

# Recognising Bullying

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Bullying behaviour is always unacceptable because it is harmful to the person who is bullied and can, in some cases, lead to lasting psychological damage.

**Bullying is defined** as offensive, intimidating, malicious, insulting behaviour and/or an abuse or misuse of power that undermines, humiliates or denigrates. Bullying is a form of abusive behaviour, psychological or physical, which hurts or causes distress by taking unfair advantage of another person in some way, making the victim feel uncomfortable or threatened.

**It is usually deliberate and intended to hurt.**

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## Examples of behaviour which is likely to constitute bullying:

- psychological intimidation, humiliation, excessive and/or unreasonable criticism or fault-finding of any colleague, peer or student
- asserting a position of superiority in an aggressive, abusive or offensive manner, including via electronic media
- preventing access to resources
- unfair allocation of work and responsibilities or setting unreasonable goals or targets in work
- abuse of power or behaviour that causes fear or distress for others
- acting unreasonably by failing and refusing to listen, reflect and take appropriate account of the position or needs of other
- treating staff and students in an unprofessional manner, or refusing to follow agreed and fair procedures
- physical – hitting, kicking, pushing people around, spitting; or taking, damaging or hiding possessions
- verbal – name-calling, taunting, teasing, insulting or demanding money
- exclusionary – intimidating, isolating or excluding a person from a group
- general unkindness – spreading rumours or writing unkind notes, phone texts or emails.

## Bullying may also be:

- sexist – related to a person's gender
- racist or regarding someone's religion or culture
- related to a person's sexual orientation (homophobic)
- related to a person's home circumstances
- related to a person's disability, health or appearance
- sexual – talking to or touching someone in a sexually inappropriate way.

**Cyberbullying** is the use of the internet, mobile phones, social networking sites (such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn, email messaging, etc.) to deliberately upset someone else with offensive and/or humiliating material or comments.