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COLAISTE NAISIUNTA EALAINÉ IS DEARTHÁ
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BULLYING AT POST PRIMARY LEVEL:
RESEARCH INTO THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF THE PROBLEM
WITH PROPOSALS FOR RAISING AN AWARENESS
THROUGH ART, CRAFT AND DESIGN.

A Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Education

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Candidacy for the

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by

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Dissertation Abstract

Student: Sharon Owens

Title: Bullying at Post Primary Level:
Research into the Nature and Extent of the Problem with Proposals to
Raise an Awareness through Art, Craft and Design.

This dissertation explores the nature and extent of bullying at Post Primary level. It proposes the use of Art, Craft and Design as a means of raising an awareness of bullying behaviour on a whole school level, class level and on an individual level.

The Nature and Extent of bullying is explored in the first four chapters. In the literature review, a series of definitions are put forward for what constitutes as bullying behaviour. Chapters II and III deal with the incidences of bullying behaviour under the headings, Age, Gender and Statistics and examine the influence of family background and school on the individuals involved. Chapter IV discusses the specific psychological traits and personality characteristics of both bullies and victims of bullying.

In Chapter V, I have explored the long term aspects of bullying behaviour and have proposed an approach for dealing with the problem of bullying in schools on three levels, that of a whole school approach and measures at the class and individual level.

Chapter VI relates to the questionnaire and research project undertaken by my fifth year art class during my teaching practice this year. Its aim being to raise an awareness of bullying through a sequence of practical lessons in art, craft and design.

In conclusion, I have suggested a series of aims to be included in a curriculum based approach to bullying and further ideas, materials and resources which can be used to explore the issue of bullying on a practical level, through art, craft and design.

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INTRODUCTION

Bullying, although an age old problem, is very new as an area of research.

Bullying is the most malicious and malevolent form of deviant behaviour widely practiced in our schools and yet it has received only scant attention from national and local authorities. It has failed to claim the attention of teachers' unions; our schools have given it low priority compared with disruptive behaviour and truancy; and finally it has been ignored by the educational research community.(Tattum, 1989)(1)

However the last few years have seen an increase in interest from the media, researchers, the public at large and some local education authorities. This has been mainly due to the horrific and publicised attacks on certain individuals, which have prompted relatives to speak out and education authorities to act. The two most publicised accounts in the UK are probably those of Mark Perry, whose death as a result of bullying led his mother to establish the Anti-Bullying Campaign in conjunction with Kidscape in 1988, and the death of Ahmed Ullah at Burnage High School in 1986. Ahmed's death led to the extensive MacDonald Inquiry, a flurry of media attention, the anti-antiracist backlash from the right and some action from the British local education authorities to prevent the same thing happening in their schools. But even now action has not been extensive. The British Government has only very recently decided to allocate funding to Sheffield University to carry out research into bullying. The Irish Department of Education failed to release guidelines to counter bullying behaviour until September of 1993 and the Department of Education in Northern Ireland has yet to acknowledge that the problem exists at all in their schools.

Bullying in schools is one of the dark, hidden areas of social interaction, along with child physical and sexual abuse and adolescent violence in the home, which has thrived on a bed of secrecy and which has been neglected by professional investigation.

Parents and pupils alike have been concerned about the problem and, therefore, we need not be wary of escalating anxiety in bringing it out into the open for examination and discussion. Only professionals have underestimated the extent of the problem and the long-term trauma and damage caused both to the victims and bullies. We now understand that many victims hide and endure their stress over a period of years, and that the effects may be pervasive and long term.

One of the major difficulties in considering bullying is that it is not a phenomenon which is easily defined and measured. Definitions encompassing all possible facets of bullying become so cumbersome, that they are in danger of being counterproductive. It is, in my view, a problem to be considered within the context of normal social behaviour, where often both the bully and the victim have become enmeshed in a process of maladaptive social functioning which may suddenly escalate into crisis. Once put in terms of social interaction, I feel that schools should be able to respond to the problem in a variety of productive ways.

The problem is covert, well hidden from the staff in school, buried in that "curriculum" organised by the pupils themselves. In addition to being hidden from sight, it may take the form of social ostracism, name calling, malicious gossip or a competitive, academic approach, behaviours which are not easily identified as bullying behaviour by the

victim. It is often an attitude rather than an act; it can be identified as bullying only by

measuring the effect the acts have on a vulnerable child. While in legal terms, we recognise that mental cruelty can cause as much distress as physical damage, we may perhaps continue to be guilty of expecting pupils to cope alone with such psychological stress.

In searching for an explanation for bullying behaviour it is necessary to sift through a bewildering, often conflicting, array of research findings from biological, sociological, anthropological, psychological and other sources. Human behaviour necessarily rests on such a wide base of research. So little research is available on this complex problem of bullying that, as yet, we can only identify high- risk factors rather than proffer, with confidence, firm conclusions. Large scale research with a rigorous statistical design may not be the mode most suitable for the investigation of such a sensitive area. Small-scale, in situ pieces of research carried out in the individual school or classroom by practising teachers who know their pupils well, may be a more flexible and fruitful way forward.

Bullying is always with us. We encounter bullies in some form or other throughout our lives. There does seem to be some prevalent process by which there is a testing out of will and strength of others. It is not only children that we encounter bullying, it happens in all strata of society and in all localities. As adults we have learnt to go where we feel safe, to confront only when we feel comfortable, to conform and to comply so as not to attract too much unwanted attention. Only those trapped by circumstances (as in the armed services and prisons), those trapped by emotional or financial bonds (such as co habitees and marital partners), parents with violent children, those trapped by their frailty (such as the elderly), only adults so locked in a situation for any reason, experience the type of bullying some children encounter daily in school.

Such research that has been carried out shows that only some of those children learn to cope and, of those, few will learn to cope quickly enough to avoid damage and distress. We cannot expect the victims to cope alone. It is not their battle and, therefore, we need to offer training and support to those at risk.

If, as adults, we do fall foul of such an attack, we can turn to others for aid - the police, the legal system, or the trade unions. Are we then leaving the most vulnerable sector of our society unprotected? We need to ensure that the school circumstances in which our children spend the greater part of their lives are those we would wish for ourselves.

The problem is multidimensional and I feel that schools may be able to respond best by using a multifactorial response. Prevention is far better than crisis management and a team response by all teachers taking the responsibility for all children at all times, in a variety of ways, is probably one of the most effective forms of preventative measures possible. The specific intervention programme implemented on discovering a case of bullying must be two-fold: the bullying must stop and firm action must be taken to ensure the safety of the pupils at risk; and, in parallel, the social behaviour of the bully and the victim must be analysed and amended. Simply to stop the bullying is to leave the work half done, and to put further pupils at risk.

There does appear to be a need for a change in attitudes at all levels. The majority of pupils in our schools, I believe, have a clear sense of justice and they themselves are often secondary victims, as a large number of schoolchildren are known to worry about bullying behaviour they witness or hear discussed. We need to help the 'silent majority' of our young people to see that they are taking responsible action in reporting incidents and not 'telling tales'. We must, however, ensure that they do not put themselves at risk

in doing so. As a society, we need to address ourselves to the question of what type of young person we want to emerge from the school experience. Long- term studies are beginning to indicate that children with social problems in school - victims and bullies - are at high risk of taking those problems with them into adult life and even passing them on to their own children. Academic success is important, but unless our pupils are socially secure and well adjusted, we may not see the fruition of their labours or our own.

FOOTNOTES INTRODUCTION

1. D. Tattum and D. Lane, Bullying in Schools, (Stoke-on-Trent:Trentham Books Ltd, 1989), p.

CHAPTER 1

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Bullying : A Definition

Bullying behaviour may be viewed as a form of aggression. Aggression covers a very wide range of activity. (1)

When Dr. Brendan Byrne looked for definitions on aggression, he found that Webster's Third New International Dictionary defined it as "an offensive action or procedure : a culpable unprovoked overt hostile attack".(2) However a further definition is "healthy self assertiveness or a drive to accomplishment or to mastery, especially of skills".(3) Konrad Lorenz described aggression as "the fighting instinct in beast and man which is directed against members of the same species"(4), whilst J.Dollard, L.W. Dods, N.E. Miller, D.H. Mowrer and R.R.Sears defined aggression as "a sequence of behaviour, the goal response to which is the injury of the person toward whom it is directed".(5)

The 1993 Department of Education Guidelines on Countering Bullying behaviour in Primary and Post Primary schools, define bullying as "repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against others".(6) It states that although isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, should not be condoned, they cannot be described as bullying. However, if the behaviour is systematic and ongoing - then it is considered bullying.

Michelle Elliott, a child psychologist and director of the children's charity, 'Kidscape', which runs a helpline for victims of bullying, sees bullying as taking many forms.

It can be physical, like a child being pushed, beaten or thumped. It can involve a weapon and threats. Bullying can also be verbal and emotional.(7)

Delwyn Tattum points out that bullying is all encompassing, including anti-social acts such as assault, intimidation, extortion and violence. It is important to appreciate in each incidence that bullying is a "wilful concious desire to hurt another person".(8)

Pete Stephenson and Dave Smith describe bullying as,

a form of social interaction in which a more dominant individual (bully) exhibits aggressive behaviour which is intended to and does , in fact, cause distress to a less dominant individual (the victim). The aggressive behaviour may take the form of a direct physical or verbal attack or may be indirect as when the bully hides a possession that belongs to the victim or spreads false information about the victim. More than one bully and more than one victim may participate in the interaction.(9)

In this definition, there is a focus on the abuse of power by the bully, the distress experienced by the victim and the intentionality of the act.

Again, the notion of intentionality is central in David A. Lane's definition, where he includes as bullying behaviour "any action or implied action, such as threats or violence intended to cause fear and distress".(10)

In a major study in Scandinavia, Dan Olweus examined aggression in schools. He defined a bully as,

a boy who fairly often oppresses and harasses somebody else. The target may be boys or girls - the harassment physical or mental.(11)

He went on to describe a victim as,

a boy who for a fairly long time has been and still is exposed to aggression from others; that is boys and possibly girls from his own class or maybe from other classes often pick fights and are rough with him and tease or ridicule him.(12)

It is important to note here that Olweus studied only boys, believing that bullying behaviour could be confined almost exclusively to them. His definitions stress the mental and physical nature of the behaviour and the stability aspect, i.e. the fact that it is going on over a period of time. Kaj Bjorkqvist, Kerstin Eckman and Kirsti Lagerspetz see bullying as "a special case of aggression which is social in it's nature".(13)

Therefore, in a Scandinavian context, Erling Roland says that the following definition of bullying would be generally accepted:

Bullying is long standing violence, physical or psychological, conducted by an individual or a group, and directed against an individual who is not able to defend himself in the actual situation. The physical bullying could include kicking, pushing, or beating the victim, whilst the most common means of psychological bullying are teasing and exclusion.(14)

Eve Brock, in her workshop on a positive approach to bullying feels that in every case of bullying behaviour, there is an imbalance and abuse of power. The stronger (not necessarily the older or bigger) inflicting an abuse of his/her power upon a person who is somehow weaker. Brock suggested an integrated definition where,

Bullying is the abuse of power by a person who is somehow stronger, resulting in some distress, harm, or neglect of necessary attention for another.(15)

Sue Askew argues that bullying should be regarded as " a continuum of behaviour

which involves the attempt to gain power and dominance over another".(16)

She sees long term bullying as having painful consequences for the victim but in addition concerns the classroom because a power struggle within the group will affect a pupil's feeling of safety and ability to learn. Askew views bullying as a continuum of behaviour with the result that 'once-off' incidents of physical and verbal assault right up to long term abuse could be included.(17)

Tiny Arora and David Thompson suggest that a number of studies of bullying in post primary schools have tended to concentrate on the identification of children perceived as bullies by their peers and teachers rather than looking at specific incidences of violence apart from their identification with identified bullies. They decided to use children themselves in an attempt to reach a definition of what constituted bullying. A list of friendly and unfriendly interpersonal incidents was drawn up and children were requested to indicate whether they had experienced these incidents once only, twice or more, or not at all during the week immediately before. The following week, the children were asked to examine a list of 'unfriendly' actions and indicate if they thought each constituted bullying with a yes, no or sometimes indication. The children agreed on six actions in the following order:

1. Tried to hurt me.
2. Threatened to hurt me.
3. Demanded money from me.
4. Tried to break something that belonged to me.
5. Tried to hit me.
6. Tried to kick me. (18)

L.F.Lowenstein found that teachers tended to confuse bullying with aggression and disruption, putting the behaviour on the same continuum. Teachers were asked to observe

their pupils and note the following:

1. Physical or verbal attacks on the child or group of children, led by a bully on less adequate or effective children.
2. Causing another child or children physical or psychological distress, as reported by the victim, or observed by a teacher, or reported by a parent of the victim.
(19)

This observation was to continue over a period of six months which resulted in Lowenstein dividing bullying into three types of behaviour: "physical, verbal attacks and more subtle psychological behaviour".(20)

A study by Irene Whitney, Dabie Nabuzoka and Peter Smith refers to the vulnerability of the victims and the fact that they are different due to 'their ethnic origin, class, sexual inclination, or physical or learning difficulties'.(21)

Despite the cultural differences, a definition of bullying from Japan is very similar to those I have previously mentioned. M. White quotes the National Police Agency as defining *Ijime* (bullying) as,

attacks on a particular individual, physical and/or through the force of words, involving threats or pushing, shoving or punching, being shunned by their classmates, psychological pressure continually repeated, resulting in suffering to the victim.(22)

In "Bullies and Victims in School", Valérie Besag recognises the following problems with regard to bullying: few studies available, the contamination of cross cultural effects, the differences in terminology and the variety of research methods employed.

Aware of these constraint, Besag gives the following definition of bullying behaviour;

the repeated attack, physical, psychological, social or verbal, by those in a position of power, which is formally or situationally defined, on those who are powerless to resist, with the intention of causing distress for their own gain or gratification.(23)

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 1

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22. M. White, The Japanese Educational Challenge, (London : Free-Press?MacMillan, 1987)
23. V.E. Besag, Bullies and Victims in Schools (Milton Keynes : Open University Press, 1989), p.4.

CHAPTER 2

INCIDENCES OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

Statistics

Nine year old Mark was walking home from school when a gang of bullies set upon him. His arm was broken, his money stolen and his books were destroyed. His self confidence was also destroyed. He became withdrawn, hated to go to school and eventually had counselling to help him through the trauma. He knew one boys who had attacked him, but refused to tell who they were. He was frightened of what they would do if he told.

Fourteen year old Susan was cornered on the playground by a gang of ten boys and girls. She was stripped to the waist and had to beg on her knees to get her clothes back. She was pushed, punched, and had her hair pulled. 'Tell and you'll get worse', was the parting shot from one of the girls. Sarah didn't tell until they did it again and took photographs. When the mother confronted the school, she was told it was only 'horseplay' . Sarah, who had attempted suicide after the latest incident , was transferred to another school in which she is thriving. (1)

Are these isolated cases of bullying or just the tip of the iceberg? Given the sensitivity of the issue, the means of assessing bully/victim problems is an important one. Ahmed and Smith (1990) compared a number of different methods on a sample of about one hundred children aged nine, eleven, thirteen and fifteen years. They concluded that in the case of students willing to talk about their experiences individually, interviews can give a rich insight. However, interviews were not most suitable as a means of studying the incidence of bully/victim problems; they did not light new cases and, in some instances, led to defensive answers. Teacher nominations of victims correlated quite well with questionnaire responses, but agreement for bullies was not so high. The best method for establishing incidence from 'middle school' age upward appeared to be the use of anonymous questionnaire , such as that used by Olweus.(1991)

The initial work in the quantative assessment of the extent of bullying has been carried out by Olweus in Norway. Use of his questionnaire on a national basis (with samples

of some 25,000 - 50,000 pupils) established that about fifteen per cent of school students were involved in bully/victim problems 'now and then' or more frequently (Olweus 1990). By these criterion, about nine per cent were victims, and seven per cent were bullies. Using a more strict criterion of 'once a week or more', these figures fell to three per cent victims and two per cent bullies.

The pioneering work in Britain into bullying behaviour was carried out by L.F. Lowenstein . He identified eighty three children as bullied in fifteen elementary and secondary schools. From Lowenstein's material , Lagerspetz et.al. extrapolated the following figures : At ages seven to eleven, he found eleven per cent and at the ages eleven to sixteen, two point nine per cent .(2) Using a slightly modified Olweus questionnaire , Ahmed and Smith estimated the incidence of bully/victim problems in about 2,000 pupils in seven middle schools and four secondary schools in the South Yorkshire area (Smith 1991). They found that being bullied 'sometimes', 'now and then' or 'more often' was reported by about two per cent of middle school children and eighteen per cent of secondary school children; while being bullied 'once a week ' or more often by two and three per cent respectively. These figures suggested an incidence of up to one in five for being bullied, and up to one in ten for bullying others. A figure of twenty per cent for being bullied 'sometimes or more' was confirmed by Boulton and Underwood (1992) in three other Sheffield middle schools, together with a figure of bullying others of seventeen per cent. Other studies in England suggest these figures are not atypical. Researches by Arora and Thompson (1987), Stephenson and Smith (1989) and Gillard (1991) have used various different methodologies, but come up with figures of roughly the same order of magnitude, if not greater, as in the case of a report from 'Kidscape'

In a six month period after the 'Kidscape' National Conferences on Bullying' were held in 1989 and 1990, Kidscape received over 12,000 letters and 4,000 telephone calls from parents, children and teachers about the problem of bullying. 'Childline' set up a special 'Bully-Line' for three months in 1990. According to Hereward Harrison, the Director of Counselling, they answered 5,200 calls and counselled approximately 2,000 distressed children and teenagers. In 1984, a two year study was conducted by 'Kidscape' with 4,000 children.

