



STOP BULLYING

A guide for Parents and
Carers



This leaflet has been produced to help you, as parents and carers to understand conflict and bullying. It sets out what we do at Roe Green Junior School to prevent bullying. It gives you clear definitions and signs & symptoms of bullying and ideas of how to support your child if they experience conflict or bullying.

All schools have a duty of care and must have measures in place to encourage good behaviour and prevent bullying at school.

At RGJS our Behaviour Policy sets out clear expectations of behaviour and encourages the active and early involvement of parents in supporting positive behaviour. Our Anti-Bullying Policy too outlines clear interventions and strategies undertaken by the school to protect all pupils equally.

At RGJS we recognise that it is natural for parents to worry if their children complain about bullying. However, children often say they have been bullied when actually they may have been involved in a conflict. It is therefore, very important to know what the difference is. Children will often talk about conflicts but if they are really being bullied, they may feel too ashamed and embarrassed to talk about it.

What is conflict?

Conflicts are arguments, fights and fallings out. Something has happened in the moment to cause the conflict and both people may bear some responsibility for what has happened.

What is bullying?

Bullying is the repeated, deliberate use of words and/or actions to scare or humiliate someone so they feel bad or feel that they have to do what the other person wants. Only the person bullying is to blame.

Signs and symptoms of bullying

Children often do not tell when they are being bullied, therefore parents need to be aware of the signs and symptoms, which can include:

- changes in behaviour eg. becoming more aggressive or more withdrawn;
- not wanting to go to school;
- feeling ill in the morning;
- physical reactions to stress such as eczema, stomach pains, headaches etc;
- Stopping eating or eating too much
- starting to bully others
- losing confidence.

How can you tell if it is conflict or bullying?

There are several factors to consider:

1) What feeling place does the behaviour come from - hot or cold.

• **A hot feeling place is anger** because something has just happened in the moment eg wanting the same thing as someone else; taking teasing/ joking the wrong way; being accidentally hurt etc. The person can say and do things which are hurtful because of their anger, which can lead to conflict.

• **A cold feeling place is lack of empathy and caring** about the feelings of another. Nothing has usually happened to make the person angry. Coldness can lead someone to be deliberately unkind in words or actions. If they are angry, it is anger from the past and often has nothing to do with the person it is directed at. Unkind acts, when repeated, become bullying.

2) **How do both people feel during and after the incident?**

If there is a conflict both people usually feel sad, scared and/or angry. If it is an unkind act, however, only one person feels sad, scared and/or angry. The other person in contrast, feels powerful and in control.

3) **Type of follow-up required**

In a conflict both parties need to think about what has happened and try to see it from the other person's point of view. They need to talk about the conflict and try to resolve it, ideally by themselves, or by involving someone else they both are happy with. This is known as conflict resolution.

If it is an unkind act, the person doing it needs to feel empathy for the other person and to realise the effect their behaviour is having on them. They then need to repair the harm they've done. This is known as restorative justice. If, after being made aware of the harm, the person repeats the unkindness, this is known as bullying.

Refer to: <http://www.rgjs.brent.sch.uk> for further information or to view the related policies.

Supporting your child with conflict and bullying

Anti-bullying materials used in school helps to develop assertive behaviours in pupils so they are better able to express their opinions and less likely to be a target for bullying.

Please help your child with the various exercises to enable them to develop assertiveness skills; to regain control. Also:

- Let your child know that you are there for them and will always listen to their concerns
- If they're unhappy and want to tell you about an incident that has happened at school, listen calmly and without interruption
- Repeat back what they've said, so you can check you have understood correctly
- You can ask some questions eg: How are you feeling now? What would you like me to do to make you feel better? Can you do anything to make the situation better? Is there anything else you're worried about? How do you think we can solve this problem?
- Help them to think about what they would like to say to the other child
- If your child doesn't want to speak to the other child because they're still angry about the conflict or scared about the bullying, don't hesitate to get help from the school to deal with the problem.

NOTES:

Useful websites:

www.kidscape.org.uk/resources

www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

[www.saferchools.org.uk/aba-anti-bullying-
alliance](http://www.saferchools.org.uk/aba-anti-bullying-alliance)

www.brav.org/

www.bullying.co.uk/

www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk