

United Against Bullying School Case Study: Addressing appearance targeted bullying

How Ormiston Meridian Academy educated their pupils on the impact of appearance targeted bullying.

Context of our anti-bullying work

When looking at the behaviour of a young person with SEND needs it became apparent, he was not wearing his glasses. In his annual review meeting when asked why he stated 'people would call him names' if he wore them. He then qualified this by describing an instance where this had happened to him. This was impacting his reading significantly, thus his engagement and then his behaviour.

What we hoped to achieve

- For the young man to be able to wear his glasses without fearing negative comments based on his appearance.
- For students to be made aware of the consequences of bullying related to appearance.

The action we took

We completed assemblies based on appearance and kindness and the power of words through our Form Time PHSE with whole school. We explored that people's appearance can be different to others for a variety of reasons and this should not be commented on in a negative way and the devastating effects bullying can have using the story of Megan Harteveltdt.

Impact and outcomes of the work

- To make students aware how serious bullying can be.
- Students reviewed how their small comment on appearance could be the straw that breaks the camel's back.
- Students were able to reflect on how small things can be big things to others

What we have learned

The power of the survivor's voice. Megan's mother speaks beautifully on This Morning. The video clip is very triggering, and we ensured we had MHST and Counsellor support in school that day.

<https://www.bing.com/videos/riverview/relatedvideo?q=this++morning+bullying+parent+video&mid=54125AEA59B30362577954125AEA59B30362577>