Sixty eight per cent had been bullied at least once. Thirty eight per cent had been bullied at least twice or had experienced a particularly bad incident. Eight per cent of the students felt it had affected their lives to the point that they had tried suicide, had run away, refused to go to school or been chronically ill. (3)

Pete Stephenson and Dave Smith in a study of primary schools, indicated that a wide discrepancy occurred between schools. They found that the number of children involved in bullying in each group varied from nil to fifty per cent, but on average, twenty per cent were involved as either bullies or victims.(4) Ken Reid, in the course of his work on truancy, discovered that approximately nineteen per cent of truants had started to miss school due to bullying and continued to miss school for this reason.(5)

There have been some press reports that Britain is "Bullying capital of Europe" (6) and "Bullying in our schools is worst in Europe - claim".(7) To be fair to Britain, this statement is unjustified. A report from Scotland (Mellor, 1990) based on nine hundred and forty two responses from ten secondary schools, found incidences of six per cent bullied 'sometimes or more often', as low or lower than the Norwegian figures.(8)

An Irish perspective

In Ireland, very little wide ranging research has been undertaken into the problems of bullying behaviour in schools. A report on seven hundred and eighty three children from four Dublin Primary schools by O'Moore and Hillery (1989) found that eight per cent were seriously bullied 'once a week or more often' and three per cent bullied others this frequently. The authors conclude that, "these figures indicate an incidence that is about double that in Norway".(9)

Bullying in Specialist Settings

There is some evidence, not yet published in detail, which would seem to indicate that the incidence of bullying is even higher in specialist settings, among those pupils with emotional, behavioural or learning difficulties. Mitchel and O'Moore (1988) found that sixteen per cent of children in primary remedial groups bullied others, compared with six per cent in non - remedial groups.(10) Byrne (1987) came to a similar conclusion in his study of a secondary school - nine per cent in remedial groups compared with five per cent in ordinary classes. Stephenson and Smith (1988) found that the incidence of bullying was higher in specialist settings for emotional and behavioural problems. Sixty five per cent of these children had been involved in bullying prior to admission. Other studies (eg. Olweus, 1978) suggest that both victims and bullies are most often children of average ability, but it would seem that the stress engendered by the bullying could result in many victims, especially those with long term problems, underachieving.

Even these figures perhaps mask the true extent of the damage, because they do not

take into account the effect of bullying on those merely observing it. It is clear that "many children become highly anxious after witnessing a bullying incident. Students about to transfer from Primary to Secondary school rated it as their main concern about their new school".(11)

The figures I have quoted, however, do not take into account such phenomena as the ripple effect of malicious gossip or the effect one bully alone can have if backed by the group in socially isolating a child.

In legislation, non physical attacks, such as slander and libel, are recognised as potent and mental cruelty is considered alongside physical cruelty as valid grounds for divorce, yet in such issues as bullying it could be that we continue to underestimate the damage non- physical bullying may have on the target child.(12)

A distressing factor emerging from the research is that bullying is often sustained over a long period of time, being handed on from class to class or even year to year. Cole (1977) found that two thirds of teachers facing the problem had inherited it from the previous year. Sadly, the majority felt that they, themselves had failed to implement realistic change and would, therefore, pass on the problem , yet again at the end of the year. Other studies have reported similar findings. Lagerspetz et.al.(1982) reported a ninety three per cent stability of incidence over one year. The attacks do not appear to be consistent, rather they ebb and flow over time, but it is clear that specific children are targeted for attack and that their misery is prolonged.

Gender

There appears to be definite gender differences in the incidence of bullying behaviour. Irene Whitney and Peter Smith have found that the sex differences for being bullied is

slight, but girls tended to be bullied less than boys. Boys admitted to bullying others considerably more than girls. (Table 1) For those pupils who were bullied in Secondary school, the figures for boys in all years were higher than the figures for girls, with the exception of year eleven, where girls were higher than boys for 'once a week or more'. In the sixth form, (years twelve to thirteen) there were no reports of being bullied for either sex. It appeared that boys tended to be bullied more than girls in the majority of year groups. For those pupils who admitted to bullying others, in secondary schools, the figures for boys were higher than the figures for girls in all years except year seven, where their figures were equal for 'once a week or more'. It appears that, as with being bullied, boys also tend to bully others more than girls do in the majority of year groups. (Figures 2.1 - 2.4)

In Lowenstein's study, he found that there were about twice as many bullies among boys as among girls. Kirsti Lagerspetz et.al. selected a group of bullies and a group of victims on the basis of peer ratings and discovered that thirteen point seven per cent of boys but only five per cent of girls were involved in mobbing behaviour. Mobbing is where a group of children pick on one or more others. Erling Roland suggests that there are about twice as many victims among boys than among girls, and the figures for bullies are about three times as high as for girls. The finding that boys bully more than girls, in the ratio of three to one, is a finding common to several pieces of research, but because these figures are based on answers to questionnaires, Roland feels that they may be misleading. He is of the opinion that girls more than boys may be unwilling to answer truthfully about their involvement in violent interactions.(13)

TABLE 1

Percentage (averaged by class and school) for: (a) types of reported bullying behaviour; (b) who does the bullying; for boys and girls

	<i>Junior/middle schools</i>			<i>Secondary schools</i>		
	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Overall</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Overall</i>
(a) Types of bullying behaviour						
N =	722	718	1,440	719	546	1,265
I was called nasty names about my colour or race	19	13	15	10	9	9
I was called nasty names in other ways	51	53	50	57	71	62
I was physically hurt, e.g. hit and kicked	40	33	36	34	16	26
I was threatened	36	27	30	26	24	25
No one would talk to me	12	25	18	4	12	7
I had rumours spread about me	24	29	26	20	30	24
I had my belonging taken away from me	15	18	15	10	7	10
(b) Who does the bullying						
N =	734	728	1,462	689	529	1,218
Mainly one boy	55	27	40	47	21	35
Several boys	30	13	22	43	15	31
Mainly one girl	1	23	12	1	25	12
Several girls	2	15	9	1	16	9
Both boys and girls	12	22	17	8	21	13

SOURCE: Data from a survey by Irene Whitney and Peter Smith, Department of Psychology in Sheffield University. Quoted in Educational Research Volume 35, Number 1 Spring 1993, p.11.

NOTE: Figures are percentages of those children who were bullied, ie. those who did not check the response 'I haven't bullied at school this term' to this question. For Table 1(a), total percentages exceed 100 as more than one response could be checked.

FIGURE 2.1

Been Bullied sometimes or more (secondary)

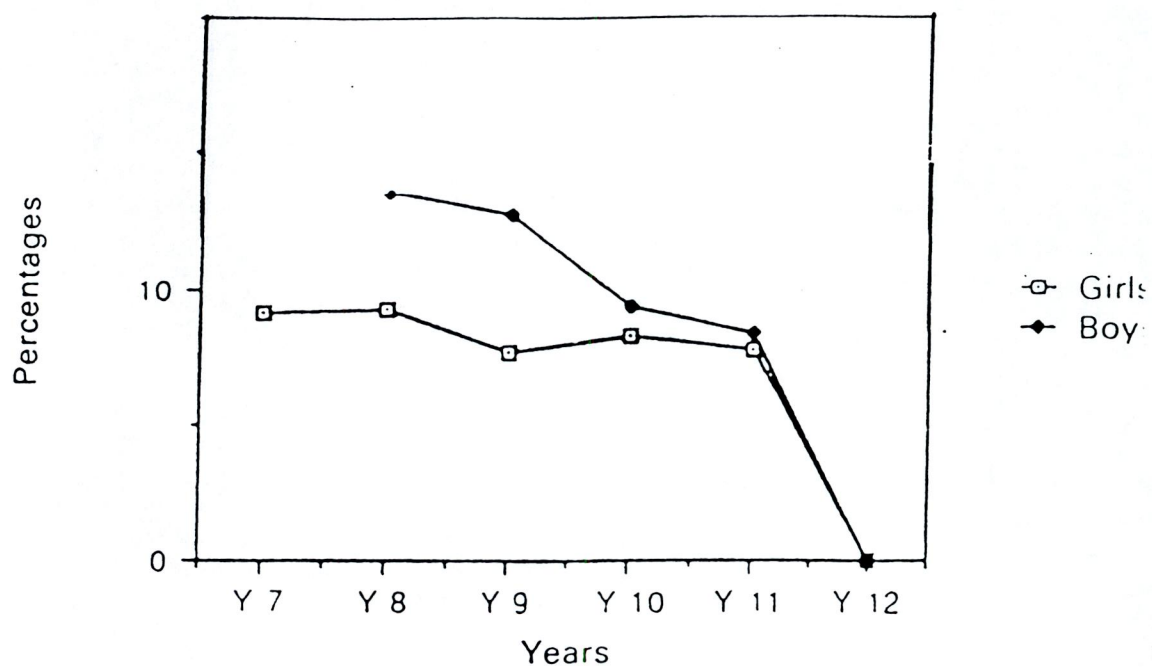


FIGURE 2.2

Been bullied once a week or more (secondary)

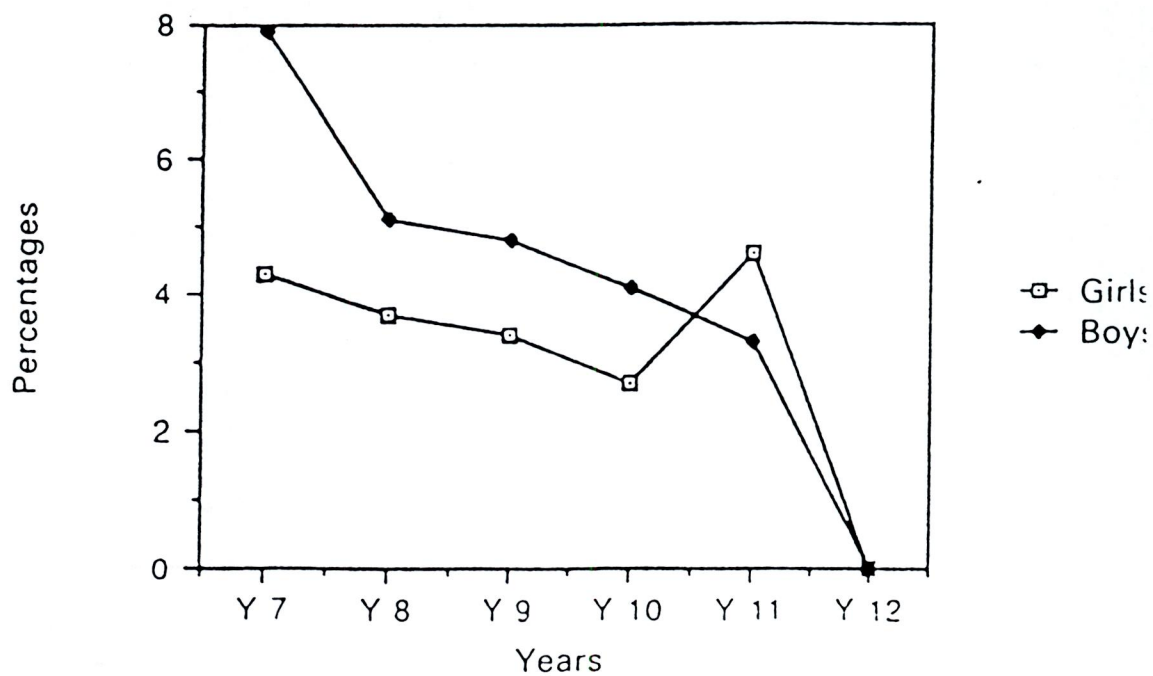


FIGURE 2.3

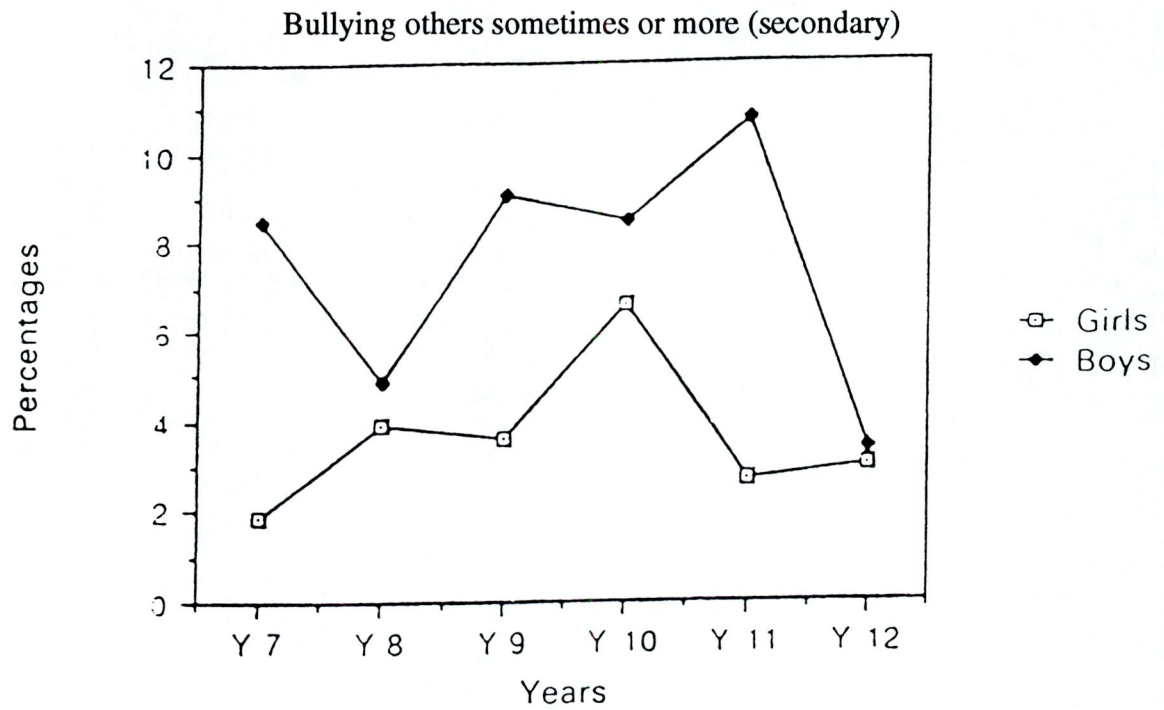
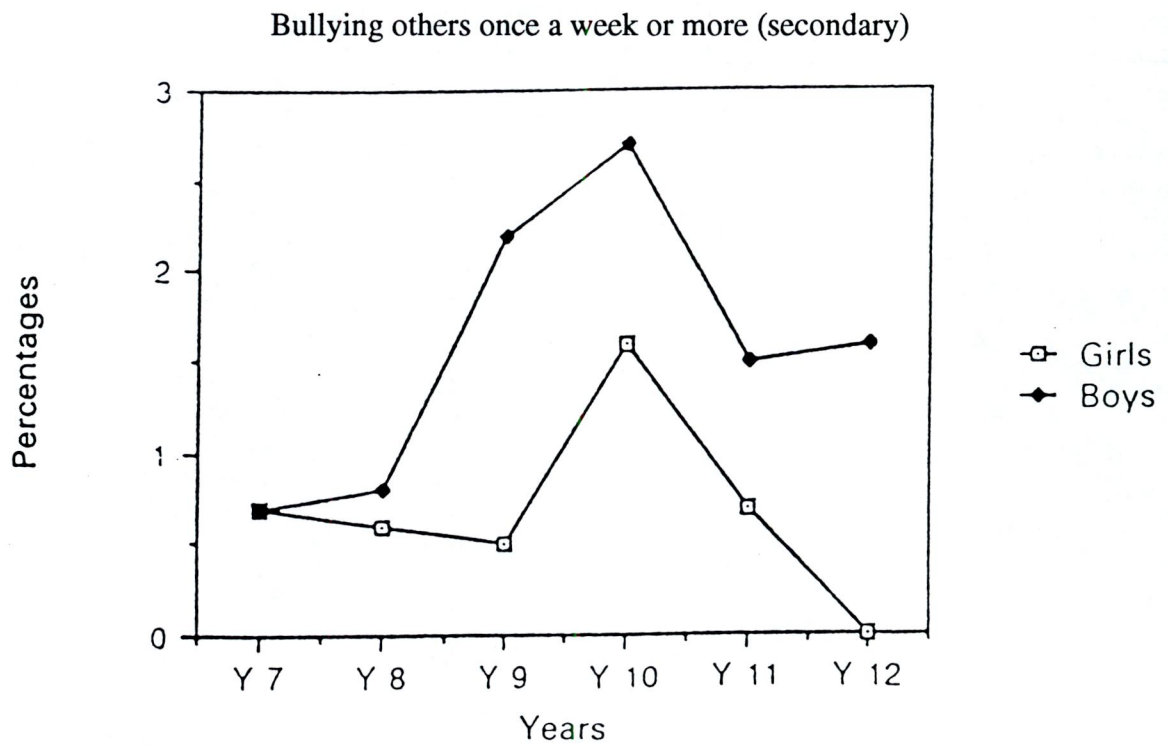


FIGURE 2.4



As the behaviour of girls is more covert, it could be that the incidence among girls is higher than we at present assume. Parents and teachers, however, report that there is an equal amount of bullying between girls as there is between boys.(14)

This could be because girls complain to adults about being excluded without realising that it is a form of bullying, whereas adults do label the behaviour in this way. Whitney, Smith and Nabuzoka discovered in their study that boys tended to be bullied by either boys or girls.(15) Of those who were bullied, the majority reported being bullied by either one or several boys. Boys admitted to bullying others more than girls did. Boys and girls engage in different forms of bullying. There is general agreement with the finding of Olweus (1978) that boys are more violent and destructive in their bullying than girls. Boys bully in a direct way, using physical aggression or threat. Girls favour the more indirect modes of malicious gossip and social ostracism. Roland suggests from his results that boys bully both boys and girls and find victims from other classes, whereas girls bully mainly girls and choose victims from their own class.(16) This would seem feasible since Roland found that girls in his study were using alienation from the group as their technique and this would be more effective among girls in the same class.

