

Parental Advice - Bullying

What is bullying?

Bullying is behaviour by an **individual or group** ...usually repeated over **time**, that **intentionally hurts** another individual or group either physically or emotionally'.

Different types of bullying include physical, cyber, verbal, racist, emotional and homophobic bullying. Emotional bullying can include leaving people out to hurt them, rumour spreading or forcing someone to do something that they do not want to do.

What is Moat doing about bullying?

We continually raise awareness of what bullying is and what can be done about it through:

1) The tutorial programme

- Year 7-what bullying is in general
- Year 8-cyber bullying
- Year 9- racist bullying
- Year 10 mental health bullying
- Year 11 homophobic bullying

2) **Surveying KS3 students** about their experiences of bullying and acting on issues which arise from this data.

3) **The PHSE and RE curriculum.**

4) **Assemblies**

5) **The students' planner**-what bullying is and what to do.

6) **Moat's commitment to providing support** through its staffing structure (students keep the same tutor, learning mentor and year achievement coordinator for 5 years)

7) **Moat's commitment to providing 'safehavens'** for vulnerable students with the mentors, Start Afresh room or Learning Support area.

8) **The KS4 citizenship programme** which looks at ways to 'buddy' bullied students.

9) **Moat's anti bullying policy** which staff, parents and the public have access to on the website.

10) **Work on E Safety** in IT lessons.

Most importantly Moat students know that bullying is taken seriously and is acted upon. Depending on the severity of the case punishments

range from warnings to exclusions.

School staff will deal with bullying in different ways depending on how serious the bullying is. They might deal with it in school by punishing the bullies or they might report it to the police or social services. Punishments will take into account any special needs or disabilities that the victim or bully may have.

They will also take into account that some forms of bullying are 'criminal behaviour' and need reporting to the police.

What can parents/carers do to prevent their child being bullied or becoming a bully?

Help your child learn that everyone deserves respect. Talk about the different types of bullying and how other people might feel in bullying-type situations. You can use TV programmes, books and films as a stimulus for this. Most importantly your child should feel that it is safe to talk to you about bullying.

Encourage your child to be safe on-line and protect their identity and personal information. Cyber-bullying is becoming increasingly common, so your child should think carefully before sending texts, emails or posting messages that include comments about other people.

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

Look out for behaviour changes such as;

- Withdrawal
- Not wanting to go to school
- Regular complaints about feeling ill
- Appearing upset after using the internet or mobile phone
- Missing belongings, torn clothes
- Unexplained bruises.

What to do if your child is being bullied

Keep calm! Getting angry or threatening to visit the school or the parent of the other student will make your child less likely to open up to you. Praise your child for telling you and use your best skills to get as many of the details as possible.

Encourage your child to think about how they might tackle the situation themselves. You should suggest to them to avoid the bullies, to tell people at school or other adults that are involved such as their form tutor, mentor or year achievement coordinator.

You may wish to contact school yourself. If so, the best place to start is to contact your child's form tutor as they know your child best. They may refer the problem to Mr Buckle, Vice Principal.

Students have been made aware through assemblies and tutorials that they can talk to any member of staff if they have concerns about themselves or other

students.

Where to get help and advice.

There are lots of organisations that provide support and advice if you are worried about bullying.

www.childline.org.uk 08001111

www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/

www.beatbullying.org

www.kidscape.org.uk

'101 Tips for parents-preventing and dealing with bullying' by JCasey at www.futurelinkpublishing.co.uk