



Anti-bullying Policy

Introduction

Holmer Green Junior School is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure environment. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a TELLING school. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell someone in the school community.

Definition

The Anti Bullying Alliance defines bullying as *“The intentional hurting of one person by another, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It is usually repetitive or persistent, although some one-off attacks can have a continuing harmful effect on the victim.”*

Source: <http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>

Pupils and staff produced the following definition

- Bullying is behaviour which is intentional and often sustained or over a long period of time.
- It is behaviour that has a negative, unpleasant impact on the target.
- It is behaviour that results in someone being hurt, threatened and/ or frightened.
- Bullying involves an imbalance of power.

Bullying methods include, but are not limited to:

- **Verbal:** name-calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments, gossiping, mimicking, spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours
- **Physical:** kicking, hitting, pushing, fighting, taking or damaging belongings, stealing money with threats
- **Indirect bullying:** spreading hurtful rumours, socially excluding people, sometimes through silent bullying, from groups and activities to hurt and lower their self esteem
- **Cyberbullying:** sending inappropriate text messaging and email through websites; abuse via social networking sites, chat rooms and Instant Messenger; sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet, and bullying via online gaming
- **Prejudicial bullying** (against people/pupils with protected characteristics):
Bullying related to race, religion, faith and belief and for those without faith.
Bullying related to ethnicity, nationality or culture. Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND). Sexual orientation (homophobic/biphobic bullying) and gender based bullying, including transphobic bullying.

Aims and objectives

To promote a school environment where bullying behaviour is not accepted and where all pupils have a right to learn in an atmosphere free of victimisation and fear.

To promote a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable and where pupils treat one another and the school staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave.

To show commitment to overcoming bullying by practising zero tolerance and a consistent response to any bullying incidents that may occur.

To ensure that all members of the school community are clear about the school's policy, their responsibilities and the procedures to deal with any bullying.

To support any child who is the subject of bullying behaviour through positive school support processes.

School procedures

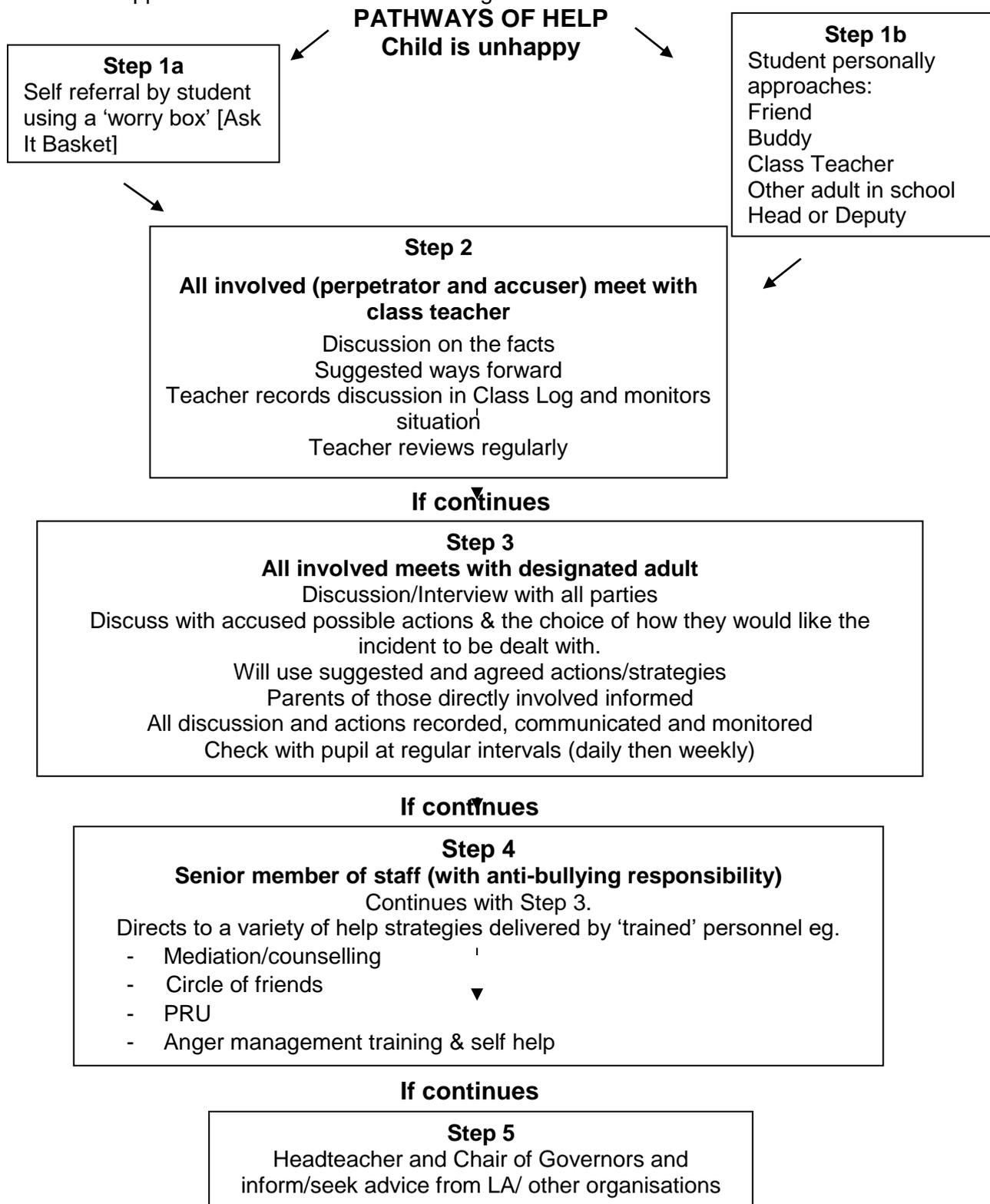
All staff and pupils are clear that bullying is unacceptable. All incidents are treated seriously and dealt with promptly.