Age

"The incidence of bullying tends to decrease with age".(17) Olweus (1987) has compared data from primary and secondary schools. Comparisons between other studies are difficult to obtain due to differences in the definition of terms such as bully, victim and bullying, and differences in the choice of methodology. Olweus found the incidence of bullying to be twice as high in primary as in secondary schools. The time of greatest risk for victims was found to be on entry to school, at each stage. Bullies were

found to be active in the last year of both primary and secondary school, presumably when they are the oldest present and so in a position to dominate and several studies confirm a peak at about thirteen years. This hypothesis is supported by the finding that the bullies were least active on entry to second level, i.e. when they are the youngest students. Bullies of any age were found to be older than their victims and this has been substantiated by several other studies. Over the school years, bullying among girls decreases, whereas it increases among boys, although there was found to be a general decrease in physical bullying among older pupils. Roland, however, says that although the percentages of victims decreases with an increase in age for both sexes, the number of male bullies remains similar at different age levels while the number of girl bullies declines slightly with increasing age. Pat Foster, Tiny Arora and David Thompson found that about half the bullying incidents involve children of different ages, with the younger one usually the victim. Whitney and Smith reported quite a sharp decrease in the incidence of children being bullied as they grew older. At secondary level, pupils being bullied 'sometimes or more' fell from fourteen per cent in year seven to zero in years twelve and thirteen. (Table 2) When they turned to those doing the bullying, a very different picture emerged. Broadly speaking, the incidence of bullies was much lower but more constant, with percentages of frequent bullies fluctuating between one and two per cent among second level pupils. The number of bullies tended to decline only slightly as pupils got older, with even a slight increase in years nine to eleven.(Table 2)

TABLE 2

Percentages in each year group (averaged over class and school) who reported being bullied and bullying others

Junior/middle schools							
Year	3	3/4	4	5	5/6	6	7
Age range	7-8	7-9	8-9	9-10	9-11	10-11	11-12
No. of classes	6	8	23	20	11	24	13
N =	138	199	561	455	324	581	289
Been bullied sometimes or more	36	35	30	28	30	18	17
Been bullied once a week or more	19	16	11	10	9	5	6
Bullying others sometimes or more	8	16	11	10	9	8	9
Bullying others once a week or more	4	4	4	5	3	2	3
Secondary schools							
Year		7	8	9	10	11	12-13
Age range		11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-18
No. of classes		19	46	47	43	41	15
N =		416	986	875	898	824	136
Been bullied sometimes or more		14	12	11	9	8	0
Been bullied once a week or more		7	4	4	4	4	0
Bullying others sometimes or more		5	4	7	8	7	3
Bullying others once a week or more		1	1	2	2	1	1

SOURCE: Data from a Survey by Irene Whitney and Peter Smith, Department of Psychology in Sheffield University. Quoted in Educational Research Volume 35, Number 1 Spring 1993, p.11.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 2

1. Elliott, Bullying, p.9.
2. K.M. Lagerspetz, K. Bjorkqvist, M. Berts, and E. King, "Group Aggression among school children in three schools", Scandinavian Journal of Psychology, 8 (1980), pp.45-52.
3. Elliott, Bullying, p.8.
4. P. Stephenson and D. Smith, Bullying in the junior school, p.47.
5. K. Reid, "Disruptive behaviour and persistent school absenteeism", in Disruptive behaviour in schools, eds. N. Frude and H. Gault (Chichester: John Wiley, 1984), pp.78-98.
6. The Guardian, 28th September, 1989.
7. The Sheffield Star, 28th September, 1989.
8. I. Whitney and P.K. Smith, "A survey of the nature and extent of bullying in junior, middle and secondary schools", Educational Research, 35 (1993,1), p.5.
9. Ibid., p. 8.
10. Byrne, Coping with bullying, p.13.
11. Besag, Bullies and Victims, p.13.
12. Ibid., p.13.
13. Byrne, Coping with bullying, p.19.
14. Besag, Bullies and Victims, p.15.
15. I. Whitney, D. Nabuzoka, P.K. Smith, "Bullying in schools: Mainstream and special needs", pp.3-7.
16. Besag, Bullies and Victims, p.15.
17. Byrne, Coping with bullying, p.19.

CHAPTER 3

THE CAUSES OF BULLYING

Family Background

This be the verse

They fuck you up, your mum and dad.
They may not mean to but they do.
They fill you with the faults they had
And add some extra, just for you.

But they were fucked up in their turn
By fools in old -style hats and coats,
Who half the time were soppy-stern
And half at one another's throats.

Man hands on misery to man.
It deepens like a coastal shelf.
Get out as early as you can,
And don't have any kids yourself.

Philip Larkin (1974)

Valerie Besag asks if there is "a section of our society more prone to use aggression and aggressive means than the culture of our schools accepts as the norm?".(1) Several studies have shown parenting practices to be highly influential in controlling or encouraging aggressive behaviour. Low levels of supervision and monitoring of a child's whereabouts can result in the early socialisation of the child occurring on the neighbourhood streets or further afield, where the young child only has equally young or slightly older role models. In addition, the adults in the community may have a positive attitude towards aggression, the young males being encouraged to 'stand up for themselves' - physical prowess, for example, being more highly prized than the academic competence promoted by some schools. Besag makes the point that in some of the more impoverished communities, the most vulnerable families are scapegoated and bullied by the more robust.(2)

However, she regrets the notion that bullying is a prerogative of the poor and

disadvantaged, saying that some of the worst and more distressing and damaging cases in her experience concerned pupils with advantaged and often privileged backgrounds. She concludes that bullying is "not the product of status deprivation or financial disadvantage alone..... such factors are but contributory to the problem of violence in our society".(3)

Research on bullying would seem to indicate that family factors are of considerable significance in the development of the personality of the child who bullies others and the child at risk of being bullied. J. Mitchel and Mona O'Moore found that seventy per cent of the bullies they studied had problematic family backgrounds (4), while Stephenson and Smith found that one third of those involved in bullying , both victims and bullies, had difficult family backgrounds.(5) Other studies have found that these problems are common to both victims and bullies. Research from other areas, such as child abuse or delinquency has emphasised the long term impact family dynamics may have on the young child. (West and Farrington, 1973)(6)

Valerje Besag states that "All parents are educators, whether good or bad, and the family has specific functions to perform in the process of making the child ready to meet the demands of the world".(7) The family prepares the child for entry into his/her social group by offering appropriate social norms. Parenting can be good or bad regardless of socio-economic status. Material trappings do not ensure security, emotional warmth and sensible disciplinary control.

Olweus (1978) considers family factors to be the most significant of all. He showed that some children have a more positive attitude to the use of aggression than the majority of their peers.(8) Extensive research has been undertaken from various disciplines

and standpoints looking at child/parent interactions, parental relationships, discipline and management practices, and the effects these factors have on behaviour both in childhood and in adult life. (Patterson, 1982,1984; Patterson and Stouthamer-Loeber, 1984; Patterson et.al.,1975).(9)

Although it would appear that an antisocial pattern of behaviour is learned in the home, whether to a greater or lesser extent, it is not certain, as yet, under which conditions this takes place.(10) The research specific to bullying indicates that the following factors are of significance. (Olweus,1987)

- 1.A negative attitude between parent and child, especially mother and son.
- 2.Over punitive physical discipline, or inconsistent and lax control.
- 3.The use of physical aggression which is seen as socially acceptable.
- 4.The temperament of the child. (11)

Negative Attitude between Parent and Child

If a child lives in an environment of understanding and tolerance, they are able to generalise this to relationships with others. (Pringle and Clifford, 1965).(12) If they are shunned, criticised and repeatedly meet with a negative response, they quickly lose confidence in themselves and may become withdrawn and anxious. (Pringle and Clifford)(13) On the other hand, compensation may be sought by degrading others through physical or verbal attack. Children with low self esteem may seek ways to prove that others are even worse than the perception they have of themselves.

An infant needs to feel safe enough to openly display feelings of frustration and anger. (Pringle and Clifford, 1965) If the home cannot offer an atmosphere of security and support, the young child may feel too insecure to allow any demonstration of anger. The negative emotions may then turn inward, or unleashed upon others in the form of

aggressive behaviour and in situations where the child does not feel confident.(14)

Early experience appears to determine how an individual will handle aggression in later life. (Jamieson, 1984) If the child is brought up in an atmosphere of support and acceptance; by mid-childhood an emerging realisation of their own strengths and weaknesses should be in evidence. This awareness is accompanied by an acceptance of themselves and of others, and an associated assertiveness and confidence.

Besag feels that the attitude of a mother to her son would appear to be of particular importance.(15) A harsh, cold and rejecting attitude on the part of the mother, referred to by Olweus as 'silent violence' is considered by both Olweus and Roland to be correlated with the bullying behaviour of the son.(16) Roland found, the more a mother rejected her son, the more the boy bullied others.(17) The negative attitude of a mother to her daughter or a father to his son or daughter, were all found to have an adverse effect, but it was the mother/son relationship which was found to be of greatest significance.

Among female adolescents inadequate communication in the home was a feature of those claiming to be victimised at school, but not bullying others.(18)

Disciplinary Practices

An authoritarian rather than authoritative style of family discipline could result in a child becoming hostile and aggressive. The reverse is also possible in that a hostile and primitive parent could diminish the young child's confidence so that he/she becomes anxious and fearful. Such children sometimes have self punitive actions, nervous habits or disturbed bodily functions such as bed wetting, all of which could result in them

being unpopular and a target for taunts and jibes of others. Valerie Besag,

would suggest that those from such a home background with a robust personality and physique could become attackers, whereas the small, frail and timid could become the attacked.(19)

Unfortunately, according to Besag, children from very punitive homes may think that all families behave in this way. They themselves may grow up thinking that there is only one way to rear children, ie. the way in which they were brought up themselves. There appears to be some sort of cycle of abuse, e.g. women entering an Aid Centre, having been beaten by their husbands, are found to be more prone than others to beating their children. It is not unusual to hear of husbands beating their wives, who beat their children, who later assault their parents.(20)

Newson and Newson (1976) studied the normality of violence in homes and discovered that over fifty per cent of the parents interviewed smacked their children for disobedience, most once a week, eight per cent daily, and that more boys than girls were punished in this manner. Perhaps this helps to explain why boys tend to use more physical violence in bullying than girls. Pizzey (1974) found that boys who either witnessed or were the target of violence in the home became aggressive and destructive, whereas girls grew more passive and withdrawn.(21) The parental style of discipline may be punitive and harsh, but it would seem that the factor which makes the relationship a damaging one is the lack of empathy and warmth.(Olweus, 1978)(22) The child's own perception of the situation is important, because if there is a feeling of care and concern, of interest and acceptance, then the child seems able to accept more easily the discipline of the parent.

Physical Aggression Seen as Socially Acceptable

The ability to perceive, learn, think and reason in a culturally approved mature fashion cannot be effectively learned if one lives and functions in some isolated subculture in which one is not imbued with the values of the dominant culture and where its limitations on freedom of will cannot reach him. (Schafer, 1977) (23)

The values, standards and goals of the family unit may be so different from school and authority that the child has to cope with a dual standard of expectations and behavioural codes. The criteria for success in the home and the neighbourhood may be very different from that of academic and intellectual prowess perhaps held by the school. The home and neighbourhood may prize aggressive skills. Credits may be earned by demonstrating a quick wit and a slick response when confronting authority figures. (Hamblin, 1978a)(24) Some parents allow, even encourage, their children to use aggression in achieving their goals or settling quarrels.

The aggressive personality pattern is the result of the child with a strong need for self assertion and dominance being allowed to believe that a positive attitude to violence is acceptable. (Olweus, 1978)

However, it is important to stress that parenting skills are not solely determined by economics or social class structure. There are almost as many differences within localities and socio-economic groupings, as there are across boundaries. Regardless of family circumstances, it would seem that family attitudes to the use of aggression, in whatever form, influence the behaviour of the child.

Behaviours do not occur in a vacuum. "Experiences which have been rewarding in the past are more likely to be repeated, whilst unpleasant experiences lead to the behaviour being-extinguished."(25) Besag states that a child's behaviour pattern is constantly

regulated, reinforced and maintained by the feedback received. Hence, the child learns which behaviours are acceptable and when to use them appropriately. Adults often only comment on failure and antagonistic and annoying behaviour. What they should learn to do is praise routine achievement and sustained effort.(26)

It may be noted here that teachers are in an extremely influential position in which to help children deal with aggression, whether as perpetrators or recipients. How they themselves exercise their own control over their pupils may have considerable bearing on how children handle aggression.

A Negative Relationship between the Parents

There is general consensus of opinion that a negative relationship between parents may have some adverse effect on the child. The research specific to bullying indicates that this is so. (Olweus,1978)(27) A high proportion of victims and bullies experienced a background of conflict. It would appear more important that the atmosphere in the home be secure and stable, rather than the parents stay together in a state of conflict.

Hostile marital relationships seem to have more reliably negative effects on child development than does divorce and the absence of one parent.(28)

In studying bullying, Roland (1989) found marital hostility to have both a direct and indirect influence on the child. A hostile marital relationship reflected on the child by weakening the relationship between the mother and the child, resulting in a lack of empathy and warmth. In this way the child suffers two-fold: directly, from the effects of witnessing the marital conflict and indirectly, from the associated lack of maternal warmth. This in turn is strongly correlated with the bullying behaviour of boys(29),

ie. the more a mother rejects her son, the more severe his bullying behaviour is likely to be.

The Temperament of the Child

It must be stressed that family factors, although considered to be highly influential, cannot account for everything. According to Besag, there does appear to be more recognition in recent years of the differences in the temperament of individual children, whether due to environmental or inherited influences. There is also an emergence of a more sympathetic climate towards the parents of children who would be considered to possess a more demanding temperament.

According to Brendan Byrne, there is a trend which suggests that first children are more likely to be victims at school than later children in a family.(30) This raises questions about whether child rearing practices are very different for first children. In some cases, first children may be over-protected. Inexperienced and conscientious parents may be more reluctant to allow them to be independent when compared with later children. This may increase the likelihood that first children will be less integrated into the class group.(31)

An examination of social background also highlights some interesting differences. Victims tend to have parents who are friendlier. The victims tend to come from roughly the same social background as the norms for the school. Neither bullies nor victims tend to come from homes where there is a balanced attitude to child rearing. Often, victims are over protected in contrast to the often aggressive and dominant parents of many bullies.

School

Sue Askew focused on how the school as an institution may unintentionally either reinforce or discourage bullying behaviour. The research has been carried out primarily with boys, in single sex boys schools. The central argument to this research is that "the values promoted by an institution will reflect the values of the dominant group in society." (32)

Boy's Schools

It is argued that boy's schools are more explicitly built on 'male' values. Askew reports that physicality was not only used as a means of intimidation among the boys, but also as a way of making social contact. Apart from physical aggression, a great deal of verbal abuse was also used. Competitiveness appeared to be another major element of the boy's schools. Physical strength and power were also seen as part of stereotypical male attributes, and bullying then is a major way in which boys are able to demonstrate their manliness. Some men teachers commented on the way in which they thought aggression among the boys reflected the authoritarian structures within the school, and referred to the contradictory situation of a teacher threatening a boy with physical punishment for bullying another boy. The author commends that the school needs a policy which promotes such values as respect, tolerance, caring and responsibility for others. This policy needs to involve not only the pupils but also the whole staff. (33)

Public Schools

Geoffrey Walford considers the phenomenon of bullying behaviour in public schools.(34) He refers to the system of prefects and fagging which helped institutionalise bullying in public schools. Floggings were widely accepted as part of schooling, as were initiation rites such as hands being seared with burning wood at Winchester, being tossed in a blanket at the ceiling in Eaton or being forced to drink a jug of muddy water and salt at Rugby. Two major changes have occurred: the importance of sport has declined and with it the 'roughness' and 'toughness' of schools. Since the 1960's some of the public schools have become co-educational. Walford suggests that bullying is now a matter of verbal and light physical abuse, rather than heavy physical oppression.(35) However, he feels that there is a worryingly high number of pupils who experience bullying. What might be defined as 'teasing' in another school would often be described as bullying here. The reasoning behind this may be that unlike in a day school, there is no escape. When a few specific boys become picked out to receive 'mild abuse', in such a closed environment, it becomes bullying.(36)

Girls Schools

What is now becoming evident is that bullying is also very much a feature of all-girls schools, though it often manifests itself in different ways and often goes un-recognised as bullying because it apparently lacks the obvious physical and aggressive element associated with male bullying behaviour. Celestine Keise, in her study of a single sex girl's school suggests that "the degree and extent of bullying can be as widespread as in an all-boy's school, though the nature of it varies considerably".(37) Primarily, girls are 'bitchy' towards one another, though, it often does not stop at that. Keise found that the

level of physical violence can be as horrific and frightening as in an all-boy's school. She writes that one of the girls at another local all-girl's school recalls being pushed onto the bonnet of an oncoming car. Keise established that bullying seems to be an almost acceptable way for a girl to acquire respect, power and status in the eyes of one's friends and classmates (even though popularity is not necessarily the result achieved). Being a bully becomes synonymous with being tough.

Aggressive bullying behaviour can also serve amongst such groups, as a direct challenge to and a way of resisting the accepted notions of femininity in our society as the antithesis of being strong.

