

United Against Bullying School Case Study: Educating staff on SEND bullying

How Huntington School, City of York, carried out a teaching forum to staff on SEND bullying and how to challenge it

Context of our anti-bullying work

We had identified from our initial audit questionnaire that SEND students were more likely to be victims of bullying. National data shows that SEND students are twice as likely to be bullied.

What we hoped to achieve

To educate staff around what types of bullying SEND students maybe more prone to encounter.

The action we took

We carried out a whole school teaching forum to the staff where we challenged the views and expectations people had. We also discussed the use of ableist language that is often used casually. The data was hard hitting. But one of the biggest things to take away was how to not blame the victim.

Impact and outcomes of the work

Most staff were aware that ableist language or slurs to specific SEND characteristics are not appropriate and felt confident challenging these. However, a lot of staff were able to reflect on their experiences of how they had often suggested to the target ways they could avoid being bullied, rather than more directly challenging the individual doing the bullying. We also reinforced the legal duty we as teachers and school staff have, to ensure such language is not used in schools.

What we have learned

Allowing staff to discuss this in a forum was a really useful way of getting staff to appreciate that we all have, at some point, tried to assist a target by telling them not to act certain ways. Very powerful.