



Being safe and happy

– your guide to
tackling bullying



Your child's health and well-being are important to us. That's why we're committed to preventing bullying in our schools and communities.

Bullying is not acceptable. Derbyshire County Council works closely with schools to tackle bullying and to ensure your child is happy and enjoys school. We know that children who feel happy and secure learn better. We are doing our best to prevent bullying and, where it does occur, to deal with it effectively. You can help too. This guide shows you what steps you can take to help ensure the well-being and safety of your child.



What is bullying?

Bullying is deliberate behaviour intended to hurt, humiliate or intimidate.

It can be:

- **Physical** – hitting, kicking, taking things
- **Verbal** – name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks
- **Indirect** – spreading nasty rumours or stories, excluding from social groups, sending malicious emails or text messages.

Bullying is **not** two people having a disagreement or falling out over something.

It is **not** a one-off incident – it has to happen several times.



What to look for if you think your child is being bullied

Bullying is a difficult and sensitive issue which children are often reluctant to talk about. But there are signs which may suggest your child is being bullied.

Symptoms to look for include:

- Reluctance to go to school – including frequent complaints of headaches or stomach aches
- Anxiety or irritability
- Becoming withdrawn.

How you can help

If you believe your child is being bullied, you should:

- **Talk** to your child calmly about what is happening
- **Reassure** your child he or she has done the right thing by telling you about it
- **Make** a note of what your child tells you
- **Encourage** your child to report anything to the teacher
- **Make** an appointment to see your child's class teacher or headteacher.

What your child can do

If your child is being bullied telling a teacher, another trusted adult in school or family member is the **right** thing to do. Once a school knows what is happening, staff can act.

You should encourage your child to keep telling the school about anything that happens.

Bystanders who see bullying going on can make the biggest difference by doing something about it. If your child sees someone else being bullied telling a teacher, another trusted adult in school or family member is the **right** thing to do.

When you talk to teachers about bullying, you should:

- **Stay calm** – the teacher may not be aware your child is being bullied or may have heard conflicting accounts of an incident
- **Be as specific as possible** about what your child says has happened, using the notes you made
- **Make a note of what the schools says** and ask if there is anything you can do to help
- **Stay in touch with the school** and let staff know if things improve or problems continue.



Most bullying incidents can be resolved by your child's class teacher or headteacher.

But if you are not happy you can:

- Ask to see the school's anti-bullying policy – is the school doing what it says it will?
- Make an appointment to see a senior member of staff or the headteacher. Keep a record of that meeting
- If this does not help, write to the chair of governors explaining your concerns and outlining what you would like to see happen.

If you are still not happy, you can make a complaint under the school's formal complaints policy.



Bullying is unacceptable inside and outside school. We are determined to do our best to help prevent it.

We run our own Anti-Bullying Commitment (ABC) scheme – currently most schools and all of our children's homes are signed up. Other schools may use different schemes. It ensures schools actively try to prevent bullying and act quickly to resolve problems.

Schools in the scheme qualify for either initial, intermediate or excellence awards depending on the number of anti-bullying initiatives they have introduced.

These include:

- Buddy schemes – older pupils taking younger pupils under their wing
- Quiet areas for pupils to get away from playground hustle and bustle
- Encouraging parents to talk to their children about worries they may have
- Training schemes to help teaching staff spot the signs of bullying and develop effective ways of dealing with it and preventing it.


If your child would like to talk to somebody about bullying they can call ChildLine free on 0800 1111.

Anyone wanting more information about the county council's anti-bullying scheme can contact us on Call Derbyshire 08 456 058 058.



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