit.

A simple distinction between prejudice and discrimination is that prejudice is to do with attitude, discrimination is to do with action.

It is important to explore these topics within PSHE education as a way to children and young people to examine their own values and where they come from.

Bullying behaviour may be a result of prejudice that relates to perceived or actual differences. This can lead to prejudice and discriminatory language or behaviour, including racism, sexism, homophobia, biphobia or transphobia.

Prejudice-based bullying includes the protected characteristics, but prejudice can and does extend beyond these and can lead to bullying for many other reasons. The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful to discriminate against people with a 'protected characteristic'.

These are:



Age



Disability



Gender Reassignment



Pregnancy and Maternity



Marriage and Civil Partnership



Race



Sex



Sexual Orientation



Religion or Belief

Education staff have a legal obligation to promote equality and tackle discrimination based on the protected characteristics outlined within the Equality Act 2010.

This includes:

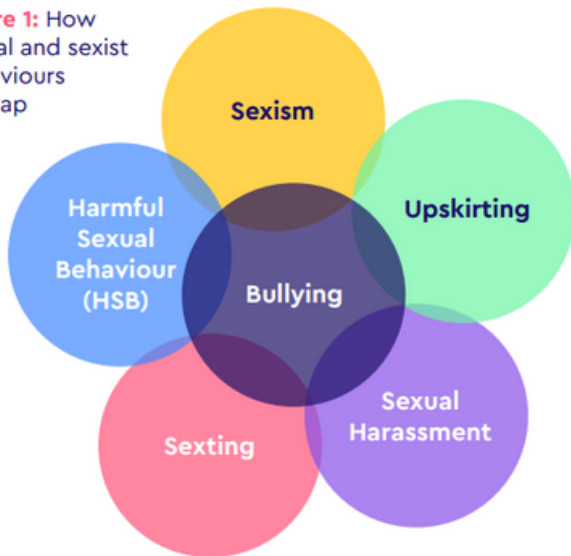
- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it



Sexual & Sexist Bullying³⁰

There is some discussion about the most appropriate definition of sexual and sexist bullying as it includes a wide spectrum of behaviours, but for the purposes of this guidance, we define it as any bullying behaviour that is sexual or sexist in nature.

Figure 1: How sexual and sexist behaviours overlap



Bullying and sexual and sexist behaviours overlap and it is possible that behaviours can be sexual bullying, sexist bullying and sexual harassment. For example, sexual bullying taking place may also be a sign that there is heightened risk of harmful sexual behaviour, sexual exploitation and/or sexual violence.

[Click here to read the Anti-Bullying Alliance's "Sexual and Sexist Bullying: Developing Effective Anti-Bullying Practice: A guide for the school and children's workforce"](#)



For KS2, Matilda's Story is one of a 4-part series focused on Violence Against Women and Girls developed for Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent on behalf of Staffordshire Police, Fire & Crime Commissioners Office.

The comic book, animation and accompanying lesson plan that aims to support children to recognise the different types of bullying and its impact.

To access this resource, and others, [sign up to the Resource Library](#).

Homophobic, Biophobic & Transphobic Bullying 31

A 2019 report showed that being bullied for being LGBT is more common than bullying relating to racism, sexism or religion. To be able to challenge homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) bullying it is important that all members of the school, college or community setting understand what it is and what it can look like.

- Homophobia

Is the fear or dislike of someone, based on prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views about lesbian, gay or bisexual people. This can also include denying somebody's lesbian, gay or bisexual identity or refusing to accept it. It can be targeted at people who are, or are perceived to be lesbian, gay or bisexual.

- Biphobia

Is the fear or dislike of someone, based on prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views about bisexual people. This can also include denying somebody's bisexual identity or refusing to accept it. It can be targeted at people who are, or are perceived to be bisexual.

- Transphobia

Is the fear or dislike of someone based on the fact they are transgender, including denying their gender identity or refusing to accept it. Transphobia may be targeted at people who are, or who are perceived to be, trans. It is important to recognise that Transgender is an umbrella term used to describe people whose gender identity does not match the sex they were assigned at birth and so includes non-binary people.

