

United Against Bullying School Case Study: Various ways of creating a culture of respect and anti-bullying

How Madani Schools Federation raised awareness about bullying, the forms it can take and how to report it.

Context of our anti-bullying work

We wanted to raise awareness about bullying, the forms it can take and how to report it. Although there was an awareness about bullying, sometimes things like exclusion or even back handed compliments were not necessarily called out as bullying. Pupils needed to feel confident about calling out bullying wherever they saw it and count on 100% support from other pupils and staff.

Understand why bullies bully and how could they be helped to change their thinking/ actions.

What we hoped to achieve

Pupils to be aware of bullying, the forms it can take and how to report it. For pupils to be up standers rather than a by standers.

Pupils feel confident to call out bullying.

Bullies (as well as being sanctioned) are dealt with via a restorative approach in order change their behaviour/ thinking. They reflect on their behaviour and change it.

The action we took

Primary school visit to present assembly

We have a close relationship with our feeder Primary and do like to involve them in our work. We felt we could use this opportunity to get the ambassadors to do an assembly about 'anti bullying', showing respect and kindness, standing up not standing by etc.

Anti-bullying ambassadors made the presentation using some of the resources and information pack from the Diana Award. They had to prepare 2 separate presentations as they did an assembly for year 3 and 4 and then another for year 5 and 6. This was to make sure that the assembly was age appropriate and engaging for all. A member of staff accompanied them. It took about a week to prepare and organise.

We took pictures and the Anti-bullying Ambassadors mentioned the work they did there in our own school assembly.

Anti-bullying Assembly - Followed by whole school doing the same lesson on 'Bullying' + Display

After our training with the Diana Award we needed to get the message across to the whole school and get everyone on board to support us. Staff and students.

We delivered an assembly with the help of some ABA followed by the whole school going back to their tutor rooms to do the lesson on anti bullying. We had tailored the lesson/ scenarios specific to the kind of issues our girls deal with. This was so the discussions would be more relevant and real.

Once we'd planned the lesson, we met with the Anti-bullying Ambassadors (ABA) and discussed how they can take the lead (there were 2 ABA from each form) when this lesson was being taught by their tutors in their forms. So these sessions were led by the form tutors, supported by ABA with ALL pupils taking part.

For the assembly and lesson there are 2 separate PP presentations. Each class also produced a '#standuptobullying' sign up display where everyone pledged to stand up to bullying.

Each task took a few hours then additional time to go through it and discuss with ABA, took another hour.

ABA made a display which went up on the wall. The display was about different types of bullying and where to get help in school and out of school.

Anti-Bullying Week activities

- **Bake sale to raise money for Diana Award**
- **Extended form time activities re anti bullying**
- **Odd Socks (days!) & Friday Prayers**

During Anti-bullying Week ABA went round to each form telling them about the week ahead and what to expect to drum up excitement and support.

We wanted to get the whole school involved and make it fun too. Bake sales are very popular at our school so everyone was very enthusiastic about baking cakes to raise money for the Diana Award. We wanted to make sure everyone knew who our ABA were and so they took the lead at the bake sale stall. School prefects and various staff popped down to buy cakes and show their support. It took us a few hours to plan but the cakes took longer to bake. Pupils baked them at home and donated them to sell. I think it was Nov.

We also had an extended form time where form tutors delivered a pre-planned lesson and facilitated a discussion around anti bullying/ bullying.

On Tuesday of Anti-Bullying Week pupils wore odd socks and we tweeted pictures on social media. We also encouraged all staff and students to wear them on Friday so we could get the whole school to wear them during all school congregational prayers. This was a powerful statement for all to see that 'bullying was never acceptable' and was a great way to end the week.

- **HEART Assemblies- RESPECT**
- **Positivity boxes**
- **Kind HEART Award**
- **Experiences shared by staff. Poem written by Ms Mayat, our English teacher, about her experiences with bullies.**

Our school values are underpinned by 5 principles; HEART

1. Honesty
2. Excellence
3. Accountability
4. RESPECT
5. Teamwork

A few years ago we started the process of having a major assembly every half-term based around one of these principles. Each assembly has a slot which is allocated to 'anti bullying' (this was very important in the school being awarded the Diana Award for Respect).

From initiative this one of the tutor groups came up with the idea of 'positivity boxes' where peers are encouraged to write a compliment about someone in their form group anonymously. These are then shared. We have started rolling this out to all the tutor groups.

From this idea we also created an award for students (nominated only by students) for 'Kind HEART Award'. This is now awarded termly for student who embody our schools values or show an of kindness or improves the school environment.

International Women's Day

Staff dressed up as the first factory workers from the 1950's. Tutor time – pupils learnt about one inspirational woman per day for the month.

Staff made a video about who their inspirational woman was and why, which was then shared with everyone and displayed in reception.

All staff also wore a name badge of a woman that inspired them (could not name their mother or relative)

Making the 'Fern Shape' with the whole school as part of stand up to racism.

One of our students won the national competition for 'show racism the red card'. We made the 'fern shape' with the whole school to show support and solidarity remembering the Christ Church attack victims and other loss of innocent lives around the world. We coupled this with 'show racism the **red card**' by holding up this message.

