

Bullying and harassment workshop for secondary school students

A workshop on bullying and harassment aimed at educating students on the effects of bullying and how to get help.

First published

5 September 2025

Key details

Stage of practice	Untested
Purpose	Prevention
Topic	Community engagement
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Region	East Midlands
Partners	Police Education
Stage of implementation	The practice is implemented.
Start date	October 2024
Completion date	October 2024

Key details

Scale of initiative	Local
Target group	Children and young people

Aim

This intervention aims to:

- highlight the effects of bullying and harassment on victims, perpetrators, and their families
- explore both the short and long-term impacts, including legal consequences, to educate attendees
- prevent future incidents by teaching attendees how to recognize the signs and offer appropriate support
- inform attendees on how to report such incidents and emphasize the importance of reporting on behalf of victims

Intended outcome

The intended outcomes of this intervention are to improve students' understanding of:

- what constitutes bullying and harassment
- why bullying remains a relevant and pressing issue
- the short and long-term effects on individuals and communities
- the legal framework surrounding bullying and harassment
- how and where to access support for themselves or others

Description

During a dedicated week of action at Nottingham College (an education partner of Nottinghamshire Police), bullying and harassment workshops were delivered to raise awareness and educate students. Nottingham College hosts annual weeks of action, each focusing on a different theme.

In total, four sessions were delivered. One session was online and three were in person across two secondary schools. These workshops were led by schools early intervention officers and

coordinated by the citizens in policing coordinator. Both roles operate within the Prevention Hub, which provides educational interventions for students from Year 5 onwards.

The team includes 13 early intervention officers, and no additional costs were incurred as the sessions fell within their regular responsibilities. The content was tailored for children aged 11 years and above.

To achieve the intended outcomes, each session included the following components.

- Understanding bullying and harassment – definitions were introduced at the start of the session. Participants were asked to identify different types of bullying and harassment. Officers then explored direct and indirect harassment, social isolation, and the misuse of photos and videos.
- Exploring bullying as a current issue – key statistics were shared to highlight the prevalence and impact of bullying, for example: One in four people under the age of 25 years are currently experiencing bullying in the UK, and a further 77% of this age group have been bullied at some point in their lives (research conducted by The Mix in collaboration with Shout, powered by Mental Health Innovations, 2024).
- Understanding short- and long-term effects – a BBC documentary featuring Jesy Nelson from Little Mix was shown to illustrate the emotional toll of bullying. This was followed by a group discussion covering issues such as body image and self-esteem concerns, depression, anxiety, social exclusion and poor school attainment.
- Legal context – the legal aspects of bullying and harassment were addressed both in a dedicated slide and throughout the presentation.
- Accessing support – attendees were signposted to support services through the presentation and feedback form. They were encouraged to take screenshots for future reference or to assist others in need.

Next steps

Following the success of these student-focused sessions, the citizens in policing coordinator plans to deliver similar workshops for parents and teachers to enhance their understanding and ability to support young people. The presentations developed for the week of action have also been adopted as a core resource by the Prevention Team for future school-based interventions on bullying.

Overall impact

Students left the session with a clear understanding of:

- what bullying and harassment are
- why bullying remains a current and relevant issue
- the short and long-term effects of bullying and harassment
- the legal context surrounding these behaviours
- where to seek support for themselves or others

Understanding was assessed at the end of each section, and students were encouraged to ask questions to the engagement officers if they needed clarification.

Feedback collection

Feedback was gathered via a QR code shown at the end of the session. A total of 50 responses were received, offering a range of insights and suggestions. The citizens in policing coordinator is currently awaiting additional feedback from the schools early intervention officers before making any adaptations to future sessions based on the students' input.

What students enjoyed most

Responses included:

- learning about bullying and harassment
- watching the example video, which highlighted that even famous people are human and have feelings
- the informative nature of the session
- participating in group conversations
- sharing views and opinions – "I did not enjoy the session because it hit a little close to situations I have been in."

Suggestions for improvement

Responses included:

- more information on how bullying spreads online
- a deeper exploration of how bullying and harassment affect everyday people
- including a male example in addition to the female video shown – "Nothing, it was well presented."

- longer sessions to allow for more in-depth discussion
- printed case studies for learners to reflect on, rather than relying solely on verbal responses

Learning

Preparation was key to ensure the sessions were delivered successfully. This included making sure the presenters were knowledgeable about the subject and had practiced the presentation. Citizens in policing coordinator ensured this by selecting the appropriate individuals to run the intervention, having the officers review the personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) association 'Police in the classroom' resource, and having the officers run through the presentation with the coordinator prior to delivery to ensure they were confident.

One of the challenges the team faced was working out how to adapt the presentation so it could be delivered to a group of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) students, this involved switching to a more discussion-based approach to ensure the material was understood.

Another challenge faced was a lack of teachers in the room supervising the session delivery, as their presence can help encourage student participation and engagement with officers.

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