



# The Wildings Anti-bullying Policy

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Last updated [14/10/2024](#)

To be reviewed [every two years](#) by the [Principal](#) and [DSL](#)

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## **Statement of intent**

The Wildings believes that all young people are entitled to learn in a safe and supportive environment; this means being free from all forms of bullying behaviour. This policy outlines how instances of bullying are dealt with, including the procedures to prevent occurrences of bullying.

These strategies, such as learning about tolerance and difference as part of the school's curriculum, aim to promote an inclusive, tolerant and supportive ethos at the school.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 outlines several legal obligations regarding the school's response to bullying. Under section 89, schools must have measures in place to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst young people. These measures are part of the school's Communication Policy, which is communicated to all young people, colleagues and parents/carers

All colleagues, parents/carers and young people work together to prevent and reduce any instances of bullying at the school. There is a zero-tolerance policy for bullying at the school.

## 1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- Communications Act 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Education Act 2011
- DfE (2017) 'Preventing and tackling bullying'
- DfE (2021) 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'
- DfE (2023) 'Keeping children safe in education 2023'
- DfE (2020) 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Communication Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy
- Primary Relationships and Health Education Policy
- Secondary School RSE and Health Education Policy
- Exclusion Policy
- Child on Child abuse Policy
- Remote Education Policy

## 2. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, "bullying" is defined as persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another person or group. Bullying is generally characterised by:

- **Repetition:** Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over an extended period of time.
- **Intent:** The perpetrator means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.
- **Targeting:** Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.
- **Power imbalance:** Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.

Vulnerable young people are more likely to be the targets of bullying due to the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves. Vulnerable young people may include, but are not limited to:

- Young people who are adopted.
- Young people suffering from a health problem.
- Young people with caring responsibilities.
- Young people from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Young people with certain characteristics are also more likely to be targets of bullying, including, but not limited to:

- Young people who are LGBTQ+, or perceived to be LGBTQ+.
- Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) young people.
- Young people with SEND.

### 3. Types of bullying

Many kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying, and bullying can be related to almost anything. Teasing another young person because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, home life, culture, or SEND are some of the types of bullying that can occur.

Bullying is acted out through the following mediums:

- Verbal
- Physical
- Emotional
- Online (cyberbullying)

**Racist bullying:** Bullying another person based on their ethnic background or skin colour. Racist bullying is a criminal offence under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Public Order Act 1986.

**Homophobic and biphobic bullying:** Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

**Transphobic bullying:** Bullying based on another person's gender identity or gender presentation, or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.

**Sexist bullying:** Bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.

**Sexual bullying:** Bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal or non-verbal sexual dimension or dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes.

**Ableist bullying:** Bullying behaviour that focusses on another person's disability or support needs; this can include mocking the individual's disability or their needs, using derogatory

words or slurs in relation to an individual's disability, or deliberately excluding an individual because of their disability.

**Prejudicial bullying:** Bullying based on prejudices directed towards specific characteristics or experiences, e.g. religion or mental health issues.

**Relational bullying:** Bullying that primarily constitutes of excluding, isolating and ostracising someone – usually through verbal and emotional bullying.

**Socioeconomic bullying:** Bullying based on prejudices against the perceived social status of the victim, including, but not limited to, their economic status, their parents' occupations, their health or nutrition level, or the perceived "quality" of their clothing or belongings.

## 4. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board is responsible for:

- Evaluating and reviewing this policy to ensure that it does not discriminate against any young people on the basis of their protected characteristics or backgrounds.
- The overall implementation and monitoring of this policy.
- Ensuring that the school adopts a tolerant and open-minded policy towards difference.
- Ensuring the school is inclusive.
- Analysing any bullying data to establish patterns and reviewing this policy in light of these.
- Appointing a safeguarding link governor who will work with the DSL to ensure the policies and practices relating to safeguarding, including the prevention of cyberbullying, are being implemented effectively.
- Ensuring that all governors are appropriately trained regarding safeguarding and child protection at induction.
- Ensuring the DSL has the appropriate status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the role.
- Ensuring that young people are taught how to keep themselves and others safe, including online.

The Principal is responsible for:

- Reviewing and amending this policy, accounting for new legislation and government guidance, and using colleagues experience of dealing with bullying incidents in previous years to improve procedures.
- Keeping a [Bullying Report Form](#) of all reported incidents, including which type of bullying has occurred, to allow for proper analysis of the data collected.
- Analysing the data in the bullying record at termly intervals to identify trends, so that appropriate measures to tackle them can be implemented.
- Arranging appropriate training for colleagues members.