We recognise that each incident of bullying behaviour is different and unique to the individuals who display it and who experience it.

These will depend upon several factors that may include:

- The level of intent.
- Any provocation.
- The duration of the bullying behaviour.
- The nature of the bullying behaviour and its impact.
- Whether it is the first report or a repeat of bullying behaviour.
- Whether the pupil engaging in bullying behaviour has received previous warnings and/or sanctions.

The diagram below identifies the school's procedures for dealing with bullying with further details included below. Appendix Two outlines further strategies and actions.



Cyberbullying

We are living in an increasingly connected world where, alongside the benefits of access to technology, come increased risks to children. More and more schools are having to respond to the growing challenge of cyberbullying. While cyberbullying is currently a predominantly secondary-based phenomenon, it is becoming more common in primary schools as technology becomes more widespread and used by an increasing number of younger children. It is important for us to recognise that increasingly young children may be affected by cyberbullying.

When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the school will:

- Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified.
- Provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.
- Encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation.
- Take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible. This may include:
 - looking at use of the school systems;
 - identifying and interviewing possible witnesses;
 - Contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary.
- Work with the individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation. This may include:
 - Support reports to a service provider to remove content if those involved are unable to be identified or if those involved refuse to or are unable to delete content.
 - Confiscating and searching pupils' electronic devices, such as mobile phones, in accordance with the law and the school searching and confiscation policy.
 - Requesting the deletion of locally-held content and content posted online if they contravene school behavioural policies.
- Ensure that sanctions are applied to the person responsible for the cyberbullying; the school will take steps to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any additional help that they may need.
- Inform the police if a criminal offence has been committed.
- Provide information to staff and pupils regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online. This may include:
 - advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply;
 - providing advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists;
 - helping those involved to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain.

Preventing bullying

At Holmer Green Junior School, our school ethos promotes respect, thoughtfulness and honesty. We aim to ensure that children treat other people with respect because they know this is the right way to behave. We promote an understanding of how our actions can affect others.