- Homophobic bullying

Is bullying that is based on prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views about, or behaviours towards, lesbian or gay people. Bi people can also be targeted by homophobic bullying if somebody thinks that they are lesbian or gay. Homophobic bullying can also include denying somebody's lesbian, gay or bi identity or refusing to accept it.

Homophobic bullying may be targeted at children or young people who are, or who are perceived to be, lesbian, gay or bi. It can also suggest that someone or something is less worthy because they are lesbian, gay or bi.

Homophobic bullying can be targeted at children and young people who have lesbian, gay or bi family members, and those who do not conform to gender stereotypes or are seen to be 'different' in some way, regardless of whether the person is actually lesbian gay or bi.

- Biphobic bullying

Is bullying based on prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views about, or behaviours towards, bi people. This can also include denying somebody's bi identity or refusing to accept it. Biphobic bullying may be targeted at children and young people who are openly bi, those who are questioning their sexual orientation, or who are suspected of being bi. Biphobic bullying is also often targeted at children and young people who have bi family members.

Biphobic bullying may target children and young people with negative stereotyping (for example suggesting that they are greedy) or imply that being bi is a phase.

- Transphobia

Is bullying based on prejudice or negative attitudes, views or beliefs about, or behaviours towards, trans people, including non-binary people. This can also include denying somebody's gender identity or refusing to accept it.

Transphobic bullying affects children and young people who are trans, including non-binary young people. It can also affect those who are questioning their gender identity as well as children or young people who are not trans but do not conform to gender stereotypes.

Transphobic bullying can also be targeted at children or young people who have trans or non-binary family members.

Like other forms of bullying, homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) bullying behaviours:

- Are intentional
- Are repeated over time
- Cause physical and/or emotional harm to the victim
- Can happen online as well as in person
- Can take lots of different forms, including but not limited to, physical, verbal or emotional actions



What about homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) language?

HBT language is language that is used either with the intention, or has the effect, of discriminating against someone based on a person's actual or perceived LGBT identity, or because they have LGBT family members or friends. This can include denying someone's LGBT identity.

HBT bullying – like other forms of bullying – can take lots of different forms, including verbal. Somebody might use homophobic, biphobic or transphobic language in order to bully someone else, whether the victim is LGBTQ+ or not.

It is important to remember that bullying behaviours are **intentional** and **repeated**. A child or young person may only use HBT language only once, they may say something without understanding it's impact.



“That’s so gay”

This [short video campaign](#) show how using homophobic language can impact on LGBTQ+ young people and how people can stand up and speak out against homophobia.

Someone might use the word 'gay', as shown above, to refer to something that is not very good/out of habit, without having considered how it might feel for somebody who is lesbian, gay or bi to hear the word 'gay' used in a derogatory way. They may use HBT language as a joke between friends or as 'banter', without necessarily causing emotional harm to one another. In all of these instances, the use of HBT language is inappropriate and should be challenged – but these uses of **language may not constitute HBT bullying behaviours**.

Where the use of HBT language does not constitute bullying, you may deal with these incidents in a different way to how you would deal with incidents of HBT bullying.

How you deal with incidents of HBT bullying and incidents of HBT language will depend on your setting's policies and procedures – but as an example, you may deal with an incident of HBT language through a reflective conversation with the child or young person involved, rather than by following the behaviour sanctions and reporting procedures you might use in response to an incident of bullying.

Challenging Discrimination

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) says that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights, and that we all have the right to a life free from discrimination and degrading treatment. People have been challenging discrimination for years, from the civil rights movement in the USA in the 1960s, the Stonewall Riots, the fall of apartheid in South Africa to the Black Lives Matter and #metoo campaigns, many people have come together to fight discrimination, and they have achieved remarkable things.