Colleagues are responsible for:

- Being alert to social dynamics in school.
- Being available for young people who wish to report bullying.

- Providing follow-up support after bullying incidents.
- Being alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups, and informing other colleagues of such observations and reporting it on CPOMS.
- Refraining from stereotyping when dealing with bullying.
- Understanding the composition of young people's groups, showing sensitivity to those who have been the victims of bullying.
- Reporting any instances of bullying once they have been approached by a young person for support.

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- Informing school if they have any concerns that their child is the victim of bullying or involving in bullying in anyway.
- Being watchful of their child's behaviour, attitude and characteristics and informing the school of any changes.

Young people are responsible for:

- Informing a trusted colleague if they witness bullying or are a victim of bullying.
- Not making counter-threats if they are victims of bullying.
- Walking away from dangerous situations and avoiding involving other young people in incidents.
- Keeping evidence of cyberbullying and informing a trusted colleague should they fall victim to cyberbullying.

## **5. Statutory implications**

The school understands that, under the Equality Act 2010, it has a responsibility to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The school understands that, under the Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998, it could have charges brought against it if it allows the rights of young people to be breached by failing to take bullying seriously. The principal will ensure that this policy complies with the HRA; the principal understands that they cannot do this without fully involving their colleagues.

Although bullying itself is not a criminal offence, some types of harassment, threatening behaviour and/or communications may be considered criminal offences:

- Under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to electronically communicate with another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, or in a way which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or contains information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.

- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.
- Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by means of a public electronic communications network, a message, or other matter, that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information through any media, including internet sites.
- Other forms of bullying which are illegal and should be reported to the police include violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation, and hate crimes.

## 6. Prevention

This curriculum will explore and discuss issues at age-appropriate stages such as:

- Healthy and respectful relationships.
- Boundaries and consent.
- Stereotyping, prejudice and equality.
- Body confidence and self-esteem.
- How to recognise abusive relationships and coercive control.
- Harmful sexual behaviour, the concepts involved and why they are always unacceptable, and the laws relating to it.

The school will clearly communicate a whole-school commitment to addressing bullying and have a clear set of values and standards which will be regularly promoted across the whole school.

All members of the school will be made aware of this policy and their responsibilities in relation to it. All colleagues will receive training on identifying and dealing with the different types of bullying.

All types of bullying will be discussed as part of the RSE and health education curriculum, in line with the Primary and Secondary School RSE and Health Education Policy.

Colleagues will encourage young person cooperation and the development of interpersonal skills using group and pair work. Diversity, difference and respect for others will be promoted and celebrated through various lessons. Opportunities to extend friendship groups and interactive skills will be provided through participation in special events.

A safe place, supervised by a colleague, will be available for young people to go to during free time if they feel threatened or wish to be alone. The colleague supervising the area will speak to young people to find out the cause of any problems and, ultimately, stop any form of bullying taking place.

The school will be alert to, and address, any mental health and wellbeing issues amongst young people, as these can be a cause, or a result, of bullying behaviour.



The school will ensure potential perpetrators are given support as required, so their educational, emotional and social development is not negatively influenced by outside factors, e.g. mental health issues.

## **7. Signs of bullying**

Colleagues will be alert to the following signs that may indicate a young person is a victim of bullying:

- Being frightened to travel to or from school
- Unwillingness to attend school
- Repeated or persistent absence from school
- Becoming anxious or lacking confidence
- Saying that they feel ill repeatedly
- Decreased involvement in school work
- Leaving school with torn clothes or damaged possessions
- Missing possessions
- Missing dinner money
- Asking for extra money or stealing
- Cuts or bruises
- Lack of appetite
- Unwillingness to use the internet or mobile devices
- Lack of eye contact
- Becoming short tempered
- Change in behaviour and attitude at home

Although the signs outlined above may not be due to bullying, they may be due to deeper social, emotional or mental health issues, so are still worth investigating. Young people who display a significant number of these signs will be approached by a colleague to determine the underlying issues causing this behaviour.

