

The Anti-Bullying Alliance chose the theme 'All different, All equal' for Anti-Bullying Week 2017 because young people made it very clear during consultation that they didn't want people standing out as the 'different ones'. They wanted to celebrate that we are all different.

If you want to ensure that difference is understood and experienced in ways that are positive for everyone, it's important to:

1. Celebrate the differences in **all pupils and staff**, so that pupils with differences that are less common, such as a disability or a disfigurement, don't feel especially different.
2. Ensure **all staff feel comfortable and confident** talking about all kinds of difference. Children will pick up on any discomfort. Create opportunities for staff to explore their ideas and discuss their feelings about difference and diversity.

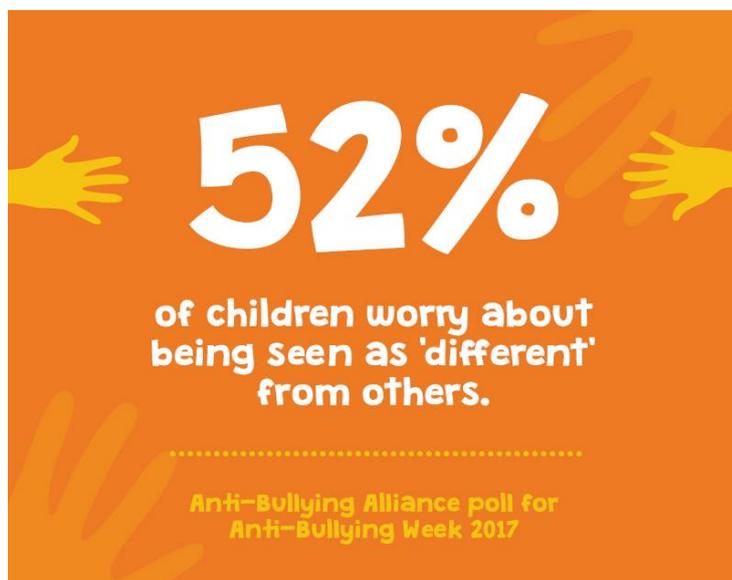
For example, if you have a child in school who is trans, consider accessible training or information for the staff team to ensure they are well equipped to create an inclusive environment for that young person, as well as understanding the correct pronouns to use.

3. Allow children to **talk about things that they find different** so that they can explore their ideas and attitudes. Using statements (such as "we are all equal") without context and explanation can sometimes create the opposite effect and make people feel like they 'stand out' more.

For example, you could talk about the history of disablism to share how the disability rights movement came about and show why it is important that people are given equal rights.

4. If a pupil has a disability, disfigurement, or something that makes them appear 'different' to others, make sure you **work with them** to discuss what they want to share with others. Support them to define themselves and take the lead in their own lives
5. Ensure all pupils have a strong sense of all the things that make **them who they are**. Also, look for shared interests and commonalities that they share.

For example, can they both talk and ask about pets, their favourite school subjects, spare time activities, music or favourite YouTube clips... It is important to enable and develop every child's capacity to ask and be interested in class mates' so that everyone can get to know everyone else as whole people and not labelled people.



6. **Avoid talking to other students about a classmate's difference**, outside of the parameters they are happy with, even if they ask. If the points above are already well covered then it will be quite straightforward to encourage a curious or doubtful youngster to get to know their classmate for themselves.

7. Some children may need **help to develop ways to communicate** information about themselves.

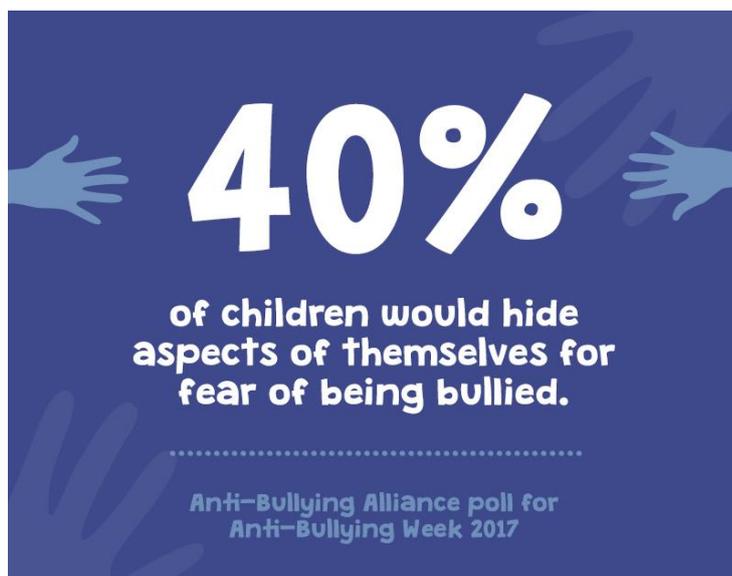
For example, if someone communicates differently or finds it hard to express themselves.

8. At the same time, **other children might need to learn how to communicate** with a classmate who communicates in a different way or finds it hard to communicate.

For example, the class/school may learn Makaton or British Sign Language.

This has given you an overview of some of the things you should do when celebrating difference in schools. There are many more resources you can find to support you doing this. For example:

- Allfie – How was school? resource pack
- Stonewall education resources
- Changing Faces education resources
- Anti-Bullying Alliance



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If you're always trying to be 'normal' you will never know how amazing you can be.

Maya Angelou

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Anti Bullying Week – 13–17th November 2017
#AntiBullyingWeek #AllDifferentAllEqual