At it's worst, the traditional modes of femininity is weak, needy and pathetic - not a model to which most young women today would aspire.(38)

Keise feels that for some young women, seeking their feminine identity through the traditional route of boyfriends, make-up and being 'good' is simply not enough. They want these things and more besides. They seek to be equal to the male members of their families and their male friends and can match fist with fist. It would seem, moreover, in some instances, that if the academic route is perceived as an impossible means of acquiring power and status then power needs to be sought by another route - and one route may be bullying.(39)

Some girls will maintain that they were simply 'having a bit of fun' and did not realise the hurt that they were causing. If they then stop bullying when the reality has been pointed out they can be given the benefit of the doubt. "Whatever the reason for the bullying, it is imperative that discussion with students about the issue takes place within the curriculum".(40)

Female victims do not have to be afraid, as male victims do, that they will be told to 'take it like a man' if they report that they are being bullied. Yet as Roland pointed out, he felt that girls more than boys may be unwilling to answer truthfully in questionnaires about their involvement in violent interactions. Fear of reprisals and of being the centre of attention makes it daunting to tell.(41) Keise found that many girls are also concerned lest they cause their already overburdened parents more bother.(42)

Friendships and disputes between friends have been found to be one of the main reasons for the bullying behaviour of girls and are the two most common features that distinguish the bullying behaviour of girls from that of boys. Excluding a friend from a friendship group is common amongst girls and may not be recognised as bullying by either teacher or the bullies and victims themselves. Besag, in her analysis of the role of friendships in bullying amongst girls, concludes:

Research on bullying suggests that boys seek power and dominance, whereas girls need a sense of affirmation and affiliation, a feeling of belonging and a shared intimacy expressed in exchanging confidences and gossip... This need for intimacy is manifest in bullying; bullies either exclude the targeted girl from the intimate group or, by use of malicious gossip, they try to prove that whereas they are acceptable, the discredited victim is not. This type of ploy can be executed with the skill of an army general on manoeuvres.(43)

Co - Educational Versus Single Sex Schools:

The Social Aspect of Bullying

Michelle Elliott refers to the 'Both Schools Survey'. The research was based on the replies to a questionnaire from six hundred and twenty women and one hundred and seventy five men in Colleges of Education who had attended at least one single sex and at least one co-educational grammar or comprehensive school. They therefore had actual experience as pupils in both types of school.

The main question put forward for each school was, 'would you say bullying by boys occurred very frequently/ frequently, not so frequently/ infrequently/ not at all?'. The results are summarised in figure 3.1)

Whereas almost half of the ex-pupils of boys schools estimated that bullying in them was 'frequent' or 'very frequent', this was only little more than one fifth in their co-educational schools. There was stronger support in co-educational schools for the reply that bullying was not a feature of the school because of the "friendlier atmosphere and pervading sense of comradeship".(44)

There was some bullying to show off in front of the girls but this was countered much more heavily by restraint because of their presence.

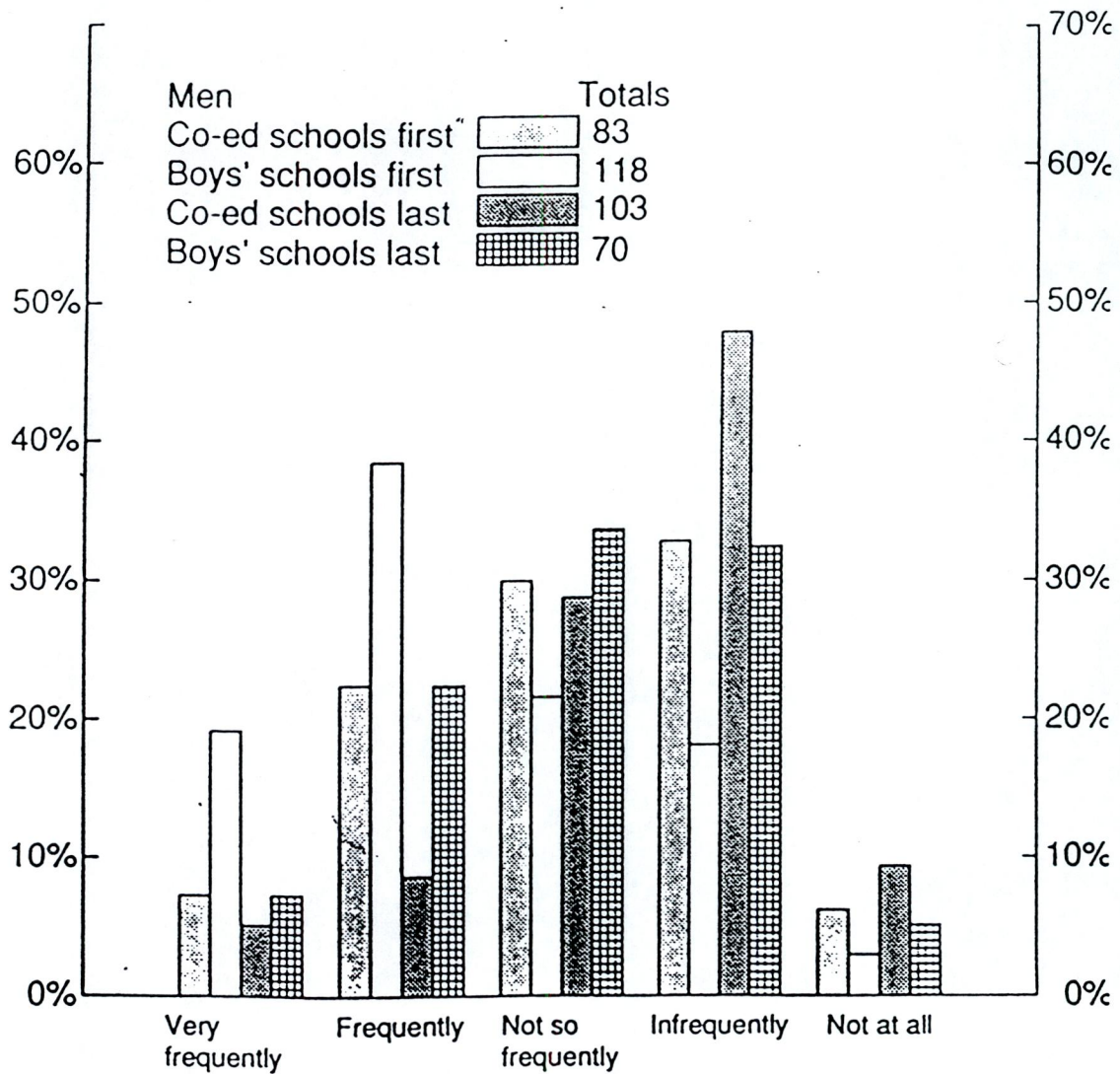
The schools friendly atmosphere (co-ed) was generally reflected in the attitude of the boys to one another.
 Not at all (bullying). This was mainly due to the presence of the girls.
 The girls would scorn any boy whom they heard was a bully. This seemed to be a very effective deterrent.
 Family atmosphere curbed this. Mixed school had a calming effect.
 I never re-call any large amount of bullying as I experienced it in single sex school.(45)

According to Elliott, although there were some comments in favour of boy's schools, they were by no means as strong as the unfavourable ones:

Frequently. Intimidation was always occurring but seldom was physical force used. The senior boys used the juniors for their own needs - despicable.
 (Boarding)
 A kind of outlet for built-up tensions in the classroom - and this was real bullying.
 This was the dominant feature of school life.(46)

FIGURE 3.1

MIXED VERSUS SINGLE SEX SCHOOLS
Incidence of bullying (boys)



SOURCE: Michelle Elliott, Bullying: a practical guide to coping for schools (Essex: Longman Group Ltd, 1991),p.

The female ex-pupils answered the same question as the boys. 'One in five of them thought that bullying was 'frequent' or 'very frequent' in their girls school and one in eighteen in their co-educational. A second strongly related question was, 'in your co-educational school would you say that a girl or group of girls made life unpleasant for some girl (or girls): - very frequently/ frequently/ not so frequently/ infrequently/ not at all ?'. (The students estimates are given in Table 3.)(47)

The principal feature of Table 3 is the decidedly lower estimates of the incidence of 'making life unpleasant' for the girls in co-educational schools compared with the same girls when in girls schools. Characteristic replies given by those girls who estimated 'not at all' or 'infrequently' about their co-educational schools were:

If this happened, the boys usually made life so unpleasant for the offensive group that they stopped.
They found it might lead to scorn from the boys which they did not wish to incite.
The girls tended to be too bothered with making the boys behave!
Arguments and disagreements usually settled by discussion - often boys present.(48)

The responses of those girls who estimated 'frequently' or 'very frequently' about the girls school they attended produced similar insights:

As I was different in my speech, etc. I was 'ragged' most viciously for the first year. I never believed girls could be so spiteful and unfeeling.
One group of second years terrorised the first, second and third years - even fighting!
Girls when together are often spiteful and tend to make life unpleasant for a girl who finds it difficult to make friends.
Groups of girls made life difficult for girls with rich fathers, good accents, shy girls, clever girls or girls who were favourites. (49)

According to Elliott, the most revealing comments were the direct comparisons made

Mixed versus single-sex schools

Estimates about making life unpleasant	Replies about first school attended				Replies about last school attended			
	Co-educational		Girls'		Co-educational		Girls'	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Very frequently	9	3.1	20	5.0	6	1.7	12	4.7
Frequently	34	11.6	105	26.0	39	11.0	51	19.9
Not so frequently	68	23.3	114	28.3	58	16.3	66	25.8
Infrequently	140	48.0	128	31.8	171	48.2	94	36.7
Not at all	41	14.0	36	8.9	81	22.8	33	12.9
Totals	292	100	403	100	355	100	256	100

Note: The differences between co-educational and girls' schools first and last schools are statistically significant well beyond the .001 level

TABLE 3: Made life unpleasant (girls) 'Both Schools Survey'

(II) FEMALE EX-PUPILS

Estimates about bullying of girls	Replies about first school attended				Replies about last school attended			
	Co-educational		Girls'		Co-educational		Girls'	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Not at all	85	30.9	62	16.5	137	41.5	42	17.5
Infrequently	124	45.11	51	40.3	147	44.6	113	47.1
Not so frequently	51	18.5	83	22.1	28	8.5	43	17.9
Frequently	14	5.1	70	18.7	16	4.8	40	16.7
Very frequently	1	0.4	9	2.4	2	0.6	2	0.8
Totals	275	100	375	100	330	100	240	100

Note: The differences between co-educational and girls' schools both for first schools and last schools are statistically significant beyond the .001 level

TABLE 4: Bullying of girls by girls: 'Both Schools Survey'

SOURCE: Michelle Elliott, Bullying: a practical guide to coping for schools (Essex: Longman Group Ltd, 1991), p.149

by the pupils between their girls and their co-educational schools.(50)

In any girls society, quarrels and backbiting take place but not so frequently in the co-ed. because it was frowned upon by the boys.

In my opinion it is inadvisable to segregate girls from boys. Both contribute towards growing up. To avoid excessive unpleasantness, I recommend mixed schools.

This happened sometimes. I think it is natural in single sex schools.

There is not the same sense of 'fair play' as in schools with mixed staff.(51)

Though boys are welcomed by the girls in co-educational schools (and vice-versa) it is important to stress that there may be discerned both favourable and unfavourable factors. The presence of boys may inhibit the 'catty' remarks which the girls admit do occur when boys are absent. On the other hand there is jealousy about boy-friends, which causes cattiness. However, the balance evidently tips over on the 'less cattiness' side.

In Elliotts view, "it is incontestable that this survey has shown that the presence together of boys and girls in schools has a powerful effect in reducing bullying and unpleasantness."(52)

Classroom Aggression

"Generally," according to Besag, "aggression occurs as a reaction to aggression but there is a tendency among the human species to practice aggression where there is no fear of retaliation".(53) D. L. Mosher, R. L. Mortimer, and M. Brebel showed that intense verbal aggression led to more retaliatory verbal aggression than did mild distraction. Weak boys were less aggressive against powerful 'bullies' than against powerful non-aggressive boys, presumably because of differential fear of retaliation.(54)

Brede Foy, writing about classroom aggression, identified four categories of disruptive behaviour:

1. Attention seeking behaviour.
2. Opting-out behaviour.
3. Destructive behaviour.
4. Impulsive behaviour. (55)

References to bullying are contained in her description on destructive behaviour:

Here we have the student who fights, destroys property, steals, bullies. The aggressor who is the bully feels very powerful and invariably had powerful models from films, comics, etc. These models present bodily strength and the use of expletives as a measure of worth; an oversimplification of the conflict between good and evil, a hero who is all powerful, indestructible; an act of aggression that is slick and dangerous. He tries to impose his norms on students who are weaker, dependent, searching for acceptance.(56)

Olweus, in his analysis of bully/ victim problems, developed a theory sketch of potentially significant factors.(57) He designed it with special reference to a school class. The first group of factors considering the school setting, ie., the size and design of the school, the size and composition of classes, the curricula and the teachers. The results indicated that neither the size of the class nor the number of students in the class was of importance for the degree of victim/ bully problems in the class. In addition, the size of the school in itself, was not an important factor for the appearance and the degree of bully/ victim problems. With regard to group climate, the bully/ victim problems were largely bound up with the character of the interpersonal relations among the students in the class. These interpersonal relations were quite stable over time. The relations to the teachers and the schoolwork seemed to be of minor significance, both for the interpersonal relations and for the appearance and degree of bully/ victim problems in a class. Kirsti Lagerspetz et. al. make the point that it is not known to what extent the amount and form of mobbing is different in schools situated in different

surroundings. (58) Olweus failed to find any appreciable correlations between the urban/ rural location of schools, and the incidence of bully/ victim problems.(59) Nor were correlations found with school size, or average class size. School variation was substantial, but Olweus thought it due more to quality of supervision at recess, and aspects of school climate or ethos. Nevertheless, Norway is quite an homogeneous country, with few socio-economic inequalities, no very large cities (Oslo having a population of 450,000) and a small percentage of ethnic minorities.

Irene Whitney and Peter Smith, in their survey of twenty four schools in the Sheffield L.E.A., found social disadvantage (but not school size or ethnic mix) to be a small but significant predictor of school variance in bullying.(60)

O'Moore and Hillery (1989) reported on school differences in Dublin, but only four schools were assessed.(61) They also failed to find any link between the level of bullying and the socio-economic status and size of school.

Lagerspetz et. al. (1982) reported less bullying in one country school than two town schools in Finland.(62)

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 3

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3. Ibid., p.38.
4. Byrne, Coping with Bullying, p.
5. Ibid., p.
6. D.J. West and D.P. Farrington, Who becomes Delinquent ? (London: Heineman, 1973), p.54.
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10. Olweus, "Familial and Temperamental determinants of aggressive behaviour in adolescent boys: A causal analysis", Developmental Psychology 16 (1980), pp.664-660.
11. Besag, Bullies and Victims, p.61.
12. Ibid., p.61.
13. Ibid., p.61.
14. Irish Independent, Wed, February 29th, 1994, p.14.
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16. Olweus, Bullying at School, p.46.
17. E. Roland and E. Munthe, Bullying: An International Perspective, (Great Britain: Wayne, 1978) p.65.

18. Besag, Bullies and Victims, p.62.
19. Ibid., p.63.
20. Ibid., p.63.
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22. D. Olweus, Aggression in Schools: Bullies and Whipping Boys, (Washington.D.C: Hemisphere, 1978)p.73.
23. Besag, Bullies and Victims, p.197.
24. Ibid., p.65.
25. Ibid., p.66.
26. Ibid., p.68.
27. Olweus, Aggression in Schools, p.85.
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37. Ibid., p.54.
38. Ibid., p.54.
39. Ibid., p.55.
40. Besag, Bullies and Victims, p.41.
41. Byrne, Coping with Bullying, p.17.
42. Ibid., p. 18.
43. Elliott, Bullying, p.147.
44. Ibid., p.147.
45. Ibid., p.148.
46. Ibid., p.149.
47. Ibid., p.149.
48. Ibid., p.149.
49. Ibid., p.149.
50. Ibid., p.150.
51. Ibid., p.151.
52. Ibid., p.151.
53. Besag, Bullies and Victims, p.24.
54. D.L. Mosher, R.L. Mortimer, M. Brebel, "Verbal Aggressive behaviour in delinquent boys", Journal of Abnormal Psychology 73 (1968), pp.454-460.
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57. Byrne, Coping with Bullying, p.25.

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60. I. Whitney, D. Nabuzoka and P.K. Smith, Bullying in schools: Mainstream and Special Needs", pp.123-127.

61. M. O'Moore, "Bullying in Dublin Schools", pp.426-441.

62. K. Bjorkvist, K. Ekwan and K. Lagerspetz, "Bullies and Victims, their ego-picture, ideal ego-picture and normative ego-picture", pp.307-313.

