



Focus on...

Bullying

Bullying comes in many forms but can have severe and long-lasting effects. Within your setting it is important to set out how you deal with bullying and share this with children who attend your setting and their parents.

What is bullying?

Bullying is behaviour that hurts someone else. It includes name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumours, threatening, or undermining someone. It can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online. It's usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child both physically and emotionally.

The following types of bullying are also hate crime: racial, sexual, transphobic or homophobic bullying
bullying someone because they have a disability

Effects of bullying

The effects of bullying can last into adulthood. At its worst, bullying has driven children and young people to self-harm and even suicide.

Children who are bullied:

- may develop mental health problems like depression and anxiety
- have fewer friendships
- aren't accepted by their peers
- are wary and suspicious of others
- have problems adjusting to school, and don't do as well.

All children who are affected by bullying can suffer harm – whether they are bullied, they bully others or they witness bullying.

Signs of bullying

No single sign will indicate for certain that your child's being bullied, but watch out for:

- belongings getting 'lost' or damaged
- physical injuries, such as unexplained bruises
- being afraid to go to school, being mysteriously 'ill' each morning, or skipping school
- not doing as well at school
- asking for, or stealing, money (to give to whoever's bullying them)
- being nervous, losing confidence, or becoming distressed and withdrawn
- problems with eating or sleeping
- bullying others.

Who's at risk

Any child can be bullied for any reason. If a child is seen as different in some way or seen as an easy target they can be more at risk.

This might be because of their:

- race or ethnic background
- gender
- sexual orientation.

Or it could be because they:

- appear anxious or have low self-esteem
- lack assertiveness
- are shy or introverted.

Popular or successful children are also bullied, sometimes because others are jealous of them.

Sometimes a child's family circumstance or home life can be a reason for someone bullying them.

Disabled children can experience bullying because they seem an easy target and less able to defend themselves.

Useful links

[Bullying at school: The law - GOV.UK](#)

[Helping Children Deal with Bullying & Cyberbullying | NSPCC](#)

