

# What is Bullying?

## A Guide for Parents



**Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.**

Department of Education and Skills, 2013

**There are many different types of bullying that can occur, some of the more common types are:**

**Name calling:** persistent name-calling directed at the same individual(s), which hurts, insults or humiliates.

**Physical aggression:** this behaviour includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking and tripping people. It may also take the form of severe physical assault. Personal property can be the focus of attention for the bully.

**Isolation/Exclusion and other relational bullying:** this occurs where a certain person is deliberately isolated, excluded or ignored by some or the entire class group; relational bullying occurs when a person's attempts to socialise and form relationships with peers are repeatedly rejected or undermined.

**Cyber-bullying:** this type of bullying is increasingly common and is continuously evolving. It is bullying carried out through the use of information and communication technologies such as text, social network sites, e-mail, instant messaging (IM), apps, gaming sites, chat-rooms and other on line technology.

**Extortion:** demands for money may be made, often accompanied by threats (sometimes carried out in the event of the targeted pupil not delivering on the demand). A pupil may also be forced into theft of property for delivery to another who is engaged in bullying behaviour.

**Intimidation:** some bullying behaviour takes the form of intimidation; it may be based on the use of very aggressive language including body language.

### DEALING WITH BULLYING BEHAVIOUR IN SCHOOLS

The school is in a unique position to promote attitudes and to shape patterns of behaviour which are positive and caring. The school should provide an environment where the child is physically safe and happy and where good relationships are fostered between pupils, teachers, parents and others involved in the running of the school. Parents in particular have a responsibility to share in the task of equipping their children with a range of skills which will help them in their dealings with others.

#### WHAT IF MY CHILD TELLS ME THEY ARE BEING BULLIED?

Talk to your child about bullying now! Empower your child with information and skills in an age appropriate way before they encounter bullying behaviour

##### **LISTEN to your child**

**Ask questions but don't interrogate**

**Avoid treating your child as a victim**

**Work with your child's school where appropriate**

Help your child to build his/her confidence and self-esteem in other areas. This can be supported through your child engaging in out of school activities, such as sports, music or art activities.

Talk with your child's teacher if the bullying is school related. A pupil or parent may bring a bullying concern to any teacher in the school. Individual teachers must take appropriate measures regarding reports of bullying behaviour in Accordance with the school's anti-bullying policy

### WHAT IF MY CHILD IS BULLYING?

#### **Don't panic**

#### **Listen to your child**

Try to establish the cause of the behaviour rather than focus on who is to blame Your aim should be to get cooperation without building resentment. Try to pass on responsibility, not blame, focus on the bullying behaviour not the child and solutions rather than problems.

#### For assistance from school:

Contact your child's Form Tutor in the first instance. This can be followed up by contacting the Head of Year.

Mrs Sharkey is the school Anti Bullying Advocate and is also available to offer advice