CHAPTER 4

BULLIES AND VICTIMS OF BULLYING

Psychological Traits and Personality Characteristics

Valerie Besag proposes several subgroupings from the two categories of victim and bully. (see Tables 5 - 9 for references). Passive victims are those children who are ineffectual, for whatever reason in the face of attack. They avoid aggression and confrontation and lack the confidence or skill to elicit support from their peers. These children are described as being fearful, physically weaker than their peers, cautious, withdrawn and often find it difficult to make friends. When attacked they display helpless, futile anger. Olweus considers that a significant number have co-ordination difficulties and a low level of self esteem.(1) Besag refers to provocative victims as intentionally provoking the antagonism of others. They tease and taunt yet are quick to complain if others retaliate.(2) About one seventh of the victim group falls into this category. (3) In extreme cases, such a child may be in need of specialist help. Unlike the passive victim, these children would probably be at risk even if there were no bully to act as a catalyst. In some cases children take on the role of victim to gain acceptance and popularity. They are known as colluding victims. They may play the part of class clown or join in disruptive behaviour to be safely included in the group. Attention seeking might be the motive for those in the next category - the false victims. No specific research has highlighted this group, where the children complain unnecessarily about others in the group. It is usually attention-seeking behaviour, but it may need to be considered a cry for help. Bully victims are children who bully in one situation but are victims in another. Children who are bullied at home e.g. by their parents, may often bully at school. It is suggested by Olweus that the characteristics of the bully and victim differ so widely that this group will necessarily be small. These children were found to be physically strong and able to assert themselves. Stephenson and Smith (1988) found them to be

TABLES 5 & 6

Table 6 Thumbnail sketches: The characteristics of children in the major categories of bullies and victims

Victim	Bully
1. Anxious, insecure, cautious, sensitive, quiet, submissive	1. Aggressive to parents, teachers, peers, siblings, impulsive
2. Reacts to attack by crying, yelling, withdrawal, helpless anger, ineffective retaliation, temper outbursts	2. Positive attitude to aggression and aggressive means, little anxiety; not a tough surface hiding a deeper anxiety (maybe in the case of anxious bullies)
3. Negative view of self and the situation	3. No guilt, shame or embarrassment, little empathy with the victims
4. Feels a failure, stupid, ashamed, unattractive, lonely and abandoned, no single close friend or supporter in the school, not provocative, bewildered and confused, unable to understand why bullied and how to find ways to become accepted	4. Strong, tough, powerful, well coordinated, dominant, confident; peers perhaps confuse this with leadership skills
5. Poor communicator, unable to talk way out of trouble	5. Good communicator, quick-witted, fast verbal responses, able to talk way out of trouble
6. Secondary nervous habits, e.g. stammering, biting nails or rocking	6. A sense of fun, more popular than victim, popularity decreases with age
7. Physically weaker, poor coordination, frequently younger than the attacker, small stature	7. Bullying may be only one component of a general pattern of antisocial and rule-breaking behaviour, a predictor of later antisocial and criminal behaviour in adulthood
	8. Girls: an exaggerated loudness, shouting, rudeness to staff, domineering to staff and peers
<p><i>Summary. An anxious personality pattern combined with physical weakness (Olweus, 1987). Their behaviour and attitude signal to others that they feel insecure and worthless and will not retaliate if attacked</i></p>	
<p><i>Summary. Constellation of antisocial and disruptive problems, spirit of violence, i.e. aggression considered to be an acceptable form of behaviour</i></p>	

Table 6 Personality factors

Victim	Ref.	Bully	Ref.
1. Enjoys home life, close relationships with family	Lagerspetz <i>et al.</i> (1982)	1. Little time spent at home, fewer positive family interactions	Lagerspetz <i>et al.</i> (1982), Lowenstein (1978)
2. Shy, withdrawn, anxious, passive non-gregarious, showing little interest in others, poor communication skills	Olweus (1978) Lowenstein (1978)	2. Confident, good communication skills, quick-witted, slick replies, can talk their way out of trouble	Olweus (1978), Hamblin (1978a), Lagerspetz (1982)
3. Socially insensitive, obsessive behaviour, ineffectual social skills, poor ability or wish to conform, submissive	Lowenstein (1978)	3. Conforms to own social ideal of dominant and powerful male, 'macho' image accepted by peer group	Lowenstein (1978)
4. Anxiety problems; eating, sleeping difficulties, ineffectual, temper outbursts, depression	Robins (1966a)	4. No anxieties; a rare exception is the anxious bully	Olweus (1978), Stephenson and Smith (1988)
5. Feelings of inferiority, below average self-esteem, rate themselves low in intellectual ability and attractiveness, but this could be due to modesty; self-report: detached, critical, aloof	Lowenstein (1978), Lagerspetz <i>et al.</i> (1982), Olweus (1978), Mykletun (1979), Byrne (1987)	5. Self-image of power, see themselves as tough, successful and capable, no focused dissatisfaction, not compensatory bullying; rate themselves more intelligent than their school work shows, remain confident, out-going, easy-going	Olweus (1978), Bjorkquist <i>et al.</i> (1982), Lowenstein (1978), Byrne (1987)
6. Feel unable to cope alone or to elicit support from peer group, feel helpless and ineffective	Lowenstein (1976)	6. Good coping skills, independent, effectively assertive	Olweus (1978)
7. Come to accept they deserve the bullying	Bjorkquist <i>et al.</i> (1982)	7. Come to believe the victim deserves the punishment	Bjorkquist <i>et al.</i> (1982)
8. Described as 'threat-sensitive'	Byrne (1987)	8. Described as 'socially bold'	Byrne (1987)

SOURCE: V.E. Besag, *Bullies and Victims in Schools* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1989), pp. 18-19.

TABLE 7

Table 7. School factors

<i>Victim</i>	<i>Ref.</i>	<i>Bully</i>	<i>Ref.</i>
1. Positive attitude to school work	Lagerspetz <i>et al.</i> (1982)	1. Less positive attitude to school work, staff and authority figures	Lagerspetz <i>et al.</i> (1982)
2. Below average popularity, may be rejected by peers, social isolate	Olweus (1978), Lagerspetz <i>et al.</i> (1982)	2. Below average popularity, more popular than the victim, possibly a leader due to dominance being confused with leadership, popularity declines with age; not so unpopular as to be rejected; not a cause for retaliatory bullying; 43% popular in ordinary classes – none found to be popular in remedial classes	Olweus (1978), Lowenstein (1978), Mitchel and O'Moore (1988)
3. Negative view of peer relationships, unable to muster support or form friendships	Lagerspetz <i>et al.</i> (1982), Olweus (1978)	3. Negative attitude to peer relationships outside own supporters, but able to elicit more peer support than the victim	Lagerspetz <i>et al.</i> (1982), Olweus (1978)
4. Peers have no clear picture, no stereotype	Olweus (1978)	4. Peers have a clear picture, a stereotype	Olweus (1978)
5. Average intellectual ability	Olweus (1978)	5. Average intellectual ability, possibly low attainments, underachieving	Olweus (1978), Lowenstein (1978)
6. Negative attitude to aggression, never provokes, fear when provoked, helpless anger, possible temper outbursts due to provocation and frustration Possible cluster of anxiety and emotional problems	Olweus (1978), Lowenstein (1978)	6. Positive attitude to aggression, clear social ideal of 'macho' man, tough/powerful, poor control over aggressive impulses, no guilt, no embarrassment Enjoys the discomfort and the distress of weaker students; seeks out aggressive situations, no motive other than for power and kudos has been identified by peers Feels tough, powerful, able to meet own expectation of social ideal, lack of sensitivity to others, think of themselves as impulsive and having low control over impulses Possible cluster of antisocial, disruptive problems	Olweus (1978), Bjorkquist <i>et al.</i> (1982), Lagerspetz <i>et al.</i> (1982) Ekman (1977) (quoted in Olweus, 1979), Wachtel (1973), Bowers (1973), Arora and Thompson (1987), Bjorkquist <i>et al.</i> (1982) Olweus (1987a), Bjorkquist <i>et al.</i> (1982), Lagerspetz <i>et al.</i> (1982), Lowenstein (1978) Mitchel and O'Moore (1988)

SOURCE: V.E. Besag, *Bullies and Victims in Schools* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1989), pp.20-21.

TABLES 8 & 9

Table 8. Family factors

<i>Victim</i>	<i>Ref.</i>	<i>Bully</i>	<i>Ref.</i>
1. Over-protected and dependent on the family	Olweus (1978), Lagerspetz <i>et al.</i> (1982)	1. Low level of home supervision and monitoring, such as times for returning home	Patterson (1984)
2. Close relationship within the family	Lagerspetz <i>et al.</i> (1982)	2. Low empathy and negative emotions between parents and child defined by Olweus as 'silent violence'; too little love and care considered the most detrimental factor	Olweus (1978)
3. Feels unable to meet parental expectations – feels unassertive and unable to defend him/herself		3. Inconsistent control and discipline, i.e. over-lax or over-punitive, physical means of control	Olweus (1978)
		4. Use of aggression condoned, social image of 'tough and powerful' encouraged	
		5. Parents likely to have been bullies themselves	Lowenstein (1978)
		6. Marital conflict, chaotic home background	Lowenstein (1978), Stephenson and Smith (1987)
		7. Family factors considered to be most important	Olweus (1987)
Three times as many bullies and victims were found to be experiencing family problems of some kind, as were the controls			Stephenson and Smith (1987a and b)
77% of bullies and victims were experiencing family problems			Mitchel and O'Moore (1988)

Table 9. Physical factors

<i>Victim</i>	<i>Ref.</i>	<i>Bully</i>	<i>Ref.</i>
1. Weak physical strength, unable to retaliate	Olweus (1978)	1. Physically strong, robust, confident to attack	Olweus (1978)
2. 8/19 victims weak, 6/93 of the well-adjusted weak	Lagerspetz <i>et al.</i> (1982)	2. 10/27 bullies very strong, 7/93 of the well-adjusted very strong	Lagerspetz <i>et al.</i> (1982)
3. 17/20 victims with coordination problems, no aptitude for sport, low motivation and poor at playground activities; could be an influential factor on social behaviour from an early age	Olweus (1978)	3. Well coordinated, good at sport, games and playground activities, could influence social skills, popularity and confidence from an early age	Olweus (1978), Jersild (1966)
4. Low energy level	Olweus (1978)	4. Energetic, active	Olweus (1978)
5. Low level of pain tolerance, fearful, lacking in confidence	Olweus (1978)	5. High pain threshold, robust, 'dare devil'	Lagerspetz <i>et al.</i> (1982), Olweus (1978), Jersild (1966)
6. Younger, smaller than the bullies	Elliott (1986)	6. Older, stronger than the victims	Elliott (1986), Olweus (1987)
7. Possible physical deviations, e.g. glasses, obesity, tall, small		7. Average appearance	Lagerspetz <i>et al.</i> (1982), Lowenstein (1978)
No physical deviations	Olweus (1978)		
Some physical deviations	Lagerspetz <i>et al.</i> (1982), Byrne (1987)		
8. Below average attractiveness	Lowenstein (1978)	8. Average attractiveness	Lagerspetz <i>et al.</i> (1982), Lowenstein (1978)

SOURCE: V.E. Besag, *Bullies and Victims in Schools* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1989), pp.22-23.

less popular with their peers than the main group of bullies.(4)

As well as the traditional bully group which contains children who are physically stronger, have a positive attitude to aggression and enjoy conflict, Besag refers to a group of anxious bullies. These children appear to have other difficulties, such as problems at home or educational failure. They are less confident and popular than other bullies.(5) Mitchel and O'Moore defined a small group of bullies as 'neurotic' (6) and Olweus and Roland identified a group they named as 'hangers on', which had similar characteristics to the anxious bullies.(7)

Bullying behaviour is found among children from a very early age. Roland examined the nature, causes and cures of bullying within the infant years. Referring to the fact that bullying is usually defined as having the intention of inflicting injury or distress, it has its onset usually between three and four years of age. At this stage a child can understand the feelings of others. He stressed that there is no typical bully - some are rebellious, popular and tough whilst others may have learning difficulties or be small and weak and seek to assert themselves by intimidating others. According to Randall, the victims at the nursery and early infant ages tend to be marked out for ill treatment because they look or sound different. Children who have more toys or better clothes can sometimes attract jealous bullies. Randall maintains that bullying is the forerunner of adult violence and has its roots in unchecked infant aggression.(8)

Physical characteristics have been considered to be of great importance in determining whether or not a person might be a bully or a victim. Some male bullies, especially in primary schools, are physically bigger and stronger than the average. This would be less the case in secondary or girls schools. However, many bullies, while not actually

physically bigger or stronger have the ability to project themselves as big people by means of aggressive body language, voice and what is referred to by students as the 'look'. The result is such that the victim is harassed by means of intimidation rather than physical force.

The stereotypical view of the victim is that they often have a physical peculiarity, e.g. small or weak, stutter or stammer, fat or thin, wear glasses. These physical characteristics may not necessarily be important on their own but instead work as triggers. Not all students who have these physical characteristics will be victimised at school. However if a person has one of these and a particular type of personality and certain family background features, it is possible that they may be bullied. As Brendan Byrne remarks, "We are moving towards the idea of a package and a distinctive physical characteristic may be seen as the trigger in this context".(9)

Dave Smith and Pete Stephenson make reference to the Cleveland Project which investigated bullying among school children over a number of years.(10) The information was collected from teachers of finally year primary school children in twenty six schools. With regard to physical characteristics, there were no significant differences between the groups in terms of the prevalence of physical defects. Victims were often distinguished as being 'thin' and as appearing 'different' from the rest of the class for example, in speech and dress. Both the victims and bullies were rated as having poor personal hygiene. The findings indicated that bullies are the most physically strong of all the groups, that they are assertive and active, and that they are easily provoked and enjoy situations which have an aggressive content. They are neither unpopular nor insecure. A positive attitude to violence rather than insecurity or unpopularity most likely underlies the situation. The victims were rated as being passive individuals,

lacking in self confidence and being unpopular with other children. They were also recognised as being physically weaker than other children. All the children involved in bullying tended to have below average school attainments and concentration.(11) Brendan Byrne acknowledges that in some classes, a child may be victimised because they are academically successful.(12) This may be considered unacceptable in some class groups. The dilemma these 'swots' (as they are called) face is one of lowering their own standards in order to conform and so achieve a level of acceptance within the class group or be the focus of negative attention if they continue to achieve. "This form of victimisation is more likely to occur in mixed ability classes rather than in rigidly streamed classes".(13)

Kaj Bjorkvist et al. examined the ego picture, ideal ego picture, and normative ego picture of bullies and their victims in a school situation using semantic differentials. The bullies considered themselves to be dominant, had high ideals concerning dominance and thought that this was what the social norms require. They felt themselves to be impulsive and lacking in self control. The victims considered themselves to be depressed, lacking in personal attractiveness and intelligence, and in general, displayed feelings of inferiority. These characteristics can be both cause and effect of the bullying situation. Girls scored lower in general than the boys on socially valued characteristics and higher on socially undesirable ones.(14)

L.F. Lowenstein, having identified eighty three children as bullies, studied them with observational techniques, interviews and a Personality Inventory.(15) These were compared to non- bullied control children. The data suggested that:

- (a) Bullying may be divided into three types of behaviour: physical, verbal attacks and more subtle psychological attacks.
- (b) The most common observable forms of bullying are physical attacks on other children.
- (c) There is a greater amount of bullying among boys than among girls.
- (d) Girls are more likely than boys to use verbal and psychological types of bullying behaviour.
- (e) Bullying children of either sex are more likely to have parents who have
 - (i) marital problems and conflicts at home (ii) been bullies themselves (iii) a lack of values relating to sensitivity to other people.
- (f) Bullies are more likely to be hyperactive and disruptive.
- (g) Bullies are more likely to have lower IQ's and are likely to be behind in their age in reading. (16)

In a later study, Lowenstein indicated that a number of distinct physical characteristics and personality traits appeared to be associated with children who were likely to be bullied. Social skills and the capacity to communicate, being popular and showing interest in others, were features likely to mitigate against being bullied.(17) Children who were physically robust, extroverted, socially sensitive, flexible, unselfish, conforming to group norms, unaggressive, rewarding, non-attention seeking and modest individuals, were less likely to be bullied than those of the opposite trait.(18)

Ken Reid set out to examine the link between bullying and persistent school absenteeism. (19) He concluded that bullying is a significant factor in school absenteeism in only a minority of cases. The absentees as victims,

tend to be vulnerable, to have low self concepts, to be defenceless, to exaggerate or to worry about perceived or actual threats, to draw attention to themselves through their behaviour, temperament, or personality and in a clear minority of cases, to invite retribution through their own aggressive stances.(20)

R.A. Glow and P.H. Glow examined the popularity of bullies versus non-bullies and concluded that bullies on the whole were not popular.(21) In primary schools their position is often based on fear. In secondary schools they may confuse dominance with

leadership. In many ways the bully is a performer who needs an audience to give approval and praise. The performance often masks what is going on in the mind of the bully. He/She behaves in a very deliberate way to create situations where they are in control of others. (both the victim(s) and the other members of the group. The underlying reasons for their behaviour may be varied. As I mentioned earlier, some may be acting out of frustration at poor achievement in school. Others may be reacting to a difficult home background. Sometimes jealousy may be the motive, of someone who does well at school or gets on well with teachers and peers. All these factors make it difficult to refer to a typical bully.

Principal and Teacher Perception of Bullying Behaviour

Principal Perception of Bullies

Brendan Byrne refers to questionnaires administered to principals and teachers concerning the problem of bullying in schools.

Byrne found that the principal's descriptions indicate that there is no typical bully, but it is possible to group together particular characteristics.(22) A major factor which is frequently referred to is the home background. 'Disturbed backgrounds' and 'violent backgrounds' are acknowledged. One principal refers to many bullies as also being victims. Some bullies may be seeking attention whilst others may be strong, assertive and pre-occupied with their own needs. Many are unaware of the hurt they cause. Some of the principal's points referred particularly to the school. It was felt that many bullies 'may have disciplinary problems in school' or 'are often frustrated with school'. 'Lack of motivation' or 'lack of interest' were other references.(23) In general, it seems that

principals do not blame bullies arbitrarily for their behaviour and they are quite aware of the causative factors beyond the control of the child.

Principals Perception of Victims

Principals refer to the 'willing' and 'unwilling' victim. The first inviting attention, negative as well as positive. The latter type is seen as more common. This victim is described as 'quiet', 'meek', 'withdrawn', 'introverted', the 'easy target'. Common characteristics are lack of self confidence, social skills and low self esteem. Once again, principals referred to the significant influence of the home background. Many victims were considered to be 'over-protected' whilst others were familiar with 'adult bullying' and are timid individuals as a result.

Byrne found that one principal referred to the lack of understanding by fellow students as to why the victim fails to defend himself/herself. Another principal referred to the importance of all children being actively involved in stopping bullying.(24)

Teacher Perception of Bullies

Byrne feels there is a definite consistency between the opinion of primary and secondary school teachers. Many of the ideas put forward by the principals are echoed. Teachers felt that bullies have a well developed ability to spot weakness in their victims. Aggression is frequently used and physical superiority is common. One teacher refers to the 'forceful presence' of some bullies whilst words such as 'thoughtless', 'loud', 'insistent on their own way', 'attention seeking', and 'socially ill at ease' were used to

describe the personalities of the bullies. It is felt that they have low self esteem and a general lack of self confidence. Teachers felt that by and large the bullies were not popular or that their popularity dwindled as they progressed through school. Bullies tend not to have 'real' friends but rather 'hangers - on'. They were confident whilst travelling within a gang but terrified when confronted strongly by a teacher. It was felt that bullies had no real past times or outlets. Once again home background was mentioned repeatedly. Teachers felt that aggression in the home often leads to aggression in school.