We all have a role to play in continuing to challenge discrimination, [Childline](#) have listed six actions that young people can take against discrimination:

- 1 Tell someone what is happening** - This could be a teacher or a manager (if the discrimination is happening in the workplace). They can help to make changes to support you.
- 2 Follow policies or guidelines** - Schools and employers have a duty to protect people from discrimination. Find out about their discrimination policy so that you can report what is happening.
- 3 Keep a record** - Messages, videos or a diary of what's been happening can help when telling an adult or be used as evidence.
- 4 Keep telling** - You may have to speak out more than once about what's happening. It's okay to tell someone else if you don't feel it's being taken seriously.
- 5 Tell the Police** - If you feel threatened or a crime has been committed you can speak to the police on 999 in an emergency or 101 at other times.
- 6 Get advice** - You can get advice by contacting the [Equality Advisory Support Service](#).

Addressing Bullying in PSHE

The topic of bullying complex and requires a whole school approach in which the PSHE education curriculum plays a vital part.

Learning about different types of bullying (including online) is a statutory RSHE requirement. This includes the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help.

This also crosses over with how you can teach about abuse, harassment and discrimination within your PSHE education curriculum.

What is a whole-school or setting approach?

The Anti-Bullying Alliance state that a whole school approach to anti-bullying is:

cohesive, collective and collaborative action in and by a school community that has been strategically constructed with school leadership to reduce bullying and respond to it appropriately.

There is evidence that a 'whole school approach' (Cambridge Education, 2005) where the whole school community, including the pupils, teachers, support staff; parents and board of governors, are involved in confronting the issue of bullying is the most effective approach to tackling bullying in school.

On the next page you will find the ABA Anti-Bullying Charter for schools which lists 10 key principles to preventing and responding to bullying.

10 Key Principles

School has committed to the following principles to prevent and respond to bullying.

Our school:

- 1. listens** - all pupils and parents and carers are listened to and influence strategies and approaches to prevent, report and respond to incidents of bullying.
- 2. includes us all** - all pupils, including those with SEND, are included, valued and participate fully in all aspects of school life.
- 3. respects** - all school staff are role models to others within the school in how they treat others.
- 4. challenges** - all forms of discriminatory language - including disablist language - is challenged taken seriously
- 5. celebrates difference** - difference is actively and visibly celebrated and welcome across the whole school.
- 6. understands** - all school staff, pupils and parents and carers
- 7. understands** - all school staff, pupils and parents and carers understand what bullying is and what it isn't.
- 8. believes** - all pupils, including disabled children and those with SEN, and their parents and carers are acknowledged, believed and taken seriously when reporting incidents of bullying.
- 9. reports bullying** - all pupils within the school and their parents and carers understand how to report incidents of bullying.
- 10. takes action** - we respond quickly to all incidents of bullying. Pupils, including disabled pupils and those with SEN, participate fully in decisions made about them and help to formulate appropriate action to respond to incidents of bullying
- 10. has clear policies** - our school's anti-bullying policy reflects these principles and is embedded within other school policies. They are widely and actively promoted to school staff, pupils and their parents and carers.

Responding to Bullying³⁸



An estimated one in three children (32%) who experienced online bullying behaviours reported it to their teachers, and 18% reported it to another member of staff.

Children most commonly reported their online bullying experiences to parents (56%), while 19% reported it to other family members.

Helplines were used by 1% of children to report online bullying behaviours they had experienced, while 15% of children reported these experiences to someone else.



Do the children and young people you work with know who to talk to if they are affected by bullying?

A key principle of PSHE is signposting, after any topic you deliver, children and young people should know who they can go to for further help and support, including trusted adults and local services.

When considering whether it's bullying, it's important to consider the key elements within the definition which are:

- Is it repetitive?
- Is it intentional?
- Is it hurtful?
- Is there a power imbalance?

[Click here to read the Anti-Bullying Alliance's "Responding to bullying: tips for teachers"](#)

Bystanders

Bystanders are essential to bullying prevention and intervention.

A bystander to bullying is anyone who witnesses bullying either in person or online (e.g. social media, gaming, messages). When bullying occurs, bystanders are present 80% of the time (2012).

