

Complex issues may take some time to sort out.

You should also:

- try to stay calm
- encourage your child to be assertive, without hitting back or retaliating
- avoid approaching another child or parent yourself
- discourage bullying behaviour at home and elsewhere.

If you feel that the school or college is not properly dealing with the problem then you should:

- ask to meet with the headteacher/principal
- ask for a copy of the school's complaints procedure.

If you are still not satisfied you may wish to contact the Education Helpline.
01223 706399

Within Cambridgeshire County Council further information and help is available:

Cambridgeshire Race Equality and Diversity Service (CREDS) (if the bullying is of a racist or sexist nature) tel: 01223 568841

The Parent Partnership Service (for parents and carers of children and young people with special educational needs) confidential advice line tel: 01223 699214

Education Helpline (if parents have a complaint about a school)
tel: 01223 706399

Locality Teams Each locality in Cambridgeshire has a multi-disciplinary team that could offer advice and support. Please contact the Education Helpline 01223 706399 for the name and contact number of your locality manager.

A further range of information and advice is available on the Cambridgeshire County Council website:
www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/bullying

**If you would like a copy of the text in this leaflet in large print, Braille, audio tape or in another language, please call
01223 706399**

Bullying at school

Information and advice for parents and carers if you think that your child may be experiencing bullying or may be demonstrating bullying behaviour

Introduction

Schools and colleges in Cambridgeshire aim to create an environment in which children feel safe, secure and happy so that they can learn most effectively.

Occasionally, some children may experience bullying at school. Sometimes the effects of bullying can be serious, upsetting and long-lasting. Bullying is **a persistent, deliberate attempt to hurt or humiliate someone.**

Bullying behaviour is characterised by three things:

- it is repeated over time
- it involves deliberately hurtful behaviour
- it involves an unfair balance of power that makes it hard for those being bullied to defend themselves.

Why does bullying occur?

Bullying may occur for a variety of reasons.

Bullies may:

- think it is harmless
- not have been taught that it is wrong to bully others
- be unhappy at school or elsewhere
- have been encouraged to bully by their friends
- themselves have been bullied in the past
- show prejudice based on perceived differences.

Bullying may involve:

- hitting, kicking, spitting and other physical approaches
- name-calling, perhaps related to disability, special needs, religion, gender, sexual orientation or other perceived differences
- racist comments or jokes
- threatening remarks or graffiti
- taking, hiding or damaging possessions
- spreading stories about someone or ignoring him/her
- intimidation by mobile phone, text message, interference with computer files, e-mail or other inappropriate use of the internet.

What do schools and colleges do to prevent bullying?

Schools and colleges take bullying very seriously and must have their own identified anti-bullying policies. They will do their best to ensure that all issues are properly dealt with. Schools, colleges and Cambridgeshire County Council are determined to stop bullying behaviour.

In addition, they should:

- work to create an environment in which children feel free from the fear of being bullied
- support children who may have been bullied and try to ensure that they feel safe
- listen sympathetically to the concerns of parents/carers
- respond positively to all instances of bullying to ensure that they are dealt with satisfactorily
- work to change bullying behaviour.

If you suspect that your child is being bullied or is bullying others you should:

- discuss the matter with your child, taking the matter very seriously
- reassure your child that it is right to talk about the issue, make a note of what your child says and be ready to give precise details (time, date, etc)
- encourage your child to talk to his/her teacher
- arrange an appointment to see the teacher yourself
- ask to see a copy of the school's anti-bullying policy
- work with the school to develop a support plan.