



IT'S OUR BUSINESS TO

**STOP
BULLYING**

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS





OUR VALUES

Everything we do at Newlands is underpinned by our values, the 3Cs:

Courage
Commitment
Compassion

These values sit at the heart of our Anti-Bullying Policy, which aims to ensure that all our students learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment, without fear of bullying.

The role that you, as parents and carers, have to play in recognising if your child is being bullied - whether in school, outside of school, or online - cannot be understated,

This guide aims to support you to spot the signs if your daughter is being bullied, and offer guidance about the different ways you can support them.



What is bullying?

Bullying is any persistent behaviour that is intended to hurt someone.

It can happen anywhere – including at school, online or at home.

Examples of bullying include name-calling, making threats, being violent or aggressive, spreading rumours and undermining, humiliating, excluding or pressuring someone.

While lots of young people experience bullying, it is an incredibly difficult thing to go through and can have a huge effect on your child's mental health and wellbeing.

As a parent, it can also feel very challenging and worrying.

The important thing to remember is that it is possible for your child to get through it and feel okay again, and that there are practical steps you can take to address the bullying and its consequences.



What are the signs of bullying?

While everyone is different, a young person who is being bullied may:

- seem low or anxious
- seem less confident in themselves
- show signs of distress such as feeling upset, tearful or panicky
- avoid school or refuse to go altogether
- often complain of feeling physically unwell
- have outbursts of unexplained anger at home
- seem withdrawn, isolated and wary of others
- have few friendships
- make changes in their behaviour, for example dressing very differently or suddenly doing new activities to meet peer pressure
- act in a bullying way towards others
- have unexplained physical injuries such as bruises or scratches
- do less well at school
- eat and/or sleep more or less than usual
- use things like self-harm or drugs and alcohol to cope with difficult feelings



How can you help if you think your child is being bullied?



Open up a conversation

If you suspect that your child is experiencing bullying, open up a conversation with them about it. It might help to explain what bullying is and how it can make people feel, which can normalise what they're going through and make it easier for them to talk.



Listen to and validate their feelings

It is essential to create a safe and supportive environment for your child to share their experiences with you. Listen to what they have to say without judgment, and reassure them that what is happening to them is not their fault.



Given them time if they need it

If your child is not ready to open up to you about what's going on, let them know that they can also talk to teachers or friends, to other family members.

Many young people will initially struggle to talk to their parents about how they're feeling, and may appear withdrawn – and when a young person is being bullied, they may feel afraid, embarrassed or ashamed about what's happening. If they don't want to talk, try again another day and let them know they can talk to you whenever they are ready.



Check in with them

If you already know that your child is being bullied, check in with them regularly about it and listen calmly and carefully each time. Keep reassuring your child that they are loved and do not have to put up with bullying. Let them know that you will be there to support them throughout the experience.



Keep a log of the bullying

Keep a detailed log of what happens and when, so that you have evidence of the bullying - this can be a written list, photographs or screenshots of online messages.

Encourage your child to share any evidence with you as soon as possible. It can be difficult to remember to do this when you're juggling lots of different things, so finding a simple system like keeping notes in one place on your phone might help.



Help them build up their self-esteem

Use the time you have with your child to help build their resilience and self-esteem. For example, you might try regularly doing activities that you know they enjoy together, which can give your child a sense of achievement and belonging. This could also be things like exercising or playing sport, cooking and baking, or colouring, drawing or painting. Try to notice and affirm their efforts in these activities.





Encourage them to spend time with friends

Encourage them to spend time with peers who treat them well. Help them to think about who these people are, and support them to arrange times to hang out or do activities with them.

It might help your child to join a club or group at school, or at an organisation outside of school, where they can meet people with shared interests. Bear in mind that some young people might find it difficult to spend time with new people, and need space and time to think about this, especially if they regard the bullies as friends.



Help them make time to do things they enjoy

Support them to make time for doing the things that help them to relax and switch off from worrying. This could be things like listening to music, exercising, watching a favourite film or doing something creative.



Teach them coping skills

Help your child develop coping skills to manage their emotions and stress. This could include activities like exercise, meditation, or talking to a therapist.



Take action to stop the bullying

Take action to stop the bullying. Providing emotional support is really important, but your child can only start to recover from what's happened when the bullying has stopped and they feel safe again.

Talk to your child about seeking support from a teacher, guidance counsellor, or other trusted adult. Let them know that it is okay to ask for help.

BUT WHAT IS NEWLANDS DOING TO HELP?



As in any community, there is always the possibility that some form of bullying may occur.

Newlands does its utmost to encourage an ethos where bullying is acknowledged as totally wrong, and where the reporting of bullying is viewed as the correct action to take.

No individual should have to suffer any form of intimidation, and bullying has no place in our school.

We acknowledge our responsibility to protect all individuals within the school and we are committed to acting promptly if any cases of bullying are discovered.

The school is constantly keeping bullying as a focus and has, this year, established an Anti-Bullying Strategy Working Party which includes members from across the school. The group are looking at a number of different approaches from sanctioning to building resilience. Activities and initiatives will be developed during the course of both this year and next.

You can read our full Anti-Bullying Policy on the website which sets out exactly how we work both to prevent bullying, and how we deal with it in the event that it does happen.



Working in partnership with parents

We believe that by working in partnership with parents and pupils, Newlands can stop bullying in its tracks.

Parents/Carers

Organise a meeting with your child's teacher or form tutor as soon as possible.

Together we will agree on the strategies you will use to support your child and make sure the bullying stops.

It's helpful to use your evidence log during the meeting if you have one.

If your child feels worried about you speaking to the school, reassure them that we are there to support them and want to make sure that the bullying stops.

Newlands

We will investigate all reported incidents of bullying thoroughly.

Action will be taken to support the student who has been bullied, and the behaviour of the perpetrator(s) will be addressed, with appropriate consequences.

Acknowledgements

This resource has been created using materials produced by the mental health charity, Young Minds: <https://www.youngminds.org.uk/>