Teacher Perception of Victims

Victims tended to be seen as different in some way from the norm, in either physical appearance, personality trait or social background. Physical characteristics such as small size, or obesity can act as triggers for victimisation. Defects such as imperfect sight, stammering or stuttering can have a similar effect. Occasionally, coming from a single parent family can be a problem in this context. In relation to personality, victims tend to be shy, sensitive and fearful. They have difficulty socialising and are described as 'isolated', 'loners', 'outcast'. Sometimes they try too hard to become part of a group and rejection leads to even further isolation. When subjected to either physical or verbal abuse, most victims behave in a non-retaliatory way. They are afraid to complain and are terrified of being seen as a 'rat'. At one end of the scale, poor academic ability can be a cause while at the other, being exceptionally good academically can cast a student in the role of 'swot'. This will apply particularly where the norms of the class determine that it is unacceptable to succeed academically. Some teachers are of the opinion that parents can cause their child to be victimised by over-protecting them, so preventing them developing a sense of independence. Finally, teachers felt that only a

small number of victims were attention seekers who brought their problems on themselves.

Bullying in the classroom

Sometimes, but not often, a pupil will tell a teacher if he/she or someone else is being bullied. The major deterrent here is the fear of being called a 'rat'. However, there are other less obvious signs that it is going on. Some children, normally restrained, may become aggressive as a result of frustration in failing to cope with victimisation. A usually quiet child may become even more withdrawn. There may be deterioration in school performance or level of concentration in class. A child who has been well all day may develop an illness just prior to break. A child may look distressed and upset after the break.

A victim may be excluded in a number of ways. Students may be reluctant to sit beside them. In pair or group work, nobody wants to work with them. (This point would be of particular relevance in the art room.) At P.E. they are usually last to be picked for a team by their peers. Group dynamics in the classroom may also be a tell tale sign. The victim is often reluctant to answer questions. When they do, there are sniggers, sneers and knowing glances between members of the class. Victims are also very reluctant to receive praise from teachers. They may change their seat frequently in an attempt to escape the attentions of the bully/bullies.

The personal property of victims may go missing for periods of time or be damaged on a regular basis. Bags, books, pens, clothes, sports gear or art materials are all subject to this. Finally victims may be absent from school without convincing explanation.

When it came to taking steps to deal with bullying in the classroom, two different approaches were suggested. Most teachers thought it better to approach the bully and the victim separately and attempt to get both sides of the story. A smaller, but significant number of teachers preferred to discuss the matter with the entire class group first, in an attempt to draw attention to the wrong-doing of the bully and so engender support for the victim. In serious cases, it was widely held that both the principal and the parents of the bully and victim should be consulted.

A number of teachers referred to the fact that bullying can often go on unknown to the teacher. It only comes to the teacher's attention when there is a serious incident. Related to this is the point that a lot of bullying goes on outside the school - on the way to and from school, at the local shops.

Teacher Training

"Very few teachers feel that their teacher training adequately prepared them to deal with the problems of bullying behaviour".(25)

A number of teachers felt that practical ways should be introduced to deal with the problem. It was suggested that a section on bullying in schools should be included as part of the psychology course at training college or university.

A common fear for teachers is that their interventions into a bullying situation may aggravate it. They feel it necessary to have practical guidelines introduced to help identify children who are either bullies or victims. This would give them the confidence to intervene in a useful way. Many teachers referred to the need for inservice days to give information on the topic.(26)

Another suggestion was that maybe the Department of Education would devise a general policy on discipline with regard to bullying. The Department of Education consequently published it's 'Guidelines on Countering Bullying Behaviour' in September 1993.(27)

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 4

1. Olweus, Aggression in the schools, p.65.
2. V. Besag, Bullies and Victims in Schools, p.45.
3. Ibid., p.45.
4. P. Stephenson and D. Smith, "Bullying in the junior school", p.43.
5. Besag, Bullies and Victims, p. 28.
6. Ibid., p. 32.
7. Brendan. Byrne, Coping with Bullying in Schools, p.42.
8. P. Randall, "Bullies and their victims", Child Education, (March 1991), pp.50-51.
9. Byrne, Coping with bullying, p.42.
10. P. Stephenson and D. Smith, "Bullying in junior school" p.47.
11. Ibid., pp.50-51.
12. Byrne, Coping with Bullying, p.43.
13. Ibid., p.44.
14. K. Bjorkvist et al. "Bullies and Victims: Their ego picture, ideal ego picture and normative ego picture", pp.307-313.
15. L.F. Lowenstein, "Who is the bully?", p.149
16. Ibid., p.149.
17. Ibid., p.170.
18. Ibid., "The bullied and the non-bullied child", p.318
19. K. Reid, "Disruptive Behaviour ", p.91.
20. Ibid., p.93.
21. R.A. Glow and P.H. Glow, "Peer and self-rating: children's perception of behaviour relevant to hyperkinetic impulse disorder", Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology, 8 (1980), pp.471-490.
22. Byrne, Coping with Bullying, p.84.
23. Ibid., p.48.

24. Ibid., p.49.

25. Ibid., p.50.

26. Many teachers made reference to the lack of training available to enable them to intervene or learn how to deal with incidences of bullying behaviour.

However, I applied to attend a course which specifically dealt with this issue (St. Patrick's Teacher Training College, Drumcondra - July 9th -14th, 1994)

but the course had to be cancelled due to lack of interest. I was the only person who applied.

Is it that teachers are not offered adequate training or that they are only interested if the course is free and run during school working hours?

27. Department of Education, Guidelines on countering bullying behaviour in primary and post primary schools (Dublin: The Stationery Office, 1993)

CHAPTER 5

WHAT WE CAN DO ABOUT BULLYING

The Long Term Aspects of Bullying Behaviour

David Lane contends that acting to stop bullying behaviour can reduce the incidence of violent criminality in later life because a number of studies show that problems in childhood are reflected in the adult criminal statistics.(1) M.M. Lefkowitz et. al. found that aggression at age eight was the best predictor of aggression at age nineteen; irrespective of social class, IQ or parental models. They were not, however entirely pessimistic about the outlook for bullies. They carried out a major piece of longitudinal research which accepted the premise that "aggression is a socially learned phenomenon".(2) The initial purpose of the study was to select a representative sample of American children - 7 -9 years old - and to investigate the factors which might influence the development of aggression over time. All the major findings of the study were consistent with the hypothesis that aggression may be learned by a child from his interactions with his environment. The researchers acquired a second set of information when the children reached the thirteenth grade. Hypothesis from the first study were tested by re-interviewing the subjects of that study when they were approximately nineteen years of age. The approach isolated certain environmental conditions and child rearing practices, that appear to be predictors of aggressive behaviour in young adulthood. The results confirmed that the punishment of the child at home correlated with the aggression of the child at school, ie. there was "a consistent manifestation of aggression across time and across situations".(3) Lefkowitz et. al. also concluded that 'phenotypic behaviour' (greater male aggressiveness) is not necessarily fixed. Males can learn not to be aggressive just as some females can learn to be aggressive. Thus, as set forward by the researchers, "Bullying need not be for life. Like most other behaviours, it can be unlearned".(4)

Peter Smith suggests that the peer rejection which victims often experience is a strong predictor of later adult disturbance. He refers to research by Gilmartin which found that eighty per cent of 'love- shy' men (who despite being heterosexual, found it difficult to have relationships with the opposite sex) had experienced harassment or bullying at school.(5)

D. Lewis makes reference to a long term study undertaken on eight hundred children in America which revealed that children who bullied in first grade were extremely likely to develop into aggressive, anti-social adults. Their marriages were less satisfactory than those children who did not bully at that particular age. They were likely to use violence against their own children, have poor personal relationships and few friends. They also stood a much greater chance of getting into trouble with the law.(6)

Dan Olweus conducted two longitudinal studies covering a one and a three year interval respectively on two samples of boys aged thirteen years to examine aggression and peer acceptance in adolescent boys. The results indicated strong degrees of stability over time in relation to aggression and peer acceptance.

Valerie Besag feels that bullying is often sustained over a long period of time, being handed on from class to class or even year to year.(7) R.J. Cole found that two thirds of teachers facing the problem of bullying had inherited it from the previous year.(8) D. Riley found that over fifty per cent of bullies had been identified by the feeder schools prior to entering secondary school.(9) In Scandinavia Kirsti Lagerspetz et. al. reported ninety three per cent stability of incidence over one year.(10)

Proposed Approach for Dealing with the Problem of Bullying in Schools

Children lacking confidence in themselves and their own ability, for whatever reason, may cease to make any effort to succeed and therefore, withdraw into themselves. Feeling hopeless failures, they do not believe that they have the ability to change their circumstances and, therefore a state of learned helplessness develops where there is a drift towards apathy, lethargy and depression.(11)

Children who feel they have no valid place in school, or perhaps society, can turn to aggression and conflict in a bid to alter their situation . These children benefit from the expertise and experiences to be found in schools to show them how they are able to take more effective control over their own lives.

Adverse social experiences may leave some children unwilling to make any attempt to involve themselves with others. They may claim to prefer to be alone, but this could result in them becoming even more vulnerable as, in this way, they preclude any of the valuable social experiences which could be the only effective channel for change because the parents may feel helpless to alter the situation. The parents of a younger child are able to provide more friendship opportunities, where as the parents of an older, resistant teenager may have no idea how to help.

The family may have been contributory in some way to the development of the problem, so there may be little support available, even if the parents wish for change and are willing to try to alter the situation. The environmental props which once supported children in society, such as family stability, neighbourhood communities and religious

practices, have gradually been eroded away, so that there is now less access to help from these other sources. Professional agencies might be able to help, but some families are reluctant to turn to them in time of need because they regard the use of such agencies as an admittance of failure.

For some children, the lack of family stability could mean that within the school community, among their teachers and friends, they experience their most stable and longest known relationships. They may have grown up with the peer groups since they were toddlers, so that it is the most stable factor in their lives.

Finally, children are in school for a large part of their waking lives and are in daily contact with some teachers who are therefore, able to use their expertise to watch over them closely for a number of years. These teachers are thus in a prime position to identify difficulties and to offer support through times of emotional turmoil in a friendly, but expert fashion, something which is available to very few other professional workers.

How can the school help?

There can be little doubt, therefore, that the school has a vital role to play in helping children involved in bullying. Primarily, the school needs to ensure that there is little opportunity for bullying to occur, but, equally important, is the long term work a school is able to offer to children with socialisation difficulties. Without this two-fold approach, I feel that there is a risk that the problems will recur. Simply to resolve a crisis, or only to prevent the eruption of bullying, is to tackle only one half of the problem. Children at risk - both bullies and victims - need to be identified and helped towards a happier and more effective social adjustment.

The most effective and economical way a school can deal with the problem of bullying is by evolving a school system which to as large an extent as possible, precludes it ever occurring, not only by removing any opportunity but also by offering children the quality of support, training and education which can, hopefully, attack the root causes of the bullying behaviour. Rather than an individual teacher having to try to resolve a problem, and any further ramifications, it is more effective for the school to be organised in such a way so as to prevent problems, by looking, not only to the daily functioning of the school but, in addition, by looking to the long-term objectives of all aspects of the school.

The school as an organisation

In recent years there has been some move away from focussing solely on the resolution of individual problems, such as case work with individual children, to taking the wider perspective of considering the school as an organisational complex which can escalate or de-escalate social and antisocial behaviour (Burden 1981).(12) The school as a whole is seen to be partly responsible for any maladaptive behaviour if the necessary preventative work has not been thoroughly investigated and adopted. This perspective of the school as an organisational system has been drawn, in part, from the behaviourist approach which focuses on observed behaviours and the environmental contingencies maintaining the behaviour, rather than looking to distant sources and causes not present within the current interaction between school and child. The emphasis is on the here and now (Bandura, 1969).

Behaviours within such a framework are viewed as being the product of a dynamic system, so that problem behaviours could be considered useful in that they are highlighting

any gaps or weaknesses within the system. Putting these differences right involves helping all those within the organisation by bringing about more widespread and permanent changes rather than helping just one individual child. The focus, therefore, moves from considering what is wrong with the child to looking at what is wrong within the organisation. In this way the school shares in the responsibility for the problem behaviours rather than blaming some other source, such as society, the family or the child.

This model can be criticised as being too impersonal and simplistic, taking little note of the complex familial and societal undertones to many problems. It would appear, however, from diverse studies, that the school as a whole can often be influential in preventing difficult behaviour regardless of the family and environmental factors which may have contributed to the problem in the first place.

In the past there appears to have been a commonly held assumption that schools, to some extent, had a blanket effect on all pupils. Any variation in outcome was thought to be largely due to differential intake.(13)

Evidence would now suggest that specific school variables may exert a higher degree of influence on outcome than the social balance of pupils. Schools with similar catchment areas produce widely differing outcomes and statistics indicate that outcomes may correlate more with over-all school factors than the internal psychological make-up of the child (Mortimore et. al.,1988).(14)

In other words, some schools appear to make the drift towards deviant behaviour such as bullying difficult, in that mechanisms within the system in some way protect the

pupil, whereas other schools leave their pupils at risk.

Bullying would appear to be a multifaceted problem with roots in a variety of interrelated processes: the temperament, communication skill, level of self esteem and self-confidence. If this is so, it would seem to be logical to have available, in the school, a wide spectrum of well-planned and prepared skills and responses from which to draw in time of need. Parallel to this, in advance of any crisis, almost all aspects of the functioning of the school would need to be addressed in the context of preventing bullying. Forward planning is more effective and economical than crisis management.

The whole school system should be organised to support all children and staff so that no one child or teacher is left alone to try and resolve a bullying problem. Sound, well planned preventative work, frequently revised and updated, should result in an atmosphere that is non-conducive to acts of bullying. A network of preventative strategies should be laid down well in advance and supported by sound protective work.

The set of proposed measures as illustrated in figure 4, constitutes what I would consider to be a fairly comprehensive intervention programme. All of them are considered to be useful in a programme designed to counteract bully/victim problems. At the same time, I am aware, that some of these measures may be more important than others for achieving good results.

Goals

The major goals of the intervention programme are *to reduce as much as possible - ideally to eliminate completely - existing bully/victim problems in and out of the school*

setting and to prevent the development of new problems.

It is natural that attention is directed in the first place toward what we call 'direct bullying'. As previously mentioned, direct bullying involves relatively open attacks on another student and may include words, gestures, facial expressions or physical contact. However, reduction and prevention of 'indirect bullying' must also be included in our goals. A student exposed to indirect bullying is excluded from the peer group and has problems making friends within his/her class. An intervention programme should be directed towards this less visible form of victimisation.

The goals described are negatively formulated: They concern the reduction, elimination and prevention of bully/victim problems. It is also natural to state positive goals which can be expressed in the following way;

To achieve better peer relations at school, and to create conditions that make it possible for both victims and bullies to get along and function better in and out of the school setting.(15)

For victims, this would mean a greater sense of security at school, greater self confidence, and a feeling of being liked and accepted by at least one or two fellow students. For bullies, "functioning better" would imply fewer aggressive reactions to the environment and asserting themselves in more socially acceptable ways. In essence, this amounts to mitigating the bullies negative and hostile reactions, while at the same time strengthening their positive behaviours.

Awareness and Involvement

Two conditions are very important for realising these goals in a school based intervention programme: (1) That adults at school and, to some degree, at home become aware of the extent of bully/victim problems in 'their' school; (2) That the adults decide to engage themselves, with some degree of seriousness, in changing the situation.

The research results presented earlier have clearly shown bullying to be a considerable problem in Irish schools (as well as in schools in many other countries) and that no school environment can be regarded as "bully proof". Any time several students are together, especially when they cannot choose the members of the group themselves and when no adult is present, tendencies toward bullying may arise. This is a reasonable general assumption.

But to work concretely with the problems of a particular school, it is essential to collect more detailed information about the specific situation at that school. An excellent way of doing this is to make an anonymous survey with the Bully/Victim Questionnaire.

Mapping the extent of the bully/victim problems at the particular school is a good starting point for an intervention programme. Even if the amount of bullying occurring in the school is relatively limited, there must be no complacency. The ultimate goal must be to eliminate bullying at school altogether!

Registering the amount of bully/victim problems existing in the particular school after serves as an eye-opener to parents and teachers and makes them eager to take action. Adult involvement in countering bully/victim problems is an essential general prerequi

site to a school based intervention programme, and it is important that adults do not view bullying as an inevitable part of children's lives. Also implied in this view is the conviction that a great deal can be accomplished with relatively simple means. At the same time, I want to underscore the fact that increased knowledge of the problems and of suitable counter-measures is of major importance in obtaining good results.

Measures at the School Level

As shown in the overview of the intervention programme, measures against bullying can be implemented at the school level, at the class level and at the individual level. In principle, the target group at the school level is the entire student population of the school, and there is no particular focus on students who have been identified as victims or bullies. Measures are directed at developing attitudes and creating conditions that decrease the extent of bullying in the school as a whole. Some of these measures have the additional goal of preventing the development of new bully/victim problems.

Measures at the class level can in general be described in the same way, except that they have the class as a whole - all the students in the class - as the target group. The purpose of measures at the individual level is to change the behaviour or situation of individual students. Targets here are those students who are known to be, or suspected of being, involved in bullying problems, either as bullies or victims.

I shall discuss measures at the school level first.

A School Conference Day

When a school has decided to initiate systematic measures against bullying, it is useful to organise a school conference day around the problem. In addition to the principal, the teachers, selected parents and students, if the staff of the school includes a school psychologist, school counsellor and/or a school nurse, they could also take part. Ideally, all participants would have read related literary material in preparation for the conference.

If results from the students replies to the Bully/Victim Questionnaire are available, it is very valuable to present them at the conference and to discuss them in some detail. There are also special video cassettes about bullying that could be shown.