Colleagues will be aware of the potential factors that may indicate a young person is likely to exhibit bullying behaviours, including, but not limited to, the following:

- They have experienced mental health problems, which have led to them becoming more easily aggravated
- They have been the victim of abuse
- Their academic performance has started to fall and they are showing signs of stress

If colleagues become aware of any factors that could lead to bullying behaviours, they will investigate the matter and monitor the situation.

## **8. Colleagues principles**

The school will ensure that prevention is a prominent aspect of its anti-bullying vision.

Colleagues will treat reports of bullying seriously and will not ignore signs of suspected bullying. Colleagues will act immediately when they become aware of a bullying incident. Unpleasantness from one young person towards another will always be challenged and will never be ignored.

Colleagues will always respect young people' privacy, and information about specific instances of bullying is not discussed with others, unless the young person has given consent, or there is a safeguarding concern. If a colleague believes a young person is in danger, e.g. of being hurt, they will inform the DSL immediately.

Follow-up support will be given to both the victim and perpetrator in the months following an incident to ensure all bullying has stopped.

## **9. Child-on-child abuse**

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of child-on-child abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence.

To prevent child-on-child abuse and address the wider societal factors that can influence behaviour, the school will educate young people about abuse, its forms, and the importance of discussing any concerns and respecting others through the curriculum, assemblies and PSHE lessons, in line with the Prevention section of this policy.

All colleagues will:

- Be aware that young people of any age and gender are capable of abusing their peers.
- Be aware that abuse can occur inside and outside of school settings.
- Be aware of the scale of harassment or abuse, and that just because it is not being reported does not mean it is not happening.
- Take all instances of child-on-child abuse equally seriously regardless of the characteristics of the perpetrators or victims.
- Never tolerate abuse as “banter” or “part of growing up”, and will never justify sexual harassment, e.g. as “boys being boys”, as this can foster a culture of unacceptable behaviours and one that risks normalising abuse.
- Be aware that child-on-child abuse can be manifested in many ways, including sexting, sexual harassment and assault, and hazing or initiation-type violence.

Always challenge any harmful physical behaviour that is sexual in nature, such as inappropriate touching. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

Sexual harassment in particular can take many forms, including but not limited to:

- Telling sexual stories, making sexual remarks, or calling someone sexualised names.
- Sexual “jokes” or taunting.
- Deliberately brushing against someone.
- Displaying images or video of a sexual nature.
- Upskirting (this is a criminal offence).

· Online sexual harassment, e.g. creating or sharing sexual imagery, sexual comments on social media, or sexual coercion or threats.

Young people will be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled – this includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers. If a pupil has been harmed, is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral may be made to children’s social care services (CSCS) and potentially the police, where the DSL deems this appropriate in the circumstances.

All colleagues will be aware and sensitive towards the fact that other young people may not be ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused. Young people being abused may feel embarrassed, humiliated, scared, or threatened.

The school’s Child-on-child Abuse Policy outlines the school’s stance on addressing child-on-child abuse, including sexual abuse, and the procedures in place will be adhered to if any instances are uncovered or disclosed. More information on the school’s approach to preventing and managing instances of child-on-child abuse can be found within this policy and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

## 10. Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying can take many forms and can go even further than face-to-face bullying by invading personal space and home life, and can target more than one person. It can also take place across age groups and target young people, colleagues and others, and may take place inside school, within the wider community, at home or when travelling. It can sometimes draw bystanders into being accessories.

Cyberbullying can include the following:

- Threatening, intimidating or upsetting text messages
- Threatening or embarrassing pictures and video clips
- Disclosure of private sexual photographs or videos with the intent to cause distress
- Silent or abusive phone calls
- Using the victim’s phone to harass others, to make them think the victim is responsible
- Threatening or bullying emails, possibly sent using a pseudonym or someone else’s name
- Menacing or upsetting responses to someone in a chatroom
- Unpleasant messages sent via instant messaging
- Unpleasant or defamatory information posted to blogs, personal websites and social networking sites, e.g. Facebook

**NB.** The above list is not exhaustive, and cyberbullying may take other forms.

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to cyberbullying. The school views cyberbullying with the same severity as any other form of bullying and will follow the sanctions set out in [section 12](#) this policy if they become aware of any incidents.

All colleagues will receive training on an annual basis on the signs of cyberbullying, in order to identify young people who may be experiencing issues and intervene effectively.

