

Frequently Asked Questions

What is bullying?

There is not one single answer to this question. One way bullying can be described is that it is something that is done to deliberately hurt somebody either emotionally or physically. It is also usually something that happens to you more than once. This does not mean that if someone does something to you on just one occasion that you should not tell someone. If you are upset or worried about anything then tell an adult or a person you trust. To understand bullying you could also ask your school to tell you how they describe it.

What types of bullying are there?

Listed below are some of the different methods of bullying. It is important to remember that if something does not appear on this list and it is upsetting you then you should still talk to someone you trust. There are a number of different reasons why somebody might be bullying you but it is more likely the reason is something to do with them rather than you.

- **verbal**; name calling, threatening,
- theft; taking or damaging your things,
- **rumours**; spreading lies about someone or people close to them,
- physical; Kicking, punching etc,
- **cyber-bullying**; making abusive phone calls, sending threatening messages isolation; making people feel left out.

We also know that sometimes people get bullied because of other people's prejudices, for example;

Racist Bullying - bullying that is directed at an individual from

- a particular race, group or culture.

If this is happening to you it might be an individual saying something unkind about:

- the way someone looks,
- what someone eats,
- the way that somebody dresses,
- the way someone speaks,
- family,
- religion.

Homophobic bullying - bullying that is directed at someone because of their “perceived” sexual orientation

Homophobic bullying can happen to anyone it does not matter what your sexual orientation is. If this is happening to you it might be an individual saying something unkind about someone being:

- gay,
- lesbian,
- bisexual or,
- trans gender.

Special educational needs - sometime people might get bullied because of the way someone views someone with a disability or learning difficulty

What can I do?

The most important thing you need to do is tell someone you trust. If you feel nervous it might help to practice what you are going to say. If you don't feel able to tell someone face to face you could try writing a letter. Once you have told somebody they can offer you help and support. Bullying is unlikely to just go away by itself and having an adult to help you will make a big difference.

If you want to tell someone in school but don't want other people to see then you could leave a note or tell other people it's about school work. Your school may have peer mentors and these may be good people to speak to about what is happening. Think about what you want to happen once you have told someone because it's important that people know what you want. Hopefully this will be enough to improve the situation. If you do tell someone and you do not think they have listened or the situation has not improved then tell someone else. It is important to keep telling until someone listens to your concerns.

Who would be a good person to tell?

You know better than anyone else the people you feel safe with and who you believe will listen. Listed below are some of the people you may want to talk to but remember that there may be other people you could talk to who are not on this list;

- parent,
- carer,

- relative,
- teacher,
- teaching assistant,
- social worker,
- youth worker,
- a friend,
- another adult in school.

I can't think of anyone to tell

If you don't feel able to tell someone you know but want advice then you could call ChildLine - a free telephone helpline for children and young people. You can ring them any time of day, any day of the year. It's free and it's confidential - that means that no-one else will know about the conversation unless you decide to tell them. They are very busy so you may need to try to call a few times but keep trying and you will get through. Their telephone number is 0800 1111.

What will happen next?

It is difficult to answer this because it depends on where the bullying is happening and your situation. You can expect that people listen to you, keep in contact with you and tell you exactly what is going to happen. It might be a good idea to ask the adults involved to sit with you and write a plan of what is going to happen.