The goal of the school conference day should be to arrive at an overall long-term plan of action for the school. To make this plan concrete and detailed enough, there should be plenty of time for discussion of the measures to be selected for implementation at the particular school.

Even if different teachers choose to focus on somewhat different components of the programme for use in their own classes, it is highly desirable that certain measures and principles are generally agreed upon. It is a great advantage if the school conference succeeds in creating some degree of collective commitment to and responsibility for the programme chosen.

Supervision and Outdoor Environment

It is at school, rather than on the way to and from school, that most of the bullying occurs. As previously reported, there is less bullying at schools that have a relatively high 'teacher density' during breaks and lunch time. Accordingly, it is important to have an adequate number of adults outside together with the students during break periods, and that the school provide good supervision of the students' activities - also during the lunch break (when students in many schools are left completely without adult supervision). A simple preventive measure is to make sure that the school has a smoothly functioning plan for recess and lunch time supervision.

Obviously, it is not enough that teachers and other adults are merely present during recess: They must also be prepared to intervene quickly and decidedly in bullying situations - also in situations where there is only a suspicion that bullying is taking place. Assurances, even from the supposed victim, that the whole thing is 'just for fun' cannot be unconditionally accepted. Such incidents should be followed by a heightened attention to the actions of the students in question. It is quite often possible to decide from facial expressions, intonation and the atmosphere of the activities whether there is bullying occurring. The guiding rule is to intervene too early rather than too late. Intervention by adults in a determined and consistent way marks an important attitude: 'We do not accept bullying', sending clear signals to both bullies and to other students who might become involved in the bullying activities. Adult intervention also implies taking sides in favour of the possible victims.

To increase the security of the students, supervising adults must exchange information about events taking place during recess. A teacher who observes bullying should, in

addition to intervening, also report the incident to the classroom teacher of the students involved. In this way, tendencies toward bullying can be discovered and counteracted at an early stage.

As already discussed, a good deal of bullying is carried out by older students towards younger ones. Bearing this in mind, schools can also try to prevent bullying through special arrangements of time and space. For example, younger and older students could have separate break times or could be assigned different areas of the school playground.

Bullying tends to occur more frequently in certain parts of the playground than others. Cloakrooms and toilets are 'risk areas' which should be given extra attention. Secluded areas of the school yard where bullying can occur with little chance of adult intervention, should be given special surveillance or be removed, if possible.

An additional way to counteract bullying is to promote a well equipped and attractive outdoor environment that invites positive activities. It is likely that some students bully more when they are bored; the bullying may become a way of making school life somewhat more exciting. Further, a well laid out and well planned playground may make it more attractive for adults to participate in the students activities.

Contact Telephone

The bullied student is usually anxious and insecure and may not dare to tell anyone about the situation - in part from fear of revenge by his tormentors in case the adults

were to take some action. It is also possible that the victim or his/her parents have brought the matter to the attention of the classroom teacher, but have been dismissed with some excuse or other.

In such situations, a 'contact telephone' could be very useful. A person closely associated with the school - the school psychologist, counsellor, or an interested teacher - could spend a few hours a week taking calls from students or parents who wanted to discuss their situation anonymously.

It is very important for the contact person to follow up such situations, and not to let the matter go until there are such signs that the problems have been, or are on their way to being, resolved.

In schools and classes where there is an unfortunate lack of communication among teachers, students and parents, a contact telephone can be of help for students or parents who wanted to discuss their situation anonymously.

It is very important for the contact person to follow up such situations, and not to let the matter go until there are such signs that the problems have been, or are on their way to being, resolved.

In schools and classes where there is an unfortunate lack of communication among teachers, students and parents, a contact telephone can be of help for students or parents who feel unable or are unwilling to use the regular channels of communication.

If a school decides to establish a contact telephone, it is of course important to make

this known through public notices, announcements to the students, and letters to the parents.

A General PTA Meeting

Close co-operation between school and home is clearly desirable if bully/victim problems are to be efficiently counteracted. Co-operation can be organised through general PTA meetings in which all parents at the school are invited to participate, or in meetings with the parents of a class.

If a school has decided to increase its efforts to combat bullying, the students' parents need to be informed of this decision and invited to participate. A good way to do this is to bring the matter up at a general PTA meeting. If the students have taken the Bully/Victim Questionnaire on bullying, the results can be presented on this occasion. The participants in the meeting should then be invited to discuss the plan of action and the particular measures the school wishes to implement and emphasise in its efforts to counteract bullying.

The school should also inform the parents that teachers are now going to focus attention on even relatively minor cases of bullying and social exclusion. The school should encourage parents to contact the teachers if they suspect that their child is being bullied or is bullying others.

Minutes of the PTA meeting and information about the plan of action against bullying should be sent out to all parents after the meeting. If a decision to arrange class PTA meetings has been taken, it is important to emphasise this point of information to the

parents. In this way, parents who were unable to attend the general PTA meeting will be given an opportunity actively to participate in future work.

Teacher Groups for the Development of the Social Milieu of the School

Because bullying can appear wherever several individuals are together, there must be a constant readiness to counteract such tendencies in the school environment. Involvement in and enthusiasm for this work must be kept alive. It is vital that teachers - as well as parents and students - gain more knowledge about suitable methods of dealing with these problems.

Groups of five to ten teachers could meet regularly, perhaps once a week, for a number of weeks. The meetings would be a forum for discussing various problems at the school, sharing one another's experiences, and learning from one another's successes and failures.

A natural beginning for the group's activities would be to concentrate on various aspects of bullying : The problem in general ; bully/victim problems at the school and in the various classes based on the questionnaire results and the teachers' observations ; measures and development of a common plan of action for the school.

Social milieu development groups can become an important tool in the struggle against bullying in school. They can give valuable new experiences and contribute to keeping teachers actively involved. Teachers, who often have to handle various classroom problems on their own, could feel themselves to be part of a collegial support group in which the participants learn from, stimulate and support one another.

Social milieu development groups can also promote a common ground among teachers against bullying at school. Counter measures are clearly more likely to become successful if the adults in the school environment react in a relatively consistent manner to similar situations. Variations in behaviour from one incident to the next, and from one teacher to another, will soon be noted by students, thereby weakening the effects of possible measures.

Parent Circles

If teachers and parents react in a reasonably similar way toward bullying, the possibility of obtaining desirable results will be considerably increased. The Parent - Teacher Association can arrange a series of meetings - for instance in parent circles - where literature on bully/victim problems are presented and discussed. Teachers and other representatives of the school can also be invited to some of these meetings to inform about the schools work in this matter. A group activity of this kind can fulfil the same functions for parents as the social milieu development groups can do for teachers.

Measures at the Class Level

class rules about bullying

An important aid in counteracting bully/victim problems and creating a better social climate in the class is for the teachers and the students to agree on a few simple rules about bullying. It is helpful for the teacher to think through these rules and possible alternatives before he/she brings the matter up with the class. Preparatory discussions could be held in the social milieu development group.

The following three rules are a natural starting point:

1. We shall not bully other students.
2. We shall try to help students who are bullied.
3. We shall make a point to include students who become easily left out.

The kinds of behaviour to which these rules refer must be made clear to the students. Clarifications can be made in several different ways. A video cassette on bullying can be shown to the students as a basis for discussion.

Another possibility is to *read aloud from literature* on bullying, in class. The teacher must choose these materials with some discretion. The goal in reading aloud from the literature should be to increase the students' empathy with victims of bullying and to demonstrate some of the mechanisms involved, without teaching new ways of bullying.

Simple *role playing* about bullying can also be engaging and an effective method of reaching the same ends. Through role playing, it is also possible to illustrate what more 'neutral' students can do to counteract tendencies towards social exclusion and to stop ongoing bullying.

Among other things, passive participation in bullying can be discussed. Students must understand that even the passive participant is an 'accomplice' and has an individual responsibility for what happens. It should not be acceptable to disengage oneself from responsibility by referring to 'the other girls/boys'.

Students are often under the impression that if they tell a teacher or parents that they

themselves or a fellow student are being bullied, this is to 'tattle' or 'rat'. The teacher should point out that when a student tells of another student being bullied, this is not to 'rat' but it is to show compassion for, and to take the side of the weaker party, the victim.

Praise

Praise and friendly attention from the teachers is an important means of influencing student behaviour. Generous praise, both in connection with students' behaviour toward one another and with their schoolwork, can be expected to have favourable effects on the class climate. It is also easier for a student to accept criticism of undesirable behaviour and to attempt change, if he/she feels appreciated and relatively well liked. It is easily overlooked that students who are aggressive and difficult to deal with, also do much that deserves appreciation.

The teachers can praise students for intervening when one or more students try to bully another, for starting or participating in activities that involve all the students in the class without excluding anyone, for taking initiative to pull related students into common activities, and in general, for showing helpful and friendly behaviour. In particular, aggressive students and students who are easily influenced by others should also receive appreciation for not reacting aggressively, and for not participating in bullying.

Sanctions

In order to make aggressive students change their behaviour it is usually not enough for the teacher (or other adults) to be benevolently understanding and to dispense a good deal of praise. Both research and experience show that one must also make use

of sanctions - some form of negative consequence - for undesirable behaviour (Patterson et. al., 1975, Patterson, 1982, Walker et.al.,1976). The best results are achieved through a combination of generous praise for positive activities and consistent sanctions for aggressive, rule breaking behaviour.

In class discussions of rules against bullying, it is natural to bring up the question of what sanctions are appropriate. It is essential that the teacher involves the students in this discussion.

Some possible sanctions are the following: Serious individual talk with the student; making the student sit outside the principal's office during some break periods; making the student spend one or more hours in another class, perhaps with younger students; making the student stay close to the supervising teacher during a number of breaks; sending the student for a serious talk with the principal; depriving the student of some privilege. It could also be appropriate to contact the student's parents to inform them of the situation and try to bring about cooperation with the aim of changing the student's behaviour (see more under Measures at the Individual Level).

Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning is a method of teaching developed particularly in the USA. As the name suggests, it deals with group work, but group work of a special kind. Considerable research (Johnson et. al. 1983) has shown that the method has favourable effects not only on learning and achievement but also in other areas. Students who participate in cooperative groups are likely to be more accepting of and more positive toward one another, to be more helpful and supportive of one another, and to develop

fewer prejudices toward group members of other races or nationalities than do other children. Though it may be generally desirable to achieve results of this kind in most classes, in this context I view cooperative learning from the more limited perspective of preventing and counteracting bully/victim problems.

In cooperative learning, students work in small groups on a common task. The size of the group can vary from two to six students, depending on the type of task. In his/her instructions, the teacher makes clear to the students that it is the performance of *the group* that counts and will be evaluated. At the same time, it is stressed that each member of the group must be able to present the group's results or solution to the problem ("individual accountability"). In addition, each member of the group is responsible for every other members learning of the prescribed task.

A basic characteristic of the method is that the teacher lays out a task so that *mutual positive dependence* is created among the group members.

It is important to make frequent simple evaluations of how the individual groups function. This can be done by having the members give brief accounts of what the group managed to do especially well and what they did less well and will continue to work on.

To get a good mixture of students with varying levels of achievement, the teacher should usually be responsible for the distribution of the students in the groups. In view of the possible bullying tendencies, it is also important that the teacher uses his/her knowledge of the social relationships among the students in setting up the groups.

If the teacher feels insecure about social relationships in the class, he/she can ask the

students to write down the names of three other classmates they would like to work with. In this way, it is easy to identify which students are not selected by anyone. The teacher can then construct a group of positive and friendly students around isolated girls or boys. It is also possible to take the students preferences somewhat into account by letting each student work with one group member whom he/she selected as well as with a couple of others whom the teacher selected.

The choice of group members is also very important with regard to students who bully others. As a rule, it is not appropriate - at least not in the beginning - to place a bully and a possible victim in the same group. Nor is it advisable to let several bullies, or a bully and a follower work together. Instead, the teacher should attempt to surround the bully with a couple of strong and secure students who will not accept being bullied. Later it may be possible to group a bully with his/her victim. This presupposes, however, that the bully has to a certain extent modified his/her behaviour or that the victim now has one or more allies in the group who are willing to take his/her side in possible attacks. The teacher must follow closely what happens in and out of the group, and, should too many problems arise, be prepared to dissolve it.

It is not possible to specify in advance how long a certain grouping of students should last. In general, a group should be kept together long enough to make a certain amount of progress in its work; it is also important that the members of the group get to know each other reasonably well. At the same time, it is good for each student to be given the opportunity to work with a number of fellow students during the course of the term or academic year. This can contribute to decreasing tensions and conflicts in the class, and to increasing cohesion and student satisfaction. In classes with bully/victim problems, in order to decide how long a certain grouping should last, it is necessary to pay special

attention to how students involved in such problems get along in their respective groups.

It must be emphasised that cooperative learning is only one of several special teaching methods that a teacher might want to use. Further, it should be emphasised that it is not a substitute for, but a possible addition to, previously mentioned measures such as class meetings and development of class rules against bullying.

Measures at the Individual Level

Serious talks with the bullies

Many bullies in addition to being fairly tough and self confident, are good at talking themselves out of a tricky situation. One must expect a bully to attempt this when the teacher brings up the issue of his/her participation in bullying. Among other things, he/she can be expected to minimise his/her own contribution while exaggerating the role played by others. The behaviour of the victim will often be portrayed as aggressive, provocative, and dumb, and used as justification for the bullying he/she may 'possibly' have participated in.

After individual talks with all of the suspected bullies, it may be useful to assemble them as a group. Once again, they should be clearly informed that no further bullying will be tolerated and that sanctions will be imposed for any future bullying.

It is much easier for the teacher to have these discussions with bullying students if some of the measures previously described have already been implemented, for example, the class rules against bullying. Such measures constitute a background for the students' understanding of the problems and there are then suitable 'tools' for counteracting them,

such as sanctions and the class meeting.

If the measures taken do not lead to changes in the bullies' behaviour, it may become necessary to arrange talks with the principal or parents present in order to emphasise the seriousness of the situation.

Talks with the Victim

The typical victim is an anxious and insecure student who usually does not want to be the focus of attention. He/she is afraid of getting his/her tormentors into 'trouble' by telling adults of their activities. Frequently, he/she has also been threatened with more bullying if he/she should get any idea of tattling. Undoubtedly, such threats cause many victims to decide to suffer quietly for fear of getting 'out of the frying pan into the fire'. These considerations make one point very clear: In trying to clear up a bullying situation one must make every effort to guarantee the victim efficient protection against harassment. The victimised student must be able to trust that adults both want and are able to give him/her any help needed. In order to give the bullied student such protection, close cooperation and frequent exchange of information between the school and the students' family are usually needed.

It is generally advantageous if the teacher or the parents can secure the consent of the victimised child before pursuing the matter. In the case that bullied children are so afraid of negative consequences that they do not want to follow adult advice in this matter, the adult must take responsibility for unravelling the problem, possibly in spite of the protests of the victim. But it must be emphasised once more that the teacher who intervenes in a bully/victim problem will have a special duty to arrange for the protection of

the victim.

Sometimes a bullying situation can come to a head take a dramatic turn, possibly including severe attacks and assault. In such a situation, it is important that the victim and his/her family get professional help quickly to work through the shocking experience. This will reduce the risks of the victim taking impulsive action and of suffering serious long-term effects from the incident.

Talks with the Parents

After having discovered that students in the class bully others or are being bullied, the teacher should make contact with the parents concerned - at least if the problem has some degree of seriousness.

In addition, it is often appropriate for the teacher to arrange a meeting in which both victim(s) and bully(ies) as well as their parents participate. The aim here is to have a thorough discussion of the situation and to arrive at a plan for solving the problem. One important aspect is to try to establish some degree of cooperation with the parents of the bully(ies) and to make them exert their influence over the child in an appropriate way. If the victimised child has had his/her clothes or possessions damaged as a result of bullying, it is reasonable to raise the issue of compensation in this context.

The meeting should not be a one-off event. It should be followed up with other meetings in which an evaluation of the situation can be made. It is of course also important to make sure that things agreed upon in the meetings are actually carried out. Under favourable circumstances, relatively positive relationships between parents of the

bully(ies) and those of the victim can develop. This is often an important step toward a solution of the problem.

In many cases, however, it is obvious that there are tense and hostile relations between the families of the bullies and of the victim. In such cases, it is probably advantageous to meet with one family at a time, before getting them together.

Change of Class or School

When there is an unfortunate combination of aggressive students in a class, the school should, after consulting with the parents of involved students, distribute these students among different classes, or possibly even among different schools. Good results can often be obtained by splitting up such a 'gang'. The prospect of an aggressive being moved, unless the bullying stops, can, of course, also be used as pressure to bring about change.

The first solution to consider should be to move the aggressive students, and not the victim. However, if such a solution does not seem viable, the possibility of moving the victim to another class or school could also be considered if such an arrangement appears to be promising. Under all circumstances, such moves should be carefully planned and prepared, with the concerned teachers and parents consulting one another. In this way, the chances of a successful outcome will increase.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 5

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CHAPTER 6

METHODOLOGY

Chapter five was principally concerned with establishing a proposed intervention programme to deal with the problem of bullying on a whole school level, class level and on an individual level.

The research project described in this chapter proposes the use of Art, Craft and Design as a means of raising an awareness of bullying behaviour at the class level. It would also hope to increase the students' empathy with victims of bullying and to demonstrate some of the mechanisms involved without teaching new ways of bullying.

The case study will be undertaken in the school where I complete my teaching practice, with the relevant projects assigned to my own fifth year group.

This chapter presents the relevant background information on the research project. It provides a description of the actual school where I will conduct the case study.

Through the utilisation of a questionnaire, I will investigate the students awareness of what to them constitutes as bullying behaviour, if they feel the problem exists in their school and whether they feel the problem is adequately dealt with within their school. Following this, I will present the sequence of practical lessons which I will use within the art room to further develop my fifth year classes' awareness of the problem of bullying within their school.