Many of the signs of cyberbullying will be similar to those found in the '[Signs of bullying](#)' section of this policy; however, colleagues will be alert to the following signs that may indicate a young person is being cyberbullied:

- Avoiding use of the computer
- Being on their phone routinely
- Becoming agitated when receiving calls or text messages

Colleagues will also be alert to the following signs which may indicate that a young person is cyberbullying others:

- Avoiding using the computer or turning off the screen when someone is near
- Acting in a secretive manner when using the computer or mobile phone
- Spending excessive amounts of time on the computer or mobile phone
- Becoming upset or angry when the computer or mobile phone is taken away

Parents/Carers will be given information in order to educate them on the signs and symptoms of cyberbullying, and will be advised to report to the principal if their child displays any of the signs outlined in this section.

All learning at home will follow procedures outlined in the Remote Education Policy. During times when remote education is being utilised, the school will frequently be in contact with parents to make them aware of their activities online, but also to reinforce the importance of young people staying safe online, and explaining how filtering and monitoring procedures work.

Colleagues will be aware that a cyberbullying incident might include features different to other forms of bullying, prompting a particular response. Significant differences may include the following:

- **Possible extensive scale and scope** – young people may be bullied on multiple platforms and using multiple different methods that are made possible by virtue of the bullying taking place online
- **The anytime and anywhere nature of cyberbullying** – young people may not have an escape from the torment when they are at home due to the bullying continuing through technology at all times
- **The person being bullied might not know who the perpetrator is** – it is easy for individuals to remain anonymous online and on social media, and young people may be bullied by someone who is concealing their own identity
- **The perpetrator might not realise that their actions are bullying** – sometimes, the culture of social media, and the inability to see the impact that words are having on someone, may lead to young people crossing boundaries without realising
- **The victim of the bullying may have evidence of what has happened** – young people may have taken screenshots of bullying, or there may be a digital footprint that can identify the perpetrator

Colleagues and young people will be instructed not to respond or retaliate to cyberbullying incidents. Evidence of the incident should be recorded, e.g. taking screenshots. Colleagues will report incidents to their line manager or the principal for the incident to be investigated and support to be provided. Young people will report incidents to a trusted colleague.

Where offensive content is posted online targeting a colleague or young person, the person targeted will be encouraged to use the reporting mechanism on the website or social media platform to request its removal. Where the person who has posted it is known to the school, the principal will request they remove it directly.

The school will support young people who have been victims of cyberbullying by holding formal and informal discussions with the young person about their feelings and whether the bullying has stopped, in accordance with [section 13](#) and [section 14](#) of this policy.

In accordance with the Education Act 2011, the school has the right to examine and delete files from young people's personal devices, e.g. mobiles phones, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone. In these cases, the school's Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy will be followed at all times.

## **11. Procedures**

Minor incidents will be reported to the victim's form tutor, who will investigate the incident, set appropriate sanctions for the perpetrator, and inform the head of year in writing of the incident and outcome.

When investigating a bullying incident, the following procedures will be adopted:

- The victim, alleged perpetrator and witnesses are all interviewed separately
- Colleagues ensure that there is no possibility of contact between the young people being interviewed, including electronic communication
- If a young person is injured, medical intervention will be sought.
- A room is used that allows for privacy during interviews
- A witness is used for serious incidents
- If appropriate, the alleged perpetrator, the victim and witnesses are asked to write down details of the incident; this may need prompting with questions from the member of colleagues to obtain the full picture
- The Principal will gather evidence of a cyberbullying incident; this may involve text messages, emails, photos, etc. provided by the victim
- Premature assumptions are not made, as it is important not to be judgemental at this stage
- Colleagues listen carefully to all accounts, being non-confrontational and not assigning blame until the investigation is complete
- All young people involved are informed that they must not discuss the interview with other young people

Due to the potential for some specific forms of bullying to be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviour, colleagues involved in dealing with the incident are required to consider whether there is a need for safeguarding processes to be implemented.

## **12. Sanctions**

If the Principal is satisfied that bullying did take place, the perpetrator will be helped to understand the consequences of their actions and warned that there must be no further incidents. The Principal will inform the perpetrator of the type of sanction to be used in this instance and future sanctions if the bullying continues.

If possible, the Principal will attempt reconciliation and will obtain an apology from the perpetrator. This will either be in writing to the victim, and/or witnesses if appropriate, or face-to-face, but only with the victim's full consent. Discretion will be used here; victims will never feel pressured into a face-to-face meeting with the perpetrator.

