



# CHARLTON SCHOOL

*Taking PRIDE in progress and partnership,  
with learning at the heart of all we do.*



**Principal: Mr A McNaughton**

Good afternoon

Next week we will be promoting Antibullying week at Charlton. As a school we are proud to work with The Diana Award and are an Antibullying Ambassador School. The Diana Award engages young people, parents and teachers to change the attitudes, behaviour and culture of bullying by building skills and confidence to address different situations, both online and offline. As part of antibullying week we are running a variety of activities with students:

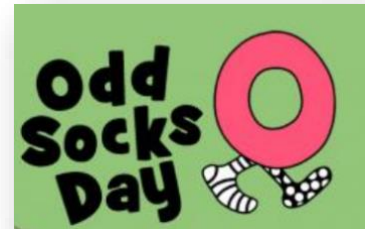


### **Self-Advocacy task**

A house activity for students to complete on Doodle (also attached). This activity aims to develop self-advocacy skills, it is recommended that, if possible, students complete this with a trusted adult. Once complete students should hand in their work to their form tutor and will receive a house point for taking part.

### **Odd Socks Day: Monday 14th November**

Odd Socks Day is promoted through the Anti-Bullying Alliance. It's an opportunity to encourage people to express themselves and celebrate their individuality and what makes us all unique! There is no pressure to wear the latest fashion or to buy expensive costumes. All you have to do to take part is wear odd socks to your school, at work or at home, it couldn't be simpler! Odd Socks day will take place on the first day of Anti-Bullying Week each year to help raise awareness of bullying.



### **Antibullying Ambassadors**



We will be working with a group of Antibullying ambassadors in school to create a student friendly version of the Anti-Bullying Policy to make this more accessible to students. The Anti-Bullying ambassadors will be sharing their work with all students as part of their student leadership role.

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## Curriculum Enhancement Days

In addition to the activities next week students have recently taken part in the Big Antbullying assembly and have received presentations during curriculum enhancement days to build skills and confidence to address and report situations, including the promotion of our anonymous reporting tool 'tootoot'.



Please see the attached Anti-Bullying parents guide which will also be available on the school website under 'help guides for families'. If you haven't already, please do have a look at this section of the website which contains some very useful information for parents and carers: <https://www.charlton.uk.com/help-guides-for-families>.

Please encourage your child to take part in the activities on offer and wear their 'odd socks' on Monday to raise awareness of bullying.

Many thanks

Mrs A Vickers  
Assistant Vice Principal - Personal Development, Culture and Ethos

# A PARENT'S GUIDE TO ANTI-BULLYING

If your child has previously experienced or is currently experiencing bullying behaviour, it can be a very upsetting and emotional time. You may also feel quite isolated and anxious about what to do to support your child and resolve the situation. In this guide, we will explore bullying behaviour and definitions, some of the most common signs to look out for if you know or suspect that your child is experiencing bullying behaviour and practical next steps towards a solution.

## BULLYING FACTS IN THE UK

The national centre for social research found that **47%** of young people reported that they had experienced bullying behaviour by the age of 14. (Brown, Clery & Ferguson, 2011)

The number of children and young people who have experienced cyber-bullying behaviour has increased by **88%** in five years, according to the NSPCC Report. (2015/16)

**16,493** young people aged 11-15 are absent from school due to bullying behaviour. (Clery, 2011)

## THE DIANA AWARD'S DEFINITION OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

Repeated negative behaviour that is intended to make others feel upset, uncomfortable or unsafe. This can happen both online and offline.

## TYPES OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR



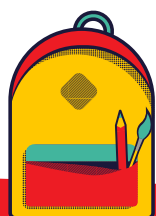
**Verbal** bullying behaviour is the repeated, negative use of speech, sign language or verbal gestures to intentionally hurt others e.g. using hurtful words, discriminatory or offensive language or swear words.



**Indirect** bullying behaviour is the repeated, negative use of actions which are neither physical nor verbal to intentionally hurt others e.g. spreading rumours, purposefully excluding another person, damaging or stealing someone's property or cyberbullying.



**Physical** bullying behaviour is the repeated, negative use of body contact to intentionally hurt others e.g. kicking, punching, slapping, inappropriate touching or spitting.



## SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS TO LOOK OUT FOR IF YOU BELIEVE YOUR CHILD IS EXPERIENCING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR\_

- Isolation from social groups or gatherings
- Changes in personality (quieter or acting out for attention)
- Fall in school grades
- Defensive body language
- Stopped doing activities they enjoy
- Regularly truants from school
- Does not want to go to school
- Being upset before or after school
- Being secretive and hiding their phone or other devices

## HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD IF THEY ARE EXPERIENCING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR\_

It can be hard as a parent/guardian to find out your child is experiencing bullying behaviour. If your child tells you that this is happening, listen to them carefully, praise them for confiding in you and remain calm.

### STEP ONE

#### Speaking to your child\_

- Unhelpful responses include: 'just ignore it', 'man up', 'stop telling tales' or 'it is just a normal part of growing up'. Instead, try helpful responses like 'Thank you for telling me', 'We will get through this together' or 'I will support you through this'.
- Focus on acknowledging how they feel rather than dismissing it. Young people have the right to feel safe and happy at school and bullying behaviour should never be a barrier to learning. Try to remain calm and positive.

### STEP TWO

#### Get all the facts\_

- Use active listening, approach conversations with no expectations/hidden agenda and don't ask leading questions. Instead, encourage your child to tell you what has been happening in their own words. Avoid blaming language such as 'I told you not to wear that to school'; remember that experiencing bullying behaviour is never the young person's fault.

### STEP THREE

#### Work with others who can help you\_

- Work with the school: There are a lot of school staff who can support your child to take positive next steps. This sometimes includes the school's pastoral lead or SENCo (Special Education Needs Coordinator). All schools are legally required to have an Anti-Bullying Policy and a procedure to follow when bullying incidents takes place. Check the school website or ask to see a copy of these documents so you can work with the school to resolve this together.
- Other parents: You may be tempted to speak to other parents or even post something on social media. This can be detrimental, as it could exacerbate the situation.



## HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD IF THEY ARE EXPERIENCING ONLINE BULLYING BEHAVIOUR\_

In addition to the above:

- Encourage your child to talk to you about what has happened. They may also have a teacher who they trust and can go to for support in school too.
- Report the post/video or photos on the app/online platform. All online apps/platforms have online Help Centres where they outline the steps to report content. In most situations, reporting content is anonymous, so the person who posted the content will not know who reported it.
- Block the person posting the content. This will stop them being able to message your child.
- Save the evidence by screenshotting.
- Encourage your child to not reply or answer back, however tempting it may be.
- Stay positive.
- If your child is ever in immediate danger, ring 999.

### Further Support:

For FAQs and further support, take a look at our support centre here:

[www.antibullyingpro.com/support-centre](http://www.antibullyingpro.com/support-centre)

Keep up with the latest technology and social media here:

[www.net-aware.org.uk](http://www.net-aware.org.uk)

For a more detailed look at bullying behaviour and the psychology behind this behaviour, visit the Anti-Bullying Alliance's website and complete the e-learning modules:

[www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information)

The Diana Award Crisis Messenger provides free, 24/7 crisis support across the UK. If you are a young person in crisis, you can text **DA** to **85258**. Trained volunteers will listen to how you're feeling and help you think through the next step towards feeling better.

The Diana Award trains young people in schools to stand up to bullying behaviour – if you would like us to come to your child's school, tell their school teachers about The Diana Award's free Anti-Bullying Ambassador Programme.

<https://www.antibullyingpro.com>

### References\_

Brown, Clery & Ferguson (2011). Estimating the prevalence of young people absent from school due to bullying. National centre for social research. Found here:

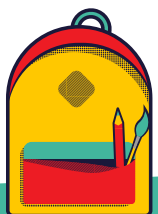
<http://natcen.ac.uk/media/22457/estimating-prevalence-young-people.pdf>

NSPCC (2015/16) What children are telling us about bullying. Childline bullying report 2015/16. Found here:

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/1204/what-children-are-telling-us-about-bullying-childline-bullying-report-2015-16.pdf>

Clery (2011). Estimating the prevalence of young people absent from school due to bullying. Nat Cen Social Research that works for society. Found here:

<http://natcen.ac.uk/our-research/research/estimating-the-prevalence-of-young-people-absent-from-school-due-to-bullying/>



We're proud to be the only charity set up in memory of Diana, Princess of Wales and her belief that young people have the power to change the world. It's a big mission but there are two things within it that we focus our charity's efforts on – young people and change.

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Throughout all of our programmes and initiatives 'change' for and by young people is central, including our anti-bullying work which encourages change in attitudes and behaviours for young people by young people.

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We hope you found this resource useful and wish you all the best in your anti-bullying journey. If you would like to help us create more resources and train even more Anti-Bullying Ambassadors you can make a £5 donation by texting CHANGE 5 to 70470 or visit [diana-award.org.uk/donate](http://diana-award.org.uk/donate)

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Website: [www.diana-award.org.uk](http://www.diana-award.org.uk)

## Tips For Self-Advocacy



### Take a moment - what does feeling heard mean to you?

As a young person there may be times that you feel you have not been listened to. You may think the reason for this is because someone is older and more knowledgeable, so is in control. For example, teachers or doctors. It may not always be one person but could be a large group of people or a system, such as the government. This can leave you feeling upset, frustrated, or even wanting to give up. In moments like this, it's important to remember your experience is valid, your voice is powerful, and you matter.

This guide is here to support you to self-advocate. Or, if you are supporting someone else, you can share this or complete it with them.

Throughout our lives all of us need to ask for things or speak up for ourselves. This doesn't always mean you have to shout or be the loudest person in the room to be heard. The word 'heard' is very important here. We all want to be listened to AND heard. We want to feel that our thoughts, feelings, opinions, and experiences matter.