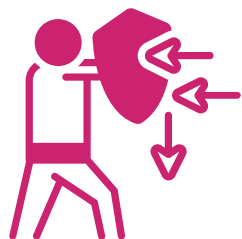
Bystanders have the potential to make a positive difference in a bullying situation. This is especially true with children and young people, as when youth who are bullied are defended and supported by their peers, they are less anxious and depressed. The anti-bullying alliance have produced a [briefing paper](#) which shows the research into the significant role bystanders can play in bullying.

Bystander Roles:

Bystanders can play different roles in bullying situations:



Outsiders - School has committed to the following principles to prevent and respond to bullying.



Defenders - Help by intervening when bullying occurs or extend support to the person being bullied – privately or in the moment – or take other actions to address the bullying.



Reinforcers - Support the person/people who are displaying bullying behaviours and may laugh, encourage, or cheer during or after the bullying incident



Assistants - Helps the individual doing the bullying and joins in. For example, an assistant may physically restrain or block the target of bullying so that they cannot get away

There are many reasons why children and young people may or may not get involved by intervening or defending the person experiencing the bullying behaviour.

Some reasons bystanders do not get involved or resolve include:

- Fear of retaliation and being bullied themselves
- Fear of losing their social status
- They are not friends with the person being bullied
- Lack of knowledge about the individuals involved, the incident and whether they perceive someone to be right or wrong in the situation
- Awareness about a specific situation that takes into account the people involved and information about their on-going actions
- They do not believe teachers or other staff will address the bullying
- They believe that adults will make the bullying worse
- They do not know what to do to intervene or address bullying

Bystanders do get involved by intervening or defending the person being bullied because they:

- Are friends with the person being targeted
- Are morally engaged and treat others with respect or believe "bullying is wrong"
- Consider how serious or dangerous the behaviour is and how frequently it occurs
- View the target of bullying as innocent
- Have empathy and sympathy for the target of the bullying
- Believe teachers or other staff will appropriately address bullying

Using scenarios can help children and young people to develop strategies within the classroom that they can utilise if they witness bullying. It is important that scenarios cover both online and offline examples.

There are usually lots of things people can do to be a positive bystander. There is no one 'right way'. Deciding when and how to act will depend on the situation. CEOP have created a list for children and young people about being a positive bystander. A positive bystander is someone who chooses to do something to try and help or stop the situation. Other names for this are being an 'active bystander' or an 'ally'.

Being a positive bystander can mean:

- Not joining in with unkind things being said
- Reporting and/or blocking someone on social media
- Saying that you disagree or think what is being said or done is wrong
- Stopping the situation by distracting, changing the subject or interrupting
- Supporting the person being targeted
- Going and getting help for the person being targeted
- Encouraging other people to be positive bystanders or to help (also called collective action)

Being a positive bystander doesn't mean:

- Putting yourself or others at risk
- Only doing something in that moment
- Challenging someone directly
- Taking big or group action



Bullying and the law

Education providers have a duty of care to protect all their pupils and provide a safe, healthy environment therefore, schools and other settings must have regard to legislation and guidance that relates to bullying.

The Education Act 2002 Section 175 placed a legal duty on maintained schools and Local Authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The Department for Education (DfE) has produced guidance for all schools, including academies and free schools, which outlines its duties towards preventing and tackling bullying in schools.

Some incidents of bullying may also be a child protection issue. A bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection issue under the Children Act 1989 when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. These concerns must be reported to the member of staff in school responsible for child protection and then reported to the local authority's children's social services.

Most bullying incidents are not crimes. But some types of bullying are illegal and should be reported to the police. This includes bullying that involves violence or assault; theft; harassment and intimidation over a period of time including calling someone names or threatening them, making abusive phone calls, and sending abusive emails or text messages (one incident is not normally enough to get a conviction); and anything involving hate crimes.

Some cyberbullying activities could be criminal offences under a range of different laws, including the Malicious Communications Act 1988 and the Protection from Harassment Act 1997. There have been some instances of such prosecutions in the UK.