Parents are informed of bullying incidents and what action is being taken.

All colleagues involved in managing instances of bullying will be aware that taking disciplinary action and providing support are not mutually exclusive actions, and should be conducted simultaneously to encourage more positive behaviour in future.

The school will avoid unnecessarily criminalising young people for bullying or abusive behaviour where possible, as young people with criminal records face stigma and discrimination in future aspects of their lives. The school's focus when handling perpetrators will be supporting them to develop more positive behaviours and to refrain from abusive and bullying behaviours in the future.

The school will remain cognisant of the fact that continued access to school can be important for rehabilitation of harmful behaviour, and will not exclude young people unless as a last resort – where there have been serious or consistent incidents of bullying, the school will act in line with the Exclusion Policy.

## **13. Support**

In the event of bullying, victims will be offered the following support:

- Emotional support and reassurance from the school counsellor
- Reassurance that it was right to report the incident and that appropriate action will be taken
- Liaison with their parents/carers to ensure a continuous dialogue of support
- Advice not to retaliate or reply, but to keep the evidence and show or give it to their parent/carer or a colleague
- Advice on aspects of online safety, in the event of cyberbullying, to prevent re-occurrence, including, where appropriate, discussion with their parents/carers to evaluate their online habits and age-appropriate advice on how the perpetrator might be blocked online
- Discussion with their parent on whether police action is required (except in serious cases of child exploitation or abuse where the police may be contacted without discussion with parents)

Colleagues, particularly the DSL, will work with the victim to build resilience, e.g. by offering emotional therapy.

The school will acknowledge that bullying may be an indication of underlying mental health issues. The school will work with the perpetrator regarding any underlying mental health or emotional wellbeing problems.

## **14. Follow-up support**

The progress of both the perpetrator and the victim will be monitored by colleagues, in particular the DSL and the young person's champion

Young people who have been bullied will be offered continuous support. The victim will be encouraged to tell a trusted adult in school if bullying is repeated.

Young people who have bullied others will be supported in the following ways:

- Receiving a consequence for their actions
- Being able to discuss what happened
- Being helped to reflect on why they became involved
- Being helped to understand what they did wrong and why they need to change their behaviour
- Appropriate assistance from parents/carers

Young people who have been bullied will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and the DSL will, if necessary, refer the victim of bullying to CAMHS.

## **15. Bullying outside of school**

Colleagues will remain aware that bullying can happen both in and outside of school, and will ensure that they understand how to respond to reports of bullying that occurred outside school in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the Child-on-child Abuse Policy.

The Principal has a specific statutory power to discipline young people for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives the Principal the power to regulate young people's conduct when they are not on school premises, and therefore, not under the lawful charge of a school colleague member.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school, it will be investigated and acted upon.

The Principal is responsible for determining whether it is appropriate to notify the police of the action taken against a young person. If the misbehaviour could be of a criminal nature, or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will be informed.

## **16. Record keeping**

The DSL will ensure that robust records are kept with regard to all reported or otherwise uncovered incidents of bullying – this includes recording where decisions have been made, e.g. sanctions, support, escalation of a situation and resolutions.

The Principal and DSL will ensure that all decisions and actions recorded are reviewed on a regular basis for the purposes of:

- Identifying patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour on the part of certain young people that may need to be handled, e.g. with pastoral support.
- Reflecting on whether cases could have been handled better and using these reflections to inform future practice.
- Considering whether there are wider cultural issues at play within the school, e.g. whether school culture facilitates discriminatory bullying by not adequately addressing instances, and planning to mitigate this.
- Considering whether prevention strategies could be strengthened based on any patterns in the cases that arise.
- Responding to any complaints about how cases have been handled.

## **17. Monitoring and review**

This policy is reviewed every two years by the Principal and the DSL. Any changes to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

The scheduled review date for this policy is 14th October 2026



# Bullying Report Form

This form will be sent to the Principal upon completion.

Personal details	
Name of person reporting incident:	
Name of young person being bullied:	
Year group:	
Form group:	
How may we contact you? (please circle)	
At school	At home
Home address:	
Email:	
Telephone:	

Incident details
What happened?
Where did the incident take place?
When did the incident occur?

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**Who has been suspected of bullying?**

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**Did anyone else see the incident?**

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**According to the victim, how often does the bullying take place?**

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**According to the victim, how long has the bullying been going on?**

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