The School where the Research Project will be Undertaken

Background Information on the School

The scheme of work will be completed in Our Lady of Mercy College, Beaumont, which is an all girls school. The school, located on its own grounds beside the Beaumont Hospital has good outdoor sports facilities including netball and tennis courts, a hockey pitch, a large assembly hall and a new gym.

It provides Department of Education courses leading to Junior and Leaving Certificate Examinations. The school also provides an optional year in fourth year - the transition year programme- which caters for academic study, careers education, work experience and also, most importantly, personal development.

The following subjects are available:

Irish, English, Maths, History, Geography, French, German, Art Craft and Design, Music, Singing, Science (Biology, Chemistry, Physics), Business Studies (Business Organisation, Economics, Accounting), Civics, Religion, Home Economics (General, Social and Scientific), Physical Education and Computer Studies.

The school has one permanent guidance counsellor. It does not have an official remedial teacher but does provide special classes for the very weak student. New students have to undergo an entrance examination when applying for the school. Classes are organised in mixed ability groups. The school is quite strict on student compliance with the correct school uniform.

There are a total number of forty seven teachers in the school, this includes both full and part time staff. The school has a total of four hundred and fifty one pupils.

The classes are divided as follows:

First Years:	1st Year One	25	Total no. of pupils - 78
	1st Year Two	27	
	1st Year Three	26	
Second Years:	2nd Year One	24	Total no. of pupils - 99
	2nd Year Two	24	
	2nd Year Three	25	
	2nd Year Four	26	
Third Years:	3rd Year One	24	Total no. of pupils - 100
	3rd Year Two	25	
	3rd Year Three	25	
	3rd Year Four	26	
Fourth Years:	Transition Year	23	Total no. of pupils - 23
Fifth Years:	5th Year One	27	Total no. of pupils - 70
	5th Year Two	28	
	5th Year Three	25	

Sixth Years:	6th Year One	27	
	6th Year Two	28	
	6th Year Three	26	Total no. of pupils - 81

There is only one art teacher in the school and one art room.

The Art Department

As mentioned above, the school has one art room which has facilities for drawing, painting, printmaking, ceramics and textiles. The room is quite spacious and well lit with windows occupying the back wall and windows in the ceiling. There are three sinks spaced well apart on each of the walls. There is one kiln and four potters wheels within the room. There is a ready made dark room which is located to the back of the room, within the store room. This is a rather small room, which contains a sink and photographic equipment and some of the more expensive art materials.

The room stocks a wide variety of art materials, with the exception of fabrics. Good display and storage facilities are available, for both equipment and students' work, all of which are clearly labelled. Although the teacher's desk is located at the top of the room, it is mainly used for holding the teacher's materials, rather than a location from which the teacher would work.

How Art is Seen Within the School

The teachers and pupils promote art, craft and design as a significant and important subject in the schools' curriculum. This attitude is attributed to the art teacher. Art is

not a compulsory subject in the school system, yet it is a popular subject with all years of study. Student art work is continuously displayed on the walls and corridors surrounding the art room and exhibitions are regularly held in the school's main hall.

The Questionnaire

As previously mentioned, bullying by its very nature is a secret activity and therefore may go unnoticed by teachers. However, due to the fact that I had attended this school as a second level student, I was well aware that the problem of bullying did exist (or at least, had existed) here, but as yet was unfamiliar as to how widespread it actually was.

A questionnaire was devised and administered to my fifth year art class with four purposes in mind: (1) As a basic method of data collection, (2) As an educational exercise to assess the students understanding of what constituted as bullying behaviour, (3) To raise the topic of bullying as a problem to be dealt with among the students, (4) To introduce my sequence of lessons which would use bullying as the theme.

The questionnaire was completed by twenty three students, whose ages fall within the sixteen to seventeen year old age group. Preceding the actual distribution of the questionnaire, it was stressed that the questionnaire was anonymous and confidential with no input to be volunteered or accepted from other pupils. It was thus intended to ensure that each girl would carefully consider the questions asked in relation to her own experience of bullying. The returned questionnaire sheets would accordingly provide a true representation of each students background knowledge and direct or indirect experiences of bullying without the worry of being identified within particular bullying incidences.

The questionnaire itself contains thirty two questions and yields information concerning the extent of bully/victim problems at the particular school, the frequency with which teachers intervene or talk to the students involved, the extent to which the students themselves intervene or report bullying incidences and contains questions which challenge the students' views of what actually constitutes as bullying behaviour. It differs from previous questionnaires on bully/victim problems in a number of respects, including the following:

1. It refers to a specific time period (a 'reference period')
2. It includes questions about the 'others' reactions to bullying, as perceived by the respondents, that is, the reactions and attitudes of peers, teachers and parents.
3. It refers to specific environments within the school where bullying can take place.
4. It refers to the issue of bullying in relation to teachers as well as students.

I feel it important to stress once more that the questionnaire was not devised to acquire an overview of the extent of bullying within the 'whole' school but with the intention of raising an awareness of the problem and to map the extent of the problem within my fifth year art class.

The introduction to this first class of the scheme was purposely quite vague, giving the students no indication as to the subject matter of the questionnaire, the objective being to illicit spontaneous and honest answers from the students.

The initial questions introduced the topic slowly, inquiring as to how the students perceived their level of popularity among their peers, and to indicate, from a list of inter-personal incidents, which they felt counted as bullying behaviour.

As the questionnaire progressed, students were asked to volunteer information as to their own involvement in incidents of bullying, either as bully, victim or bystander and whether they or a teacher have intervened in a bullying incident. They were also asked what they felt to be the extent of the problem within and outside the school and their opinion on what their school could do about bullying. The questionnaire appears in its entirety in Appendix A.

Results of the Questionnaire

In the opening section of the questionnaire, the students were asked to consider their peer relations within their class. It was noted that out of the twenty three students that completed the questionnaire, none of the students claimed to have either no friends or only one good friend. Eleven girls felt that they had two/three good friends whilst the remaining twelve claimed to have many good friends within their class. It was also noted that eighteen of the students had never experienced isolation during the break periods and the remaining five girls stated that they had only experienced it once or twice.

When asked to consider what the students felt in their opinion, constituted as bullying behaviour, the physical forms of being pushed, hit/kicked, things taken or damaged and money demanded were a popular choice with nineteen of the students. It was observed that only eight girls out of twenty three felt that being 'ignored' could be classed as bullying. When one considers the fact that according to the research, girls favour the more indirect modes of malicious gossip and social ostracism in their bullying behaviour, these figures are quite interesting. However, verbal bullying in the form of threats was still the most popular answer with twenty two students.

For the percentage of being bullied and bullying others, the results indicated a disturbingly high level of both. Over fifty per cent of the class - a total of twelve student - have been or are still being bullied. Ten were bullied during the last year of primary school, three of which claimed it to be a regular occurrence. The two remaining girls have been bullied on an occasional basis during their time in secondary school.

(See Figure 6.1)

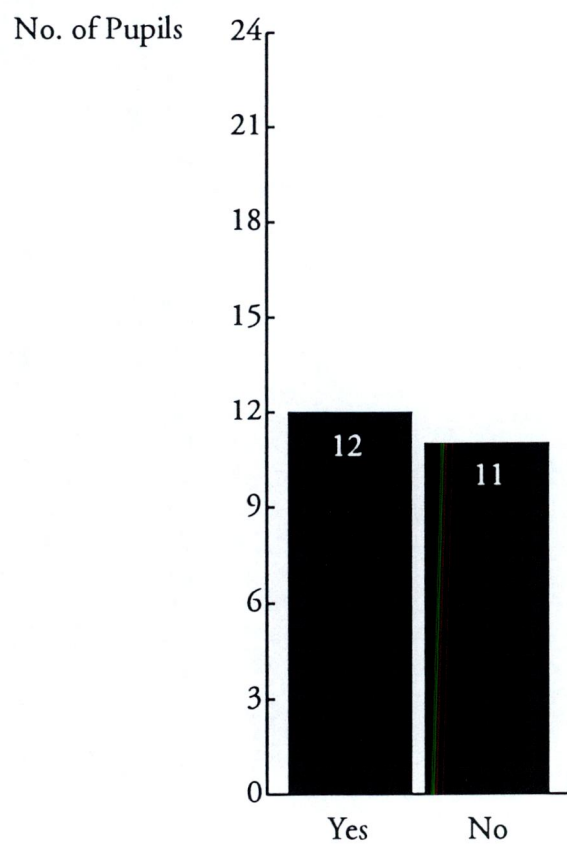
Even more disturbing was the amount of students that admitted to having bullied others - a total of nineteen students - eighty three per cent of the class. Most of the bullying took the form of social ostracism with fifty per cent experiencing this whilst forty eight per cent of students admitted to teasing and name calling. It must be noted here however, that only eight students earlier in the questionnaire felt that being ignored could be considered as a form of bullying and hence, may not have been aware that they were partaking in a bullying incident.

When asked to indicate what type of bullying they had been subjected to, the following results were revealed. The girls stated that they had been called nasty names, had been physically hurt and members of their families had been insulted. Some claimed to have been threatened, ignored, had rumours spread about them and belongings taken. Four of the twelve students admitted to having experienced more than three of the above on a regular basis.

Only three students claimed to have been bullied outside the school environment. The most referred to area of the school was the classroom with bullying also being frequent in the school grounds. Other places mentioned were the corridors (by two students) and the journey to and from school (by two students).

FIGURE 6.1

Students answers to question 5.



Have you ever been bullied ?

A 'group of girls' was the most popular answer to those responsible for the bullying act. At first I was not surprised at this answer as the students are attending an all girl school. However, most of the bullying admitted to, took place during the last year of primary school. The majority of students in my class attended the local national school, St. Fiachra's prior to entry to Our Lady of Mercy College, Beaumont. St. Fiachra's however is a mixed primary school and yet in the questionnaire only twice were boys referred to as the bullies. One girl claimed to have been bullied by 'one boy' whilst one acknowledged a 'group of boys'. On the other hand, being bullied by 'one girl' was mentioned by three students and six girls admitted to being bullied by a 'group of girls'.

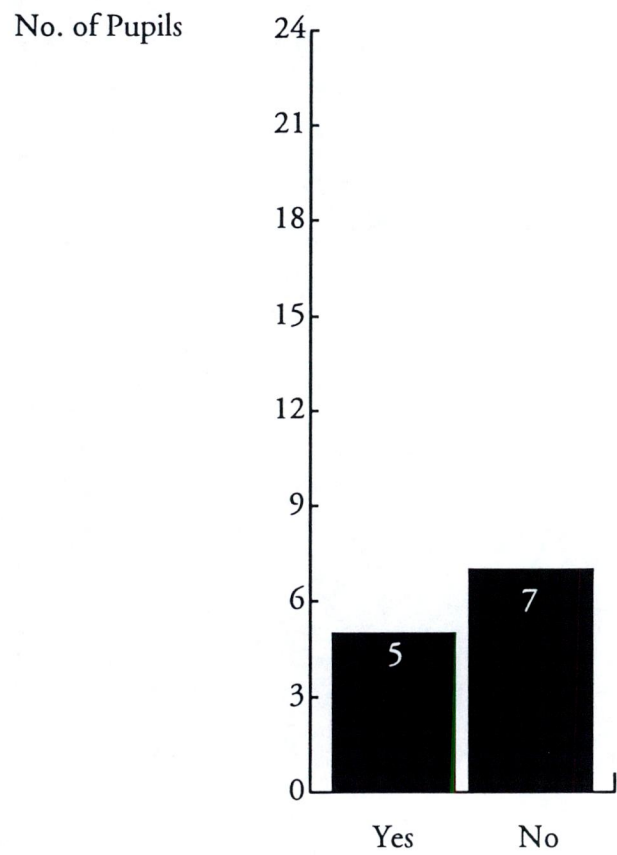
Almost all of the students bullied stated that the students who had bullied them were members of their year class. Two victims claimed the bullies to be 'one or more years above' and one said they were 'one or more years below'.

The findings that girls are less likely to report incidences of bullying behaviour was also affirmed in my questionnaire results. However, the differences between those who reported the incident to those that did not was not as obvious as I had expected. (See Figure 6.2) Students were more likely to report the incident to a parent or friend than to a teacher. Of the twelve students involved, not one told either a teacher or Year Head that they had been bullied in school. Students who did not report being bullied felt that they either would not be taken seriously, were afraid to, did not like telling tales or felt that they would look like a coward.

On the whole, students had mixed opinions as to whether teachers or pupils would try to put a stop to it when a pupil is being bullied at school; although the answers were slightly more positive than negative. It was felt that teachers were more likely to

FIGURE 6.2

Students answers to question 13.



Did you report the bullying ?

intervene in a bullying incident than other pupils.

When students were asked why they thought they were bullied, the following comments were made:

Because I was shy and didn't get into trouble often.
 Because I'm only new in the school.
 I was bullied because me and my friend were very small and they were very big.
 Because they didn't like me.
 She thought I was laughing at her.
 Because the girl who did (bullied) slagged off everyone and thought she was great.
 Because I had one special friend and the bullies didn't like that, so they took away all my other friends.

Fortunately, ten of the twelve students stated that the bullying has now stopped. One student admitted that the reason the bullying ended for her was because her family moved house.

The students were asked to consider if the bullying had changed them in any way:

Yes, I don't bully others 'cause I know what it feels like.
 Yes, I would stand up to them now.
 I don't look behind me to look at anyone anymore.
 I have become more self conscious.
 I am more cautious about my friends.
 It taught me to treat others as I'd like them to treat me.
 It made me more defensive.

A very interesting finding was established when the students were asked about the amount of people they felt have been subjected to bullying in their year class. There are three classes in fifth year, (as mentioned earlier in the profile on the school), the art class consisting of a mix of the three classes. Therefore, there are students from fifth year one, two and three in the art class. In relation to the questionnaire, students were asked to volunteer the information on the amount of students involved in bullying in

relation to their year class and not their art class. Varied answers emerged which further proved the fact that many of the students questioned were unsure of the many differing forms of behaviour which can be classed as bullying.

Students answers ranged from the problem being non-existent in their year class to as many as five or six students being bullied in that same class. This was true in the case of all three classes. (See Figures 6.3 - 6.5)

For example, in fifth year one, all six students from that class gave a different estimate for the amount of students being bullied, yet it was evident that all five of them felt the problem did exist in their class. (See Figure 6.3)

In fifth year two, four of the seven students claimed that the problem did not exist at all in their class, yet one student felt that as many as six or more girls were being bullied. (See Figure 6.4)

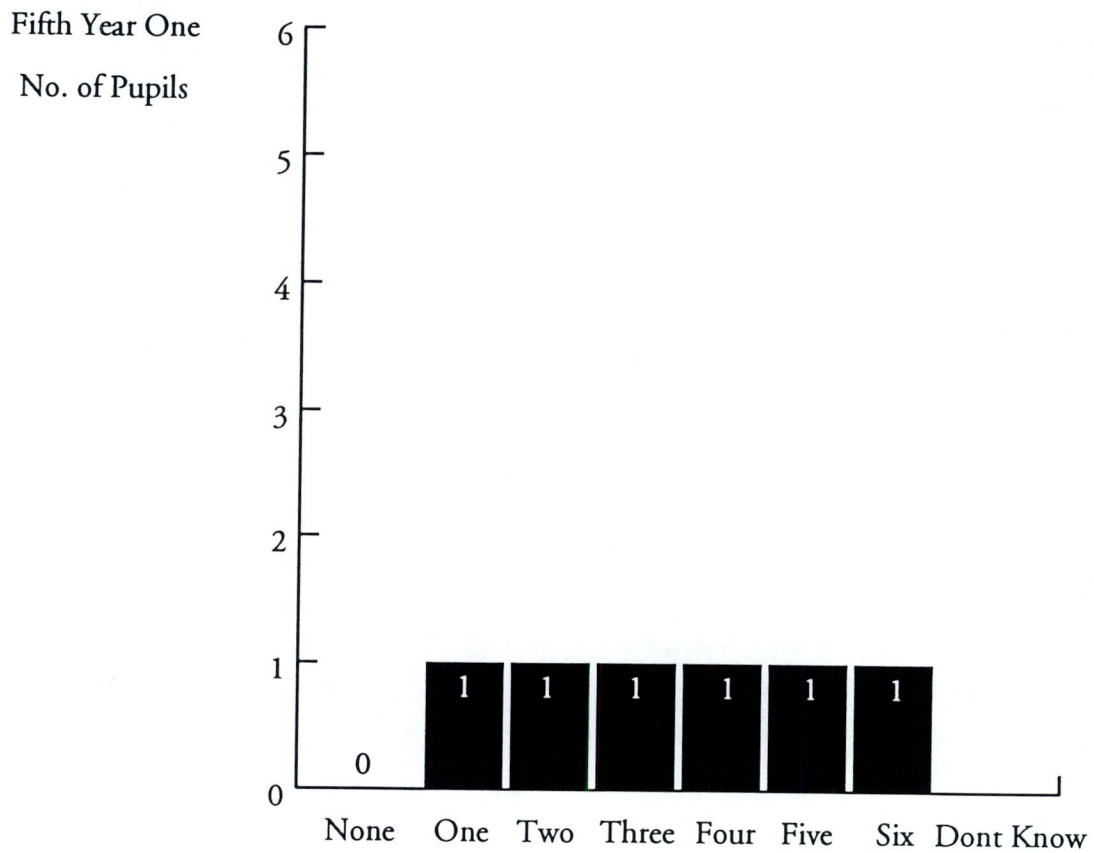
In fifth year three, three students felt that six or more students were victims to bullying whilst two girls were completely unaware of a problem. (See Figure 6.5)

Have we, therefore, to question the students knowledge of what they define as bullying behaviour or is this a case that perhaps the individuals who feel that no problem exists are the very ones doing the bullying?

Although, as I discussed earlier, it is believed that bullying is more likely to be prevalent