

Bullying and cyber-bullying

What it is, and who's more vulnerable

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. It can:

- Happen online such as through social networking sites, messaging apps, gaming sites, devices or via images, audio, video, or written content generated by artificial intelligence (AI)
- Happen in or out of school
- Be sexual in nature, such as explicit sexual remarks or inappropriate touching
- Be emotional, physical or verbal
- Be prejudice-based or discriminatory

Bullying can have significant effects on children's mental health, including into adulthood. Children who are bullied might also do less well at school and have fewer friends.

Some children may be more vulnerable to bullying due to perceived differences, such as:

- Having special educational needs or disabilities
 - Characteristics such as race, religion or sexual orientation
 - Being adopted or in care
 - Suffering from a health problem
 - Having caring responsibilities
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What to look out for

- Truancy or seeming reluctant to attend school
 - Physical injuries, such as unexplained bruises
 - Belongings getting 'lost' or damaged
 - Not doing as well at school
 - Being nervous, losing confidence, or becoming distressed and withdrawn
 - Nervous or secretive behaviour when online
 - Problems with eating or sleeping
 - Bullying others
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What to do

- If you have concerns that a child is being bullied, always follow our policies and procedures
- If you think a pupil is suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm, treat a bullying incident as a child protection concern. Discuss your concerns with our designated safeguarding lead (or deputy)

- If a pupil tells you about prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying:
 - Listen to them and take them seriously
 - Show empathy
 - Let them know it's not their fault and they were right to tell you
 - Avoid stereotypes
 - Follow our procedures

Sources

- [Preventing bullying, GOV.UK – DfE](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying)
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying
- [Bullying and cyber-bullying, NSPCC](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/bullying-and-cyberbullying/)
https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/bullying-and-cyberbullying/
- [Talking to children about racism, NSPCC](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/support-for-parents/children-race-racism-racial-bullying/)
https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/support-for-parents/children-race-racism-racial-bullying/
- [Bullying around racism, religion and culture, Department for Education and Skills on Institute of Education's Digital Education Resource Archive](https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/7236/7/6562-DfES-Bullying_Redacted.pdf)
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