Hate Crime

There is no legal definition of a hate crime. However the police and CPS have agreed a definition as follows:

A hate crime is any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person's race or perceived race; religion or perceived religion; sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation; disability or perceived disability and any crime motivated by hostility or prejudice against a person who is transgender or perceived to be transgender.

There is no legal definition of a hate incident. However the police and CPS have agreed a definition as follows:

A hate incident is any incident which the victim, or anyone else, thinks is based on someone's prejudice towards them because of their race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or because they are transgender.

However, a hate incident does not necessarily break the law. Where a hate incident amounts to a criminal offence and is based on one of the five protected characteristics, it is known as a hate crime.

Children and young people should be aware that there may be occasions where bullying behaviour could be describe as a hate incident or hate crime. The Anti-Bullying Alliance produced a [briefing paper](#) to provide information about bullying and the law for schools and the wider children's workforce in England.

The PSHE Education Service and [Uniting Staffordshire Against Hate](#) have collaborated to produced education resources for each Key Stage. This spiral curriculum aims to create a safe and inclusive Staffordshire (including Stoke-on-Trent) by recognising and celebrating diversity and difference. Click the picture to access the resource pack or alternatively search under Bullying and Communities headings in the [Resource Library](#).



Why might people bully?⁴⁴

It's important that when we discuss bullying in PSHE, balance is given to the impact on those who might experience bullying but also why children and young people might bully others.



BBC Own It asked children about their experiences of bullying, and why they think people do it.

[Click here to watch the short video.](#)

Stress or Trauma

Data provided by [Ditch the Label](#) shows that those who bully are far more likely than average to have experienced a stressful or traumatic situation in the past 5 years. Examples include their parents/guardians splitting up, the death of a relative or the gaining of a little brother or sister.

Low self-esteem

In order to mask how they actually feel about themselves, some people who bully focus attention on someone else.

They've been bullied themselves

Those who have experienced bullying are twice as likely to go on and bully others. This can be a defence mechanism and people tend to believe that by bullying others, they will become immune to being bullied themselves.

Challenges at home

1 in 3 of those who bully people daily report that they feel like their parents/guardians don't have enough time to spend with them. They are more likely to come from larger families and are more likely to live with people other than their biological parents. They are also much more likely to come from violent households with lots of arguments and hostility.

Ditch the Label have compiled [7 practical tips](#) which are designed to help children and young people who are bullying others to stop by enabling them to understand behaviour better and equip children and young people to resolve them in more effective ways.

At-risk groups

Bullying can happen for any number of reasons, but if a child is seen as weaker or different in some way they can be more at risk. This might be because of their physical appearance, race, culture, gender identity, sexuality, disability, family situation (i.e. growing up in care or parents divorcing) religion or beliefs. It could also be because a child is shy or introverted, appears anxious, vulnerable or has low self-esteem.

- Research conducted by the NHS, found that young people with a mental health condition are nearly twice as likely to be bullied, and more than twice as likely to be cyberbullied.
- The Internet Matters launched a report on the digital experiences of children receiving free school meals. It found that 74% of these children experienced at least one online harm, which was more than those not on free school meals. These children are also more likely to participate in high-risk activities online like livestreaming.
- Whilst girls are significantly more at risk of sexual or sexist bullying, a significant number of boys are also targets. Sexual and sexist bullying of boys is often homophobic in nature. This suggests that behaviour is driven by sexism and homophobia in society with peer reinforcement of 'gender norms'.
- The Anti-Bullying Alliance published a literature review, which found that among the groups more likely to be bullied were Gypsy, Roma and Traveller, asylum seeker/refugee and mixed-race children and young people.
- Children in care report twice the level of bullying than other children in primary years and Four times the level of bullying than other children in secondary years (Safe to Play, 2008)
- When compared to children who have not been in care, research has also shown that looked after children were more likely to have been continuously bullied between the ages of 14-16 years (National Centre for Social Research, 2010)