Other action (explained further below):

- **Stall on Parent / Carer Day**
- **All assemblies now have an anti-bullying slot.**
- **Celebrating 'diversity workshops'**
- **Whole School Balloon Release**

Impact and outcomes of the work

The activity has been highlighted in **bold** (from above) and the impact of that activity has been outlined below.

Primary School visit - Presenting assemblies

Year 6 coming into year 7 next term will already be aware of the work we do around anti bullying and how it is not tolerated in our school. They should feel more comfortable attending as a year 7.

The feedback I got from the team who went to the Primary school is that all the audiences loved the assembly and year 6 were asking if they could be an anti bullying ambassador when they come to MSF.

Anti-Bullying Assembly - Followed by whole school doing the same lesson on 'Bullying' + Display

Very positive feedback from staff and students. More pupils were now coming up to staff and asking how they could be involved.

Part of the lesson involved looking at bullying scenarios and discussing. Some girls were convinced that the scenario was about them....it was evidence that we had understood the issues and recognised the non-obvious ways in which bullying happens.

After the first assembly and lesson we had a slight increase in the number of students reporting bullying and ABA reporting bullying.

Anti-Bullying Week Activities

- **Odd Socks Day(s)**
- **Bake Sale to raise money for Diana Award**
- **Extended form time activities re anti-bullying**

The activities went down well. We reached over 600 pupils and 80 staff. And many more on social media.

Following from the activities this week a few pupils did come and tell me that they found it useful and if they can be involved next time.

We did find an increase in the number of bullying incidents being reported by victims themselves and ABA.

- **HEART Assemblies- RESPECT**
- **Positivity boxes**
- **Experiences shared by staff. Poem written by Ms Mayat, our English teacher, about her experiences with bullies.**

Assemblies have received much praise and the positivity boxes are very popular...especially with the year 7. Year 7 will frequently stay in form 10/15 min into their lunch time to write and read the comments from the box.

When yr 7 started, there was a lot of unkindness between them which could be classed as bullying if it was to go on for longer, however with the new work we were doing on anti-bullying, tutors and teachers referring to the same messages in their lessons that they heard from assembly and the positivity boxes, the number of incidents reported around unkindness/lack of respect dropped to the point that nothing has been reported to Heads of House for the past 6 -8 weeks!

Ms Mulla said 'assemblies are much better this year'

Ms Williams said 'it's really good that you talk about anti bullying often, it keeps the message alive'

Pupil have said how much they love Ms Mayat and someone like her sharing her story brought many of our girls close to tears (as admitted by some of the girls).

Hajira said 'It felt so sorry for Ms Mayat, I felt like crying, I even saw some (known) bullies empathising, which made me think why you saying aww etc when you do the same thing to others'

Positivity Boxes & Kind HEART Award'

The impact from positivity box led to the creation of another award for students (nominated only by students) for the 'Kind HEART Award'. This has been very successful in motivating students and helped create a 'Be Kind, Work Hard' culture at our school. We have also incorporated this slogan into our displays around the school and raised the awareness of this new award category.

International Women's Day

With us being a girl's school, opportunities like these are very important. They help to raise aspirations of our girls and make them believe they can achieve anything they want and they should not limit themselves. Because the girls wear the hijab, it's sometimes difficult for them to picture themselves in certain jobs/ fields of work. We used this opportunity to teach the girls to RESPECT themselves. To aim for the stars!

Balloon Release

We let off a load of balloons filled with helium with an attached message asking the community to join us to '#standupagainstbullying'. The message attached asked anyone who found a balloon to contact the school to pledge their support by stating 'I stand up against bullying.' We were so pleased with how far the balloons reached. We had a message to say one had been found in Birmingham (from Leicester 45 miles) and they supported our stand!

Stall on Parent / Carer Day

Parents were able to see first-hand the work we do with our ABA and how strongly we as a school support anti bullying. They were also able to use the stall for Q&A and seek advice.

Celebrating Diversity Workshops – University students came to speak to our children about the beauty of diversity especially at uni. It was to encourage our children to aspire to attend university. Also covered areas where there was disparity of gender, for example, the disparity of males and females in the field of Law. So to encourage the girls to celebrate their own diverse back grounds and aspire to be whatever they want.

Above all these have all had the impact of raising awareness and the profile of antibullying & wellbeing at our school. Other impacts have been:

- Achieving all 4 anti-bullying Diana Award badges
- Being awarded Diana Award anti-bullying **School of the Month** this year

- All assemblies now having an **anti-bullying slot**
- Our students joining the **ABA youth advisory board**
- Nominated for a Global Empathy Award (empathy week)
- All staff being entitled to a **free lunch** (however must have this sitting with students in the lunch hall). The intention behind this is to encourage wellbeing, pick up any issues and help students to feel comfortable speaking to staff.
- Free **breakfast club** for all students and staff. This again is to encourage students to come to school earlier, not face issues on the way to school and to increase communication and wellbeing opportunities for staff & students.
- Another target for next academic year will be for all Leadership Team to have **a kind word/ conversation** with a different student each day.
- Increase in school awards for students from 13 to 30 categories. These range from being awarded daily, weekly, fortnightly and monthly. As well as others awarded half-termly, termly & annually.

We hope all strategies & initiative we have listed and adopted will continue to contribute to the positive change & culture our school is heading towards.

What we have learned

As above.