We use the following methods to support us in this:

- Having clear school rules (Golden Rules)
- Providing a curriculum that develops social and emotional aspects of learning
- Including specific anti-bullying teaching in our PSHE curriculum
- Providing 'Ask it baskets' in each classroom
- Kindness Ambassadors help to run Anti Bullying week and do regular sessions to discuss the school's anti bullying message.
- Each class has two Kindness Ambassadors that help to support the children in the class as well as help to maintain a level of awareness about the school's Anti-bullying message.
- Providing support on the playground to reduce opportunities for conflict

- Providing opportunities for discussion in circle times, class assemblies and as part of P4C and values education.
- Using assemblies to read stories about bullying and differences between people that could motivate bullying
- Praising, rewarding and celebrating the success of all children

Pupils

- If you witness bullying behaviour, or have bullying behaviour directed at you, then talk to an adult you trust. Take a friend with you if this helps. Remember, 'A problem shared is a problem halved'.
- Trying to ignore bullying behaviour is not the best option; it only delays stopping it.
- If you do not wish to speak directly to an adult:
 - You can put a note in your Ask It Basket. Your teacher will look in this regularly.
 - Mention any worries to the kindness Ambassador who will then help by listening and guiding the child with the next steps to gaining help.
 - You can write to any member of staff. They will then decide the best person to resolve the situation.
 - You can talk to a member of the School Council. These people will then arrange for someone to contact you.
- Don't listen to any person who says that you will get into trouble if you talk to someone. You aren't doing anything wrong – they are. Pupils often carry on their bullying behaviour and keep picking on people because they think nobody will tell an adult.
- Stay with a group of friends while the bullying behaviour is being investigated. Do not retaliate if the bullying is repeated; if necessary go to the reception area if you do not feel safe and ask to speak to an adult.
- Retaliation using friends makes it a 'double bullying' - which is twice as hard to resolve.
- School can always offer help, support and guidance; the aim is to stop the bullying behaviour. Appendix Three provides advice for pupils who experience bullying behaviour.

Bystanders

Bystanders are all those who are not directly engaged in bullying behaviour or on the receiving end but know that it is occurring.

If you think a pupil is experiencing bullying behaviour, you could help that person by:

- Putting a note in an Ask It Basket.
- Telling any member of staff.
- Tell a Kindness Ambassador.
- Confiding in a friend who will help you speak to an adult.
- Telling the person who is being bullied that you are going to report it.
- Inviting the person who is being bullied to join your group.
- Telling someone at home.

Do not become part of the bullying behaviour by:

- Joining in (to support the bullying behaviour).
- Watching (making it look as if you agree with the behaviour).
- Keeping quiet (instead of telling the person to stop).

Adults in school

Throughout the school day all adults in school will be alert to bullying behaviour and be pro-active in stopping it. They will

- Take all reports of bullying seriously.
- Use the Golden Rules to establish an expectation for positive behaviour.
- Use prompt, positive correction for low level disruption that targets individuals.
- Always 'separate the behaviour from the child' by making it clear that the school does not accept bullying behaviour (see definition) and there is no place for that sort of behaviour in this school. It is the wrong choice of behaviour rather than labelling the child as a 'bad' person.
- Keep Class Logs up to date, recordings any issues, incidents or concerns so that patterns of behaviour can be monitored.
- Use the Pathways of Help procedures to access support and manage bullying behaviour.

Designated members of staff/ Senior staff

When bullying is reported, the following guidelines will be followed.

- Take all reports of bullying seriously.
- Reassure the pupil making the report that they have made the right decision.
- Adopt an unprejudiced approach and be prepared to listen carefully to all pupils involved. They should be interviewed individually.
- It is good practice to interview the 'accused' first so they are given the first opportunity to give their side of events in reply to the 'accuser.'
- Discuss with the accuser the possible actions that could be taken.
- To empower the pupils who have been bullied, give them the choice of how they would like the incident to be dealt with; ask them what they would like to happen next:
 - so that they don't experience this again;
 - so that it doesn't happen to others.
- Offer the support of a safe room/area if it is necessary.
- Ensure that parents of those directly involved are notified by telephone that an investigation is being carried out – arrange to keep them informed of the outcomes and if necessary invite them into school for a meeting.
- Once the investigation has been completed the action that is required will be determined and communicated to all appropriate people.
- Check with the pupil, who suffered from the bullying behaviour, at regular intervals (daily and then weekly), that the bullying has stopped.
- Finally, place written records documenting these checks (dated and signed) in the files of the pupils directly involved.
- Other strategies and actions may be used to support the pupil experiencing bullying behaviour, where necessary (Appendix Two).

