



Anti-Bullying FAQs

September 2016

1 Are some types of bullying more important than others?

Clearly the child's immediate physical safety has to be your priority but any bullying is unacceptable and must not be tolerated. The emotional aspects of bullying are also very important, and often less easy to see in terms of evidence.

2 Should I discipline a bully or not?

Yes, you should but it must be fair and proportionate to what they have done, and in keeping with your behaviour policy. It must give a clear and consistent message to everyone but not be deemed as unfair. The clearer your behaviour policy is in terms of what sanctions and rewards your school uses, the more transparent your discipline measures to parents and pupils.

3 What if the bullying has happened outside of the School?

If the incident outside of school is reported to you, then it is important that it is investigated and appropriate action is taken. This will send a strong signal to pupils.

4 How can we involve parents more in our anti-bullying work?

You should talk with parents about your anti-bullying policy and make it available to them and to prospective parents as part of your behaviour policy. Parents expect to know what measures will be taken to prevent bullying, as well as how incidents are responded to. They can also encourage positive messages about good behaviour at home.

5 Do we have to record incidents of bullying?

Your staff should have a consistent method of recording and monitoring incidents in school, so that you can evaluate whether your approach is being effective. You should keep records that show you how many incidents take place, what type of bullying it is and where it may be recurring between the same pupils. It is particularly important to keep an account of any allegations made by parents and of what you tell them you are specifically doing in school. Where you have investigated anything, be sure to tell them what your findings were, and what will change as a result.

6 How do we know if someone is actually being bullied, or whether it is just friendship or relationship difficulties between two children?

It is important to talk with the children and their parents to establish what may be happening. There are some simple signs of bullying to look out for such as loss of interest in school and extracurricular activities, frequent complaints of illness to avoid attending school, sudden decrease in academic performance, lack of friends to spend time with, unexplained bruises, scratches and cuts, appearance of sadness, moodiness or depression. These can be signs of distress which may be indicative of bullying.

7 How to we convince parents that we are doing everything we can?

Let them see the records you are keeping and make sure they do not feel you are trying to hide anything, while maintaining confidentiality as appropriate. Parents expect to hear that bullying has stopped so make sure you let them know when it has. Pupils need to know that they are being heard and this in turn enables parents to feel confident about the steps that you are taking. When you first start tackling the bullying behaviour, make sure you communicate clearly with all parties about the steps you are taking. Interview the pupils a few days later to ensure the situation has really improved or been resolved.

8 Where can I get help with this subject?

- DfE Behaviour & Discipline DfE Behaviour and Discipline In Schools a guide for headteachers and staff
- The Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA), sharing of good practice nationally www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Make Them Go Away, a video resource
- Let's Fight It Together, a video resource about cyber-bullying
- Kidscape
- Restorative Justice Council
- Beatbullying
- ChildNet International
- Mencap
- Stonewall Education For All, against homophobic bullying
- Restorative Thinking: Toolkit for KS1 and KS2 written by teachers for teachers (via ABA website or 01772 742353)
- Anti-bullying week takes place in November each year, celebrate and use the campaign teaching pack from ABA
- Training is available from ABA on a regular basis via workshops (book via aba@ncb.org.uk)