



flint high school ysgol uwchradd y fflint

DEALING WITH BULLYING

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS / CARERS

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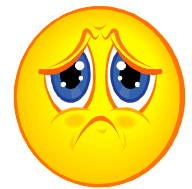
Introduction

Bullying is alarming and distressing to us all. There is no evidence to suggest that Flintshire or Flint High School has a bigger problem of bullying than anywhere else in the country. However, we are far from complacent here at Flint High School and have produced this booklet to help parents / carers who may have concerns about their children and need to know 'Are they being bullied?'

Bullying is an issue covered within the school curriculum. This includes PSHE lessons, form tutor activities and assemblies. Students are trained as Peer Educators to help support and give advice to students who are being bullied. The school council discusses bullying on a regular basis and has produced a planner page to give advice to students about what to do if they are being bullied.



Dealing with Bullying



'We take the issue of bullying very seriously'

Students who bully others will be punished. In some cases they may need support themselves to assist them in changing their behaviour.

Bullying can take various forms, such as:

- Rude and unpleasant name calling
- Threatening and aggressive behaviour
- Hitting, kicking, punching and pushing
- Damaging belongings
- Repeated teasing

Eventually the victim finds it difficult to cope and may use a number of strategies in order to avoid being bullied, and even try to stay away from school.

However, it is important to note that if your child does not want to come to school it does not necessarily mean they are being bullied.

The advice, though, remains the same – contact school immediately.

Tackling Bullying



Speak out against bullying.



Keep your hands, feet and any nasty comments to yourself!

What is Bullying?

- Name calling
- Leaving someone out
- Pinching, pushing, barging, kicking, fighting
- Taking money from people
- Being a member of a group of students known to intimidate others

Every student has the right to be safe and happy at Flint High School.

It is the responsibility of every student to work towards making this happen.

Not telling protects the bully or bullies.

Not telling gives them the message that they can continue to bully other students.

Talk to:

- Your form tutor
- A teacher you really get on well with
- Your Learning Manager
- Miss Pughe, Ms Crich, Mrs McClean

Useful Phone Numbers: Childline: 0800 1111



NSPCC: 0808 800 5000

We guarantee to take action

**Together
We can tackle bullying**

Page written by Members of the School Council

How can parents tell if their child is being bullied?

Possible warning signs.

Bullying is sometimes called 'the silent nightmare' because many children are too ashamed to admit that they are being bullied. On top of this, bullying is a secretive activity – bullies do not take the risk of being spotted by anyone capable of stopping them.

There are signs of distress, however that call out 'I'm being bullied'.

- NOT WANTING TO GO TO SCHOOL
- AVOIDING PARTICULAR LESSONS OR DAYS
- TAKING LONG OF DIFFERENT ROUTES TO SCHOOL
- BEING LATE FOR SCHOOL, HANGING BACK OR RETURNING LATE FROM SCHOOL
- AVOIDING FRIENDS AND OTHER CHILDREN
- TORN AND DAMAGED CLOTHING AND BELONGINGS
- 'MISLAID' BOOKS, EQUIPMENT AND BELONGINGS
- ASKING FOR EXTRA MONEY OR SWEETS WITHOUT GIVING REASONS
- MAKING EXCUSES FOR NOT GOING OUT TO PLAY OR MEETING FRIENDS
- HAVING 'MYSTERY ILLNESSES' – NON SPECIFIC PAINS, TUMMY UPSETS, HEADACHES
- PERSONALITY CHANGES – IRRITABLE, WITHDRAWN, TIRED, POOR SLEEPING, WEEPINESS, CRYING OUTBURSTS, LOSS OF APPETITE, FORGETFULNESS, DISTRACTIBILITY
- HAVING UNEXPLAINED CUTS AND BRUISES
- TEMPER OUTBURSTS
- IMPULSIVE HITTING OUT
- NIGHTMARES
- LACK OF CONFIDENCE
- UNDER ACHIEVEMENT
- NOT WANTING TO ANSWER THE DOOR OR THE PHONE



What can parents do about bullying?

- Discuss it with the child – do not ask straight out, 'Is someone bullying you?' The shame associated with bullying is to do with the fact that children cannot 'stick up for themselves'. Instead ask 'Is anyone in your school being nasty to other children?'
- Listen carefully to the answers and try to get the name or names of children who bully other children.
- Sympathise, listen carefully and calmly try to find out the facts.
- If the bullying has been going on for some time or is very unpleasant, contact school immediately. You will be put in touch with your child's Learning Manager or a member of the Leadership Group.
- Sometimes it might just be a falling out amongst friends that will remedy itself without intervention. If the bullying is happening in school, or on the way to or from school, then a plan will be made to deal with it together.
- Start to keep a record of the incidents of bullying, listen WHO, WHEN, WHERE, and HOW. This is a painful thing to do but does provide good 'ammunition' if the bullying does not stop.
- Encourage your child to tell a teacher they trust. You must return to school if the bullying continues.