Parents

Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact the school immediately. (Appendix One outlines some of signs that a child may be being bullied.)

If you think something may be amiss, report it to the school so that they can observe your child to see if your concerns are substantiated.

If your child tells you about experiencing bullying behaviour:

- Calmly talk to your child about it.
- Remember, children who are experiencing bullying behaviour can become upset, anxious and confused about what has actually happened.
- Make a note of what your child says – who was involved, how it occurred, where it happened and what has happened.
- Reassure your child that telling you was the right thing to do.
- Do not let your child talk you out of contacting the school.
- If the problem is to be solved, parents and school need to work together and if the school is to take action, the situation needs to be known. No knowledge means the school cannot respond and the bullying will continue.
- Telephone the school and ask to speak to your child's class teacher. If this is not possible when you call, ask to speak to a member of the Senior Leadership team or leave a contact number so that he or she can get back to you – say that you want to talk to them about the bullying behaviour of another pupil. Alternatively you may write to your child's teacher.
- Explain the problems your child is experiencing.
- Remember we cannot stop bullying behaviour if we are unaware of it happening. It is also much easier to stop the behaviour in the early stages rather than when it becomes a serious issue, over a long time.
- The school will investigate promptly; parents/carers should accept there are always different viewpoints for any incident. Do not assume you have the complete picture of what has been happening – all you have is an account. The school will use the procedures outlined in the policy to gain a fuller perspective before actions are taken.

Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school.

Actions available as sanctions for the pupil engaging in bullying behaviour

- Verbal warning* and note in the pupil's file.
- A meeting with the pupil's parents to discuss necessary changes to their child's behaviour towards his/her peers and any other underlying issues.
- Written warning** by letter from senior member of staff.
- Missed lunchtime/break.
- Internal exclusion.
- External exclusion (fixed term/permanent).
- 'Managed Move' to another school.

*A **'verbal warning'** is given at a formal meeting between a teacher and the pupil that if they choose to repeat their bullying behaviour that their parents will be informed and a more severe sanction will be applied, which may include exclusion

** A **'written warning'** is a letter to parents outlining the bullying behaviour and informing them that, if their child chooses to repeat their bullying behaviour, a serious sanction will be applied and this may include exclusion.

Support for the individuals who display bullying behaviour and those who experience it

Helping the pupil who experiences it to regain self-respect and control over his or her life

Pupils should be reassured and empowered by telling them:

- Bullying is not their fault.
- Seeking help is the right thing to do.
- They don't have to put up with it.

If they are fearful the bullying behaviour may continue, they can be given a note book to keep a bullying diary so they can report any further incidents.

Victims may need to be provided with time to talk about their experiences.

Helping the pupil to gain an understanding of their bullying behaviour

The parents of the pupil who has engaged in bullying behaviour will be involved in this process, both to provide further support and to question their child about his or her role in the alleged incident.

The school will also explain to the parents/carers of the pupil who has been bullied, the actions the school is undertaking and role they can play in providing support for their child.

Children display bullying behaviour in order to:

- Feel powerful.
- Hurt someone.
- Gain attention.
- Express feelings/emotions of sadness or anger.
- Cope with jealousy.
- Impress and entertain.
- Or because they have experienced bullying behaviour.

If the pupil identifies an underlying reason for their bullying behaviour, they should be offered strategies to help them change their behaviour such as anger management or building self esteem (Appendix Two details further strategies and actions that can be taken).

Often pupils don't understand the impact of their bullying behaviour and can be in denial; they justify their behaviour to themselves and make wrong assumptions about how the other pupil feels.

Monitoring and review

This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the headteacher, who reports to governors about the effectiveness of the policy on request.

This anti-bullying policy is the governors' responsibility and they review its effectiveness annually via the inclusion governor and the head teacher feeding into the curriculum committee in the summer term. They do this by through discussion with the Headteacher and monitoring of the school's records. Governors analyse information with regard to gender, age and ethnic background of all children involved in bullying incidents.