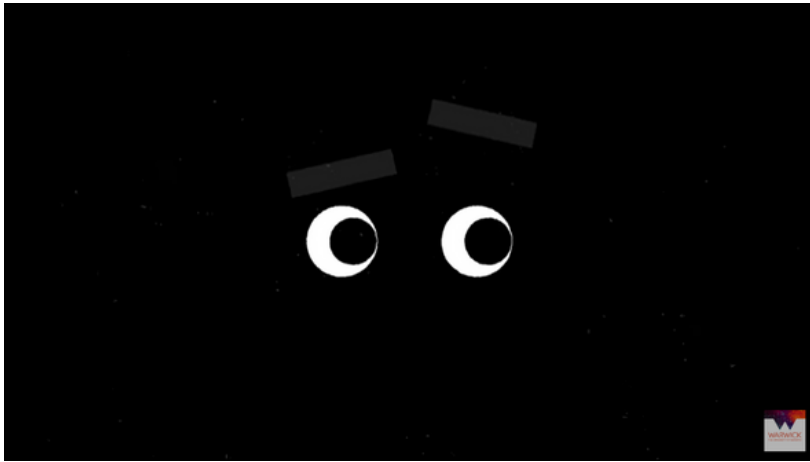
How do you promote, kindness, acceptance and celebration of diversity and difference in your setting?

Bullying links to many other PSHE topics including; Similarities & Differences, Appropriate Behaviours, Friendships, Online Safety

SEND Bullying

Disabled young people and those with SEN (SEND), are significantly more likely to experience bullying – including online bullying – than their peers.

Research shows that 36% of pupils with SEND experience frequent bullying compared to 25% of those without SEND.



Click [here](#) to view a video from the University of Warwick called 'Bullying Experiences of Disabled Children and Young People in England'

At age 7, 12% of children with special needs and 11% of those with a statement said they were bullied 'all of the time' by other pupils, compared to just 6% of their non-disabled peers. (Institute of Education 2014)

83% (or roughly eight out of ten) of young people with learning difficulties reported experiencing bullying (Luciano and Savage 2007, and Mencap 2007), Mencap's 'Living in Fear' 2019 research showed that:

- almost 9 in 10 people with a learning disability surveyed had experienced bullying or harassment in the past year***
- one in 3 said that bullying was the thing they worried about most when going out***

Mental Health & Bullying⁴⁷

Bullying has a significant effect on children and young people's mental health, emotional well-being and identity.

Bullying which is not responded to effectively can cause children and young people to develop other coping strategies such as self-isolation or self-harm; and cause significant disruption to their ability to engage with school, learning and their wider relationships.



As the diagram represents, children and young people who have mental health issues are more likely to be at-risk of being bullied and alternately, young people who are bullied are likely to experience an impact to their mental health.

Ditch the Label research revealed that 37% of people surveyed in the Annual Bullying Survey developed social anxiety as a direct result of bullying.

Experiencing bullying can lead to a number of issues which can impact on mental health, these could include; feelings of shame, sleep disturbance, social isolation, changes to routines/eating habits and low self-esteem.

Department for Education: Teacher training: online relationships and media

This training session supports the statutory:

relationships education for primary schools

relationships and sex education (RSE) for secondary schools

The module contains key knowledge and facts to help teachers understand what they must teach. It includes information on:

- understanding how people behave online
- cyberbullying
- keeping safe online
- using appropriate language online
- online behaviour and risks
- sharing material online
- harmful online content and pornography

Anti-Bullying Alliance Training Catalogue

15 free training courses which explore topics;

1. What is bullying?
2. Bullying and the law
3. The 10 key principles
4. Preventing Bullying
5. Responding to Bullying
6. Cyberbullying (Online bullying)
7. Bullying and Difference
8. Bullying and special educational needs/disability
9. Young carers and bullying
10. Looked After Children and bullying
11. Bullying and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller young people
12. Reducing Disablist Bullying: Disabilities, the Equality Act and Schools Duties
13. Mental Health & Bullying
14. Sexual & Sexist Bullying
15. All Different, All Equal - Preventing and Responding to Appearance Targeted Bullying

The Department for Education has funded a number of anti-bullying programmes since 2021, below are those still providing support at the time but this is subject to change. Schools are advised to check the link to see if the service is still accepting applications.

