

United Against Bullying School Case Study: Well-being ambassadors helping to prevent friendship issues in the school

How St. Mary's Bridport used well-being ambassadors to introduce their anti-bullying policy

Context of our anti-bullying work

We have set up our well-being ambassador initiative as a response to reports of bullying and we were wanting to support and make positive changes. We have had an anti-bullying week for years and the children are aware of our school anti-bullying champion but we wanted to filter the information down to the pupils and provide some on the ground peer support. We also wanted to educate the pupils more around bullying behaviour and how the behaviours of others in the class can impact on this.

What we hoped to achieve

We hoped that pupils would begin to identify the different roles within a bullying situation and that they would become upstanders not bystanders. We wanted different levels of support in place for pupils so they could talk to peers who they might feel more comfortable talking with.

The action we took

- We started our well-being ambassador group by announcing in assembly who they were.
- We held weekly meetings for the well-being ambassadors where we talk about bullying, we shared the policy and we had a focus for each week which the children looked for out on the playground at break and lunch.
- We created a well-being display board where we displayed the names of children who had shown the particular focus of the week in each year group chosen by the well-being ambassadors in their weekly meetings.
- The well-being ambassadors have designed a balloon format for helping children to not hold onto what is wrong and these have been presented to children by the well-being ambassadors during break and lunch.

- Our assemblies had an anti-bullying focus for the whole term and each Friday we presented a certificate to one of the chosen children voted for by the well-being ambassadors.
- The well-being ambassadors performed role plays in assembly about upstanders and bystanders and presented information about the new anti-bullying policy which they helped to create.
- Our words of the week in assembly have all been related to anti-bullying- tolerance etc.
- The well-being ambassadors presented all of their work to the parents. They also explained about the new anti-bullying policy to the parents.
- They talked about their experiences and shared their stories about helping and supporting other children on the playground.
- We linked all of our anti-bullying work with our well-being work and our Heartsmart RHSE lessons and the children were able to see the links between the work.
- The well-being ambassadors have yellow hats to identify them.

Impact and outcomes of the work

- The children have a good understanding of the policy and they are able to talk confidently about the processes for reporting bullying and the different stages within our policy.
- The well-being ambassadors have been used to help support children who need it on the playground- when a year 2 pupil's parent reported some unkindness I was able to let the parent know that one of our well-being ambassadors would be checking in with her daughter at break and lunch. A year 5 well-being ambassador then spent time in breakfast club and at lunch club checking in with the child and forming a relationship with her which really helped boost her confidence.
- Children have sought out the well-being ambassador to help with playground incidences of isolation and the children have been able to include children in a new game.
- The use of the balloons to praise positive behaviour has seen an increase in children trying to be upstanders.
- There have been examples where well-being ambassadors have provided in the moment support and have then been able to pass information about bullying type behaviours onto the anti-bullying champion. For example, some children in year 3 were excluding one of their peers, a year 5 child saw this and went to get the well-being ambassador from her year group. He tried to help but when realised he could not- he came to get the anti-bullying champion. I was then able to unpick what had happened and I was able to help the children repair their friendship. The well-being ambassador continues to check in with the younger pupil.

- The parents who attended the workshop were impressed by the way the children explained their policy and the work that they had done. They were impressed by how well the children could explain their thinking and the new adapted policy.
- The well-being ambassadors use the sayings from heart smart- such as don't hold to what's wrong/ Let love in and don't rub it in rub it out to help support the children and diffuse incidents on the playground before they happen. One example of this is when a Year 6 wellbeing ambassador who won a netball match said that she wouldn't brag about it too much as she had learnt that it was not nice to rub things in or be boastful.
- We are hoping that over the next few years that the honour of becoming a well-being ambassador is upheld and that the children value becoming a well-being ambassador.
- We are hoping to make well-being areas in the playground so that the well-being ambassadors have a place to be visible.

What we have learned

- The use of well-being ambassadors to introduce the anti-bullying policy to parents was a good way of encouraging attendance and made it less daunting for parents.
- Using assemblies and praise to reward positive behaviour has made the children look for positive friendship behaviour rather than looking for bullying behaviour.
- The use of the 'upstander superhero' in assembly has really drawn the children's attention to being an upstander not a bystander.