Date : September 2021
Review date: September 2022

Appendix One

Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go on the school / public bus
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or " go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Appendix Two

Further strategies and actions that can be taken

a) Befriending

This encourages pupils to make deliberate attempts to make friends with a peer who is experiencing difficulties. This may be a child in the same year group or an older pupil such as a Buddy.

b) Circle Time

This can be used as an opportunity to evaluate friendship problems and bullying behaviour in an open forum. It is a non-punitive approach that places an emphasis on mutual respect, active listening, empathy, problem solving and celebration of difference. Ground rules must be set for the ways in which pupils should conduct themselves during a Circle Time.

In a case of bullying behaviour those directly involved may choose not to participate when Circle Time is being used to raise awareness of a situation and to elicit support to stop the bullying behaviour.

c) Written apology

The pupil that engaged in the bullying behaviour may want to write a written apology acknowledging their behaviour was wrong, that it had a negative impact on the other pupil and that they do not intend to repeat the bullying behaviour. Where possible, parents of the pupil writing the apology should be informed when an intention to write such a letter is expressed. A copy of this letter should be placed in the relevant pupil records.

d) Repair and Rebuild meeting

Once the investigation is complete it may be appropriate to briefly bring the pupils involved together. A member of staff will facilitate this meeting if both parties express a wish to meet. A verbal apology should be offered and reassurances that the pupil who experienced the bullying behaviour should have no future causes for concern. The latter child may choose to list the behaviours they wish the other to stop.

e) Pupils with Special Educational Needs [SEN]

- **Individual Education Plan [IEP]**

This is a long term supportive pastoral plan that is issued to the teachers of the pupil detailing targets and strategies to help the pupil modify his or her bullying behaviour.

- **Pastoral Support Programme [PSP]**

This is a shorter term (6 weeks approximately), more intensive strategy to prevent exclusion. A meeting will be set up between teacher, parents and child to set targets and define the monitoring and rewards systems to support the bully to modify his or her bullying behaviour.

Appendix Three

Advice for pupils who experience bullying behavior

- 1) **Remember it's not your fault.** You might feel scared, sad and embarrassed but it's the person or people doing the bullying that need to change, not you.
- 2) **Get help. Don't suffer in silence.** Think of an adult who could help you. Tell them you think you are being bullied and you need their help to stop it. If they don't give you the advice you need, go to the next person until you find someone that can help you stop it. No one has the right to hurt you. It is a strong person that asks for help.
- 3) **Keep a record.** Try and keep a diary of events. This should include what happened, when and with who. Your parent or carer might be able to help you do this. Top tips for children 2/2
- 4) **Know your friends.** Make sure you only hang around with people who make you feel good about yourself. If someone makes you feel sad, scared or makes you do things you don't want to do they are not your friend.
- 5) **Practice standing up for yourself.** It can help to practice standing or sitting up tall in the mirror, making eye contact and saying a clear, firm 'No'. Don't let the person bullying you get a reaction from you.
- 6) **Seek a place of safety.** If you are at risk of harm there is no shame in taking yourself away from the situation. Do whatever it takes not to get hurt. If that means finding a safe place at break or lunch time like a classroom or the library then do it. Just make sure you seek help as soon as you can.
- 7) **Remember no one has the right to hurt you.** If someone has physically hurt you in any way, has touched you in a way that made you uncomfortable or is trying to get you to do something dangerous or risky then seek help. If the person you talk to doesn't listen or take you seriously, don't blame yourself, find someone who will help.
- 8) **Love yourself.** When you are bullied it can make you feel sad and lonely and like you are rubbish. You are not rubbish. You are amazing and wonderful and life will get better. Do things that make you feel good about yourself. That might be playing with a pet, going for walks, doing sports, singing, watching funny videos, playing games, writing down your feelings as poems or songs. We want you to know you are not alone. Thousands of children go through bullying every day. Together we will stop it and you will be okay.
- 9) **Stand up for others.** We all have a part to play in stopping bullying. If you see children who are scared or lonely stand or sit with them. Don't join in bullying behaviour by laughing or sharing cruel posts. Make it clear to those doing the bullying that you don't find it funny or like it. Stand up for others who are different. Show them you think they are great just as they are.

(Source: Help with bullying 2020, www.kidscape.org.uk)