

United Against Bullying School Case Study: Understanding and addressing online bullying

How Hill View Primary Academy, Bournemouth included online bullying and its impact in their curriculum

Context of our anti-bullying work

Our school is located in a middle-class area of Bournemouth. Majority of Year 5 and 6 children have their own mobile phones and tablets which allow them to have contact with children in their class. We are a large 3 form entry school.

There was a rise in incidences in Year 5 which was occurring outside of school online and the children were then bringing these conflicts into school. As a school we wanted to educate and support all those involved so that incidents would stop and children are aware of the impact their actions have even when not in school.

What we hoped to achieve

- Children would have an understanding of the age restrictions on apps and understand the consequences of posting online.
- Children are presented with real life situations and are informed of the dangers of posting online.
- Online bullying outside of school would dramatically reduce and stop.
- Children would support one another, and online bullying would stop.
- Children would understand the role of bystanders and how they can have a big impact on stopping bullying.

The action we took

- Parent letters have been sent weekly about incidents.
- Regular safeguarding information has been distributed on whole school parent newsletters and staff newsletters.
- Year group/ subject specific assemblies and lessons have been conducted to reinforce expectations and highlight safeguarding online.
- Children were informed of the procedures of online bullying cases and how the police and agencies deal with the information given.
- Children were informed of how this can impact their future and when they get to secondary school.
- DSLs have a strategic overview of incidences and conduct specific assemblies and restorative justice sessions for this.

- Keeping myself safe poster competition for the whole school and these are displayed in year group specific corridors and can be referred to for support
- The school councillor supported the children who were victims
- The school councillor and restorative justice lead supported the children who were involved in the bullying incident, including the ringleader and assistants.

Impact and outcomes of the work

- Parents are informed of all incidents and are on board with sharing screenshots of messages and know the consequences of not monitoring online chat forums and gaming.
- Children are now aware of real life situations and the severe consequences for their actions.
- Children have been reminded of the age restrictions on games and apps and how they can set privacy settings.
- DSLs are able to closely monitor behaviour and bullying through their strategic overview.
- Bullying incidents dramatically reduces from being once every day in the autumn term to once every half term in Spring and Summer.
- Over the next year and transitioning into Year 6, bullying in UKS2 will reduce and children feel more confident speaking up about issues which may arise. We will conduct parent talks and continue to send out information to parents to inform them of online usage and how to keep their children safe and monitoring mobile devices.

What we have learned

From having open and honest conversations with the whole year group and in smaller groups of the children who were involved with the bullying, the children were able to comprehend why it is a problem and how they can stop it.

The following model of bullying was very visual for children to see how bullying has moved away from just 1 on 1. We were able to explain clearly that children can change roles at any time and they had a secure understanding of this.