It is better if children can overcome the problems for themselves – that is, without your direct and obvious help. If you do have to provide direct help, do it tactfully. E.g. if you decide to collect your child from school, don't linger outside the school gates; try to wait around the corner instead. We also try to help the victim feel in control of whatever intervention is going to occur so that there is no fear of consequences.



What can parents do about bullying?

Don't advocate a 'Hit them Back' policy. This may be alien to your child's temperament and may involve more shame or a great deal of pain if the bully is bigger and stronger.

- Alternatively, if your child decides to fight back and subsequently gets into trouble for fighting, use the records you have been keeping to support and explain your child's behaviour.
- If the bullying is violent and occurs outside of school, let the bully's parents know what is happening, as well as the school. If the situation does not improve, be prepared to contact the police and or a solicitor. Ask for a letter to be sent to the bully's parents, informing them of the legal consequences.



- Unfortunately many bullies have aggressive or insensitive parents. These parents are not usually supportive of their child's victims or are unhelpful to the parents of victims. Some of them encourage their children, particularly their sons to be tough 'macho' characters. They even gain some satisfaction from the complaints they receive. They should learn that this is unacceptable, so please do not dismiss the idea of taking legal advice.

How can children help themselves to avoid bullying?

If your child is being bullied or you are aware that bullying does go on in your area, it is helpful to reach some basic ways of responding. It is best to warn and advise children how to cope well in advance.

This teaching should start with a strong message that bullying is very wrong and that the child should never feel ashamed to tell you if they are being bullied.

The best idea is not to be alone in places where bullying goes on. So, encourage your child to stay with friends and make sure that they all support each other.



This is the advice we feel you should give to your child –

- Always tell an adult you trust or a friend if you are bullied.
- Avoid going to places where bullying happens, especially do not go alone.
- Stay with your friends and say 'NO' to the bully. Remember there is safety with other people; bullies are cowards who do not like to be watched.
- Practice saying 'NO' to the bully. In some lessons you will learn how to do this.
- Try not to lose your temper; stay calm. Crying and running away provides entertainment. Look the bully in the eye, stand up straight, try to look confident and walk quietly away.
- Leave expensive things at home and do not boast about money or possessions. If you are asked for things try and make an excuse. If things are forced from you or you feel you cannot refuse, do not fight to get them back. Tell an adult the truth and ask for help as soon as you can.
- If you are being bullied by being called a name, ignore them. The best as bully can hope for is to see you get upset. Ignoring can be very difficult but try hard and remember, if you cannot cope, ask for help.
- ASK YOURSELF WHETHER YOUR BEHAVIOUR UPSETS OTHERS
E.G. DO YOU CALL PEOPLE NAMES?



PHSE and Bullying

During PHSE (Personal, Health and Social Education) lessons, students in Years 7, 8 and 9 watch videos, have discussions and are given guidance on the problem of bullying.

Students are occasionally asked to complete a questionnaire to ascertain the extent of bullying. There is also the opportunity to train as a Peer Counsellor in Year 10.

Peer Counsellors spend time in the Green Room at lunchtime on a rota basis. Just drop in and let them know if you have any problems.

We also have three School Counsellors who work with us at Flint High School. If you want to talk to one of our Counsellors ask your form tutor, Learning Manager, Miss Pughe or another adult whom you trust.

You can also contact Flintshire Counselling Service on: - 01244 846742 Text. 07774 613202



What does the school do about bullying?

The school takes all reports of bullying very seriously. We investigate all incidents of bullying, no matter what form they take, and we take appropriate action to respond discreetly and sensitively to both needs of the victim and the bully(ies).

We believe that all students should be able to feel comfortable and safe within their learning environment.

Our response may include:

- Regular monitoring and support, by all staff but particularly your son's/daughter's Form Tutor and Learning Manager.
- Involvement of the School Peer Counselling Service, and our Counsellors.
- Regular review meetings to discuss concerns with parents.
- Disciplinary action against the bully(ies) which may take several forms. In serious cases, repeated bullying may lead to an exclusion from school.
- The involvement of other external agencies such as the Educational Psychology Service, Social Services and health professionals.

We need to know whether we are dealing effectively with bullying issues. You and your child will be consulted regularly, however if you feel the need please do not hesitate to contact us.

