



Anti-bullying FAQs

1. What is bullying?

Bournside students have chosen to adopt the Anti-Bullying Alliance definition of bullying which is: *'the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or through cyberspace.'* A useful mnemonic for identifying bullying is 'STOP'- Several Times On Purpose.

2. I think my child is being bullied. What are the signs?

Bullying can hurt both physically and mentally. Students, parents, and staff should be aware of the warning signs and a symptom through changes in behaviour that may highlight someone is being bullied.

This can take many forms (this list is not definitive):

- Is frightened of walking to or from school
- Does not want to go to school by public/school transport
- Insists on being driven to school
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school after previously enjoying being part of the school community
- Begins to truant
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the morning
- Begins to do poorly in schoolwork
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- Has possessions that are damaged or unexpectedly go missing
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- Has dinner or other monies continually 'lost'
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Comes home hungry (lunch has been stolen)
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive, or unreasonable
- Is bullying/ harassing other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what's wrong
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Is nervous and jumpy when a text message is received
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above.

3. Who do I contact if I suspect my child is being bullied?

The first point of contact is your child's tutor. You can find their email address on the Contacting Staff page of our website.

4. What happens after I report an incident of bullying?

If an allegation of bullying does arise students, staff, parent, and carers should feel assured that the school will:

- take all reported incidents seriously
- act as quickly as possible to establish the facts
- record and report the incident carefully through our Pastoral Management system (PAM)
- provide support and reassurance to the victim through well-established pastoral systems and the work of Anti-Bullying Ambassadors
- support the victim
- make it clear to students displaying bullying behaviour that it will not be tolerated
- use sanctions that complement our school Ladder of Consequences
- communicate with the parents or carers of all of students involved.

5. What support will you give my child after they have been bullied?

The level and type of support given to your child after an incidence of bullying will depend on the individual circumstances and is generally led by what your child wants and feels comfortable with. Please contact your child's tutor if you feel further support is needed.

6. What happens if my child has been identified as using bullying behaviour?

The same initial process as above. After sanctions have been applied, staff will work with the student displaying bullying behaviour to try to prevent a repetition of such behaviour.

7. What do I do if I suspect my child is using bullying behaviour?

The first point of contact is your child's tutor. You can find their email address on the Contacting Staff page of our website. They will advise what support is available for your child.

8. Are staff adequately trained to deal with bullying issues?

All staff are trained annually in how to deal with bullying issues. Individual staff are also supported by the student support and wider pastoral team so that when an incidence of bullying is reported there is a strong network of professionals able to respond to it.

9. What support is there for parents who don't know how to support their child?

There is lots of support available both within school and through external contacts. Your child's tutor will advise you and help you to access the right support for you and your child.

10. What should I do if my child refuses to go to school due to being bullied?

Parents/carers have a legal duty to ensure that their child attends school. If there is a problem with bullying that is making your child reluctant to attend school, please contact us. There is support available and is important to work with us to ensure your child maintains access to their education. Absence from school in these circumstances will not be authorised.

11. Can I report bullying anonymously?

You can, but it is less helpful particularly if it does not allow us to identify and support potential victims. It can also make investigating incidents very difficult.

12. If an incident occurs out of school, can I report it to the school?

Yes. If the bullying involves students from another school, we will need to pass this information on to their school.

13. How can we guarantee that we won't make it worse by reporting it?

Unfortunately, there are no guarantees but we follow our Ladder of Consequences consistently and rigorously and further incidences will attract further sanctions. Experience tells us that reporting an incident is far more effective at stopping bullying than suffering in silence. By reporting it, staff are made aware of the issues and can be alert to them, and support the student who is being bullied.

14. Is teaching children resilience and confidence part of the ambassador programme?

Yes. It is also part of the wider PSCH EE programme. Parents can support their children in gaining confidence and resilience by encouraging them to take part in extracurricular and group activities in and out of school.

15. How are you educating pupils about appropriate use of social media?

This is also done through PSCH EE, tutor time, assemblies, IT, and several of our curriculum subjects. There is also a continual dialogue with students over the ever-changing world of social media and how it can be used more positively.

16. What do I do if I believe my child has been affected by cyber bullying?

It is very important that you report any type of bullying. Our E-safety and Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy offers additional guidance and the Department for Education has published [advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying](#).