

United Against Bullying School Case Study: Engaging in positive play

How [school] engaged in positive play

Context of our anti-bullying work

A handful of children across the school were being identified as being involved in bullying of others on the playground. As an SLT, it was felt that the pupils showing these tendencies lacked the social skills and awareness needed to play without resorting to unkind words or physical behaviour.

What we hoped to achieve

For perpetrators of bullying or those at risk of being identified as bullies to develop their play skills, social skills and emotional literacy capabilities so that they are able to engage in more positive play during unstructured times.

The action we took

- Support staff at lunchtimes given key children to monitor on the playground. Wherever possible, staff to engage key child in focused activities to support their play skills.
- Individual pupils and families met with DHT to discuss concerns and use of 'circle of friends' intervention to help them on the playground. Consent gained from parents/carers.
- Class circle time to identify pupils who would volunteer to be in a circle of friends with the identified child.
- Block of intervention planned and delivered by ELSA TA.
- Ongoing support offered to child on playground to ensure that they remained engaged in positive play and build more positive relationships.
- Careful tracking of any incidences to ensure impact of support is embedded and follow-up is offered.

Impact and outcomes of the work

- Targeted children reduced number of consequences at lunchtime play.
- Target children showed greater understanding of impact of their actions and more confident in their ability to build positive friendships with peers.

- Wider peer group of target pupils observed to be happier in playing alongside and reduced number of concerns raised.
- Support staff during play/ lunchtimes are better able to engage vulnerable pupils in play.
- Embedding the use of circle of friends as a tool for those who may have been bullied or be identified as possible perpetrators of bullying.

What we have learned

Involve target children in the planning of sessions to meet their own individual needs. Hear from them what they find particularly difficult.

Protect time for training with TA's to ensure that they are given the skills to engage pupils who may present with limited play/ social skills.