**ADVICE FOR PARENTS**

If you are worried or concerned about your child and feel that **he/she may be being bullied** in school, please read the advice below – it might help. Every situation is different, not all of the advice below will be relevant to your child’s situation.

**Definition of Bullying:**

Bullying is repeated aggression, verbal, psychological, or physical, conducted by an individual or group against others (Dept. of Education Document on Countering Bullying Behaviour; Sept 1993).

* Reassure your child that with your support this problem will be resolved.
* Remember that children will all experience both good and bad times during their school life. Adults cannot solve everything for children, but we can help and support them through difficult times.
* It may be difficult to achieve, but a calm, unemotional approach is best for your child. Try not to over react. An over emotional response by parents does not help the child and can make the situation worse. Show sympathy, praise your child for coming forward with the issue but try not to dwell on the situation.
* If you are worried about your child, please make an immediate appointment to meet with your child’s teacher.
* Remember you do not know all of the facts. There are at least two sides (and sometimes more) to every story. Talk to your child, hear their side of the story, tell him/her that you will be hearing the other side of the story too. Try to keep an open mind. Don’t rush to defend your child until you have heard the facts/details of both sides of the story.
* The school is committed to promoting the happiness and safety of all pupils.
* Do not be too quick to use the term ‘bully’. Check all the facts. Is this a bullying issue or a friendship issue which may be resolved naturally?

If, having established all the facts and having spoken to your child’s teacher you feel that your child may be being bullied then please give consideration to the following:

* Please trust the school to deal with this serious issue. All allegations of alleged bullying are thoroughly investigated; the school is committed to promoting the happiness and safety of all of our pupils. If issues of a sensitive nature are being discussed openly in the wider community the process towards resolution may be compromised.
* Be patient – bullying situations can take time to resolve.
* It is important that you advise your child to be assertive and to stand up for him/her self but not to fight back. (e.g. if your child is being called names encourage him/her to assertively say ‘Don’t call me that’ or ‘No I’m not’ rather than telling them to call names back).
* Under no circumstances should you directly approach the child/children who are allegedly bullying your child in school.

**Please see the other side of this page for advice if an allegation of bullying has been made against your child.**

**ADVICE/TIPS FOR PARENTS**

Please read this document **if an allegation of bullying has been made about your child** – it may help. Remember every situation is different and not all of the tips/advice below will be relevant to your child’s situation.

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* If you are worried about your child, please make an immediate appointment to meet with your child’s teacher.
* Remember you do not know all of the facts. There are at least two sides (and sometimes more) to every story. Talk to your child, hear their side of the story, tell him/her that you will be hearing the other side of the story too. Try to keep an open mind. Don’t make a judgement until you have heard the fact/details of both sides of the story.
* The school is committed to promoting the happiness and safety of all pupils.
* All alleged cases of bullying are fully investigated. The school only makes an allegation of bullying after a thorough investigation into the issue. The school does not use the term ‘bully’ lightly.

If following a thorough investigation, the school determines that your child has bullied another child the school Anti Bullying Policy will be initiated and you will be informed.

* Reassure your child that with your support this problem will be resolved.
* Children who have been involved in bullying behaviour need to fully understand that their behaviour is unacceptable and that there are serious consequences to this. They also need support and guidance to make sure that they do not behave like this again.
* Adults need to look at the reasons behind the behaviour. Is the child trying to show off/impress others? Are they unaware of the effect their behaviour is having on another child? Do they need to develop tolerance towards personalities they don’t like? Are they feeling insecure themselves?
* Children need to understand that if they have done something wrong they have the power to put it right.
* The school is committed to doing everything it can to resolve bullying issues, parental support is much appreciated.

**Please see the other side of this page if you feel that your child is being bullied.**