



What to do if your child says they are being bullied? (*or you think your child is being bullied*)

1. Talk to your child

- Listen and reassure them.
- Stay calm. Remember there are two sides to every story.
- Decide whether your child needs ideas on how to deal with it (see [Advice for children who are being bullied sheet](#) or whether you need to talk to school staff
- Agree what you will do next.
- If you need to talk further with the school don't promise to keep secrets.
- Make a record of what your child has told you and from now on ask your child to keep a bullying diary (For an example see: www.norfolk.gov.uk/bullying)

2. Talk to the school

- Ask for a time to meet your child's class teacher or form tutor to talk about what your child is saying.
- Ask them to give you or send you their Anti Bullying policy before the meeting.
- Note what the school says they can do to support children who are being bullied.

Before the meeting

- Make a note of things you want to talk about or questions you want to ask (use the [Record sheet](#) if it helps
- Write down what your child says about being bullied and when and where it happened, who was there and who they told.
- Check with the school to see if it's OK for your child to come to the meeting or part of the meeting if they want to.
- Remember many children and young people will find this hard and they do not have to come to the meeting.

At the meeting

- If you want to, you can take a friend, an interpreter or someone else with you to help you.
- Make sure everyone knows who you (and the person with you) are, that you know who everyone else is, what they do and why they are there.
- Listen carefully to what the school say and ask them to listen to you in the same way.
- Sharing what you know in a calm way will help everyone solve the problem.

- Ask for any words you don't know to be explained.
- Tell them about what your child is saying about being bullied and if your child is there help them to talk about it.
- Ask them what help they can give (refer to their Anti-Bullying Policy).
- Check you have asked everything you wanted to.
- Take notes (see the example [Record of Meeting](#) that might help you).

At the end of the meeting

- Agree what will happen next, who will do it and when it will be looked at again.
- Agree a Key staff member to tell you how it is working - maybe class teacher or Form Tutor.

After the meeting

- Talk to your child in a calm way about what will happen next.
- Talk about what they need to do.
- Remind them about ways of dealing with it.
- Ask them to keep you informed.
- Keep in touch with the Key staff member to check that things are being done and your child is feeling better.
- Allow time for people to do the things agreed at the meeting.

3. What to do if the bullying is still going on and you think things agreed at the meeting haven't happened

- Ask for a meeting with a senior member of staff. In a secondary school this would be the Head of Year whereas in a primary school this could be the Deputy or Headteacher.
- Make sure that you are prepared and write down anything you want to remember. (see Steps 1 and 2 above and use Record of meeting form).
- Again allow time for people to do the things agreed at the meeting

4. What to do if the bullying is still going on and you think things agreed at the meeting haven't happened

- If you are still not happy with what has been done, you can ask to have an informal meeting with the head teacher and talk about your concerns.
- Remember you can bring someone with you.
- [Use advice in Steps 1 and 2 to prepare for this meeting.](#)
- Again allow time for the school to do the things agreed at the meeting.

5. If the bullying is still going on and you think things agreed at the meeting haven't happened you may need to make a formal complaint

- Every school has a Complaints Procedure and you can ask for a copy.
- You will need to follow the school's own Complaints Procedure because they are not the same in every school.

- Most schools will ask you to write a letter of complaint to the head teacher.
- You should say in the letter "This letter is a formal complaint".
- Explain what has happened, what has been done and say what you would like to happen.
- Stick to facts.
- This will usually lead to a meeting with the head teacher. This is the first step in the formal complaints procedure and cannot be missed out
- Remember you can bring someone with you.
- Again take notes and use the Record of Meeting format to help you.
- Again allow time for the Headteacher to do the things agreed at the meeting

6. If the bullying is still going on and you think things agreed at the meeting haven't happened, the next step is to ask to write to the Chair of Governors

- Write a letter to the Chair of Governors, at the school address. You must write on the front of the envelope 'for addressee only' so that only the Chair of Governors will open it. If you want to use their name ask the school office for it.
- The Chair of Governors will ask Governors to meet with you. This is sometimes called a Governors Complaints Panel.
- Remember you can bring someone with you.
- Again take notes and use the Record of Meeting format to help you.
- The Governors decision is final and it is rare for this to be overturned.

7. If you are not happy with the decision of the Governors meeting, you can complain, in writing, to the Secretary of State for Education at the Department of Education

Be aware that even the Secretary of State has limited powers to change a decision made by a Governing Body

You should only do this if:

- (a) You have tried steps 1 to 6 first and can show that things agreed have not happened.
- (b) If you believe that a governing body is acting "unreasonably" or is failing to carry out its statutory duties properly.
- (c) If your child is at the same school where the incident took place.

Contact details are:

Telephone: 0370 000 2288

Typetalk: 18001 0370 000 2288

You can also write to the Department:

Department for Education

Piccadilly Gate

Store Street

Manchester

M1 2WD

8. You can tell Ofsted about your concerns.

- Ofsted will not usually investigate individual concerns, but can record parents' concerns for consideration during the school's next inspection.
- For more information see the Ofsted website at
- www.ofsted.gov.uk/schools/for-parents-and-carers/
- Or call their helpline on 0300 123 4666.

What if your child's school is an Academy?

- Academies must have a complaints procedure which must be available to parents.
- There must be clear timescales
- Parents are able to formally complain in writing and attend a hearing before a panel.
- The panel should include at least one member who is independent of the academy.

From the 31 March 2012, issues relating to Academies, including complaints, will become the responsibility of the Education Funding Agency (EFA), a new executive agency of the Department for Education (DfE). For information about how to complain see [DfE website](#)

Here are further details of [NCC Children's Services complaints procedure](#).

These tips have been compiled by Rita Adair, Senior Lead Educational Psychologist, Nicky Dawson, Partnerships Parenting Adviser and Chris Heasman, Complaints Case Manager, Norfolk County Council; Sarah Merrick, Parent Partnership Officer, Norfolk Parent Partnership, Liz Martin, Project Manager Family Action and Penny Olivo, Service Manager, Parenting Pathways (Action for Children) and Julie Westrop, Senior Adviser Parents and Extended Services.

If you need this document in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact the Compliments and Complaints Team on 01603 222008 or 0344 800 8011 (Textphone).

Record of meeting to discuss alleged bullying with school

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| Record of meeting/telephone conversation |
| Date:..... |
| Child's name:..... |
| Parents' name:..... |
| Who I spoke to at the meeting or on the phone..... |
| |
| We met at:..... |

Before the meeting

- What do I want to make sure I tell people about at the meeting or on the phone?

At the meeting

- . What did we talk about at the meeting?

Actions

| What did we agree to do at the meeting? | Who will do it? | When will it be done by? | Has it happened? |
|---|-----------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| | | | |

When will we discuss again?

You may want to ask the school to take a copy of this.