Diana Award

The Diana Award is implementing an anti-bullying programme to empower young people with the skills, tools, confidence, and knowledge needed to significantly transform school culture and provide support to peers.

They will create tailored resources and training to deliver content that meets the needs of students and school staff tackling bullying behaviour in school, the wider community and online.

Training will be delivered through large, multiple-school sessions at venues across the country, offering schools the opportunity to share and support learning.

Each school will have teams of around 10 students who will be Anti-Bullying Ambassadors, these will be supported by school staff.

Diversity Role Models

Embracing Difference, Ending Bullying is a package of interventions to schools which will help make sure that staff have the knowledge and skills to tackle and prevent bullying and create inclusive school cultures.

The programme will be underpinned by identifying and understanding knowledge gaps within schools and specific challenges they face.

At the end of the project, policies and processes will be widely understood by staff, while both staff and pupil participants will feel confident in intervening if they witness bullying.

EqualiTeach

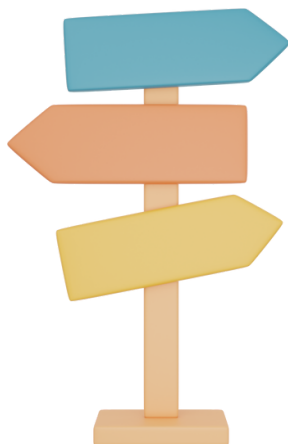
Works with schools through their Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs) and/or local authorities (LAs) to provide a programme, full of practical support, which will create sustainable whole-school change.

By working with schools in clusters in MATs/LAs, the programme builds support networks of schools who are embedding best practice and who will continue building and sharing this practice after the intervention has ended.

EqualiTeach have built an online platform of interactive resources which are available for schools throughout the country to develop their anti-bullying work.

Signposting

Information:



It is important to signpost children and young people to relevant local and national organisations who can provide further advice and support.

General Support

School Nursing Service – provide details of any local drop-in
<https://www.healthforteens.co.uk/staffordshireandstoke/>
Designated Safeguarding Lead/Pastoral Team

Specific Mental Health and Emotional Support

Action for Children (Staffordshire only)

Changes (Stoke-on-Trent only)

National Organisations:

Childline

www.childline.org.uk

0800 1111

NSPCC Helpline

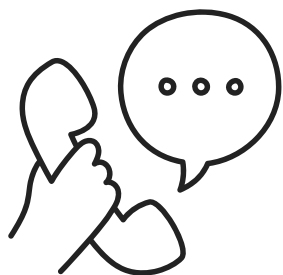
0808 800 5000

help@NSPCC.org.uk

CEOP (for cyberbullying)

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

Useful Contacts:



If you would like more information or support about Bullying please contact:

School Nursing Staffordshire - 0808 178 0611

School Nursing Stoke-on-Trent - 0808 178 3374

Families Health and Wellbeing Service (Staffordshire)

Integrated 0-19 Health Visiting and School Nursing Service
(Stoke on Trent).

Hate Crime Specific (Training and Support)

Uniting Staffordshire Against Hate

0330 0881 339

If a referral to Children's Social Care is required, please contact:

Staffordshire:

Staffordshire Children's Advice Service - 0300 111 8007

Monday - Thursday 8.30am - 5pm and Friday 8.30-4.30pm

Out of Hours - 0345 604 2886 / 07815 492613

Stoke:

CHAD - 01782 235 100

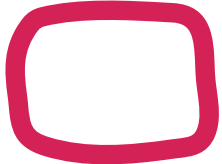
Monday - Thursday 8.30am - 5pm and Friday 8.30-4.30pm

Out of Hours - 01782 234 234

Further Reading:



[Online bullying in England and Wales: year ending March 2020](#)



[NSPCC: Bullying & Cyberbullying](#)



[ABA: Teaching about online bullying](#)



[Kidscape: 2023 Support for autistic children experiencing bullying](#)



[ABA: Sexual and Sexist Bullying - Developing Effective Anti-Bullying Practice](#)



[DfE: Preventing bullying guidance](#)



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