

April 2024

Safeguarding Updates – Bullying



What is Bullying?

As a parent/ Carer it is important we know the difference between a fall-out between friends and bullying.

Bullying can be both emotional and physical, often the behaviour is deliberately and persistently directed against a particular target group or individual child.

Though these incidents alone can seem insignificant the repeated harassment and intimidation of a child can cause serious harm and distress. Often a victim of bullying will feel scared, frightened and upset, defenceless and extremely lonely and isolated. This sense of isolation can in some extreme cases lead to severe anxiety and even fatal self-harm.

Bullying needs to be taken very seriously and should be considered a safeguarding issue.

Listed below are some of the methods that bullies use to intimidate:

- **Verbal:** Name-calling, sarcasm, persistent teasing.
- **Indirect:** Excluding , tormenting, humiliation, spreading rumours.
- **Physical.** Kicking, Hitting, pinching, biting, pushing and other forms of violence or threats and intimidation.
- **Technological/Cyber:** Using technology like internet sites, mobile phones and video hosting sites to hurt, abuse frighten or intimidate a group or individual.
- **Racism;** Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- **Sexual;** Unwanted physical contact or abusive comments.
- **Homophobic;** Hostile or offensive action against lesbians, gay males or bisexuals or those perceived to be lesbian, gay or bisexual.
- **Regarding a disability;** Tormenting, hurting, humiliating or abusing a person with a special educational need, learning difficulty or disability.

How as parents can we spot the signs?

The behaviour of a child may indicate if they are being bullied. If your child displays any of the signs listed below bullying could possibly be responsible, and it would be worth discussing the subject of bullying with your child.

Children/young children may:

- be scared of walking to and from school
- begin a pattern of lateness arriving at school
- change their usual route to school
- beg you to drive them to school
- not want to go to school
- feel ill when it's time for school
- begin truanting
- begin to let their school work slide
- come home with damaged clothes and books
- come home hungry (bully taking dinner money)
- become withdrawn, shy and lack confidence
- become distressed and anxious, even stop eating
- attempt or threaten suicide
- have regular nightmares
- have their possessions go missing
- ask for money or begin to steal money
- continually lose money

- refuse to discuss what's wrong
- have unexplained bruises, cuts, scratches
- may bully or fight with younger brothers and sisters
- become aggressive and unreasonable

This list is not a fool proof checklist, the presence of one or more of these does not necessarily indicate bullying, however if these signs are evident, it may warrant further investigation.

If you are worried that your child is getting bullied how can you help?

- Talk with, listen to, and support your child. Do not shout no matter how frustrated you are.
- Calmly make the school aware that there is a problem.
- Allow them time to investigate but ask for regular updates.
- Remain patient, calm and constructive with your child.
- Be familiar with the signs of bullying.
- never agree to keep the bullying a secret.
- If your child is bullying others, don't dismiss it as unimportant.
- Reassure your child that it's not their fault if they are being bullied.
- Ask for a copy of the school's anti-bullying policy (this should be found on the school website) and follow the procedures.
- **DON'T** tell your child to hit back, if your child was going to do this they would have done it without you telling them to. It is never good advice to meet violence with violence and if they hit back and if it doesn't work this can leave them with a bigger sense of failure and make them feel they have let you down.
- You may feel angry and upset, but work with the School to resolve the problem, your child is the priority.

You can always call bullybusters for further advice, they can support you to get the best outcome for you and your child.

Call - 0800 169 6928 -Our confidential free phone helpline operates between 3pm - 6pm Monday to Friday

School contact

Safeguarding Lead: Mrs R Jones

Deputy DSL: Christine Kirkham

Safeguarding team: Mrs N Jackson, Mrs C Gilmore, Ms S Lyon, Mr J Sanderson,

Mr J Shilcock, Ms R Boateng, Mr T Phipps