### What Is Self Advocacy?

According to the charity MIND, self-advocacy means **“speaking up about the things that are important to you”**<sup>1</sup>.

It also includes asking questions, asking for what you need, and asking for help.

### Why Is It Important?

Self-advocacy is a great skill to learn because you can use it now and in the future. It can help others understand your experience and how they can best support you. It may also help you become more independent, curious, confident, and empowered when making decisions or facing problems.

Advocating for yourself may not always be easy. There are some communities who are more likely to be ignored just because of their identity. For example, due to skin colour, ethnicity, and gender. That's why it's important to encourage and support a person to speak up if they feel comfortable to BUT also to continue to amplify their voice by being an Upstander and Ally. You can check out our [guide on promoting diversity](#) to learn more.



# How Can I Learn to Self-Advocate?

It might surprise you, but you may already have started to do it! Examples of advocating for yourself include asking your parent/carer to have something specific for dinner or asking your teacher for extra help with your homework.

Below are some ideas to help you build your self-advocacy skills. At the end of the guide there is an activity sheet that might help you plan or think about some of the steps you can take. You can go through this on your own or with someone you trust.

## 1 Identify

To start, think about a particular situation or issue that you want to raise. How has it made you feel? What do you need? Are there any changes you hope to see? Make sure you are being clear and specific – focus on one issue at a time.

It can also be helpful to do some research into your rights if you feel it is relevant. A useful place to start is [here](#)\*. Remember, even if the situation doesn't clearly violate one of your rights, it doesn't mean that your feelings of being treated unfairly or ignored don't matter. You can still raise these issues.

## 2 Seek Support

Remember the pressure is not all on you to solve the issue. Just because you're speaking up for yourself doesn't mean you shouldn't have support to create a plan, especially if it is a difficult or sensitive situation. Reach out to someone you trust, who will listen and be supportive. For example, your family, peers, or a teacher. If you can't think of someone, don't worry. You could try a helpline like Diana Award Crisis Messenger, Childline or The Mix.

## 3 Be Brave

You can do this! It is not easy to speak up, but you matter and deserve to be heard. If you are worried you could try breathing exercise or write down or practice what you want to say. You can ask someone to come with you.

Remember, sometimes speaking up may not always lead to you instantly getting the result you want, but it's a step in the right direction.

## 4 Speak Up

When you are ready, speak to the person who you think can help you solve this issue and take action. If it is in school, it could be a teacher or pastoral care staff. Think about the best time and place to have the conversation, for example in a quiet space during lunchtime. Try to:

Be specific – focus on how the situation made you feel.

Be respectful – you may feel emotional and want to convey this but it's important to remember shouting or being rude probably won't help. Try to speak calmly and slowly.

Include solutions – if you have an ideal outcome, it's good to mention this during the conversation.

## 5 Reflect

You've done it! Make sure you check in with yourself or someone you trust afterwards. Think about how you felt and what you learned. Are there any next steps you can take?



## What Can I Do If I Still Feel Unheard?

If you've done all the above and still feel unheard, know you are trying your best. If it is not an urgent issue one thing you could do is take some time away from it. Look after yourself and do things that bring you joy, such as hanging out with loved ones or watching your favourite show. You can always come back to it later. If it is an urgent or complex issue, you

may need further help or advocacy. Consider speaking to a parent or carer to support you to take it further.

You're never alone - there are so many people in the world who have been told no so many times before being told yes. It could be helpful to connect with (in person and online) those who have had similar experiences.

Here are some quotes from some famous figures and our young people at The Diana Award that might inspire you to keep going:

“  
**WIN or LEARN —  
YOU NEVER LOSE**

— NELSON MANDELA  
(PRESIDENT AND ACTIVIST)

**NO FEELING  
IS SILLY.  
IT'S VALID 😊**

— Young Person  
at The Diana Award

*I learned a long time ago the wisest thing I can do is be on my own side, be an advocate for myself and others like me.*

— MAYA ANGELOU  
(POET and ACTIVIST)

**THERE  
IS  
SUPPORT  
OUT THERE,  
DON'T  
STOP  
LOOKING**

— YOUNG  
PERSON  
AT  
THE  
DIANA  
AWARD

**DON'T BE AFRAID TO  
ASK FOR HELP ♡**

— YOUNG PERSON AT  
THE DIANA AWARD

”  
**DON'T LET ANYONE  
TELL YOU THAT YOU CAN'T  
DO SOMETHING. ESPECIALLY  
NOT YOURSELF.**

— MINDY KALING  
(ACTRESS)

# ACTIVITY SHEET

Here are some helpful prompts you can use to get started on your self-advocacy journey. If you ever have an issue you'd like to raise. Feel free to write down as much or as little as you'd like.

## **What is the issue and what do I need?**

*Remember try to be specific!*

## **Who or what can help me?**

*Is it one person or a group of people?  
Do you need other support?*

## **How did it go?**

*What went well? What could I do differently?*

## **What would I like to do?**

*Think about what you'd like to do about the issue*

## **What information do I need?**

*This could be research you need to do  
e.g. on your rights*

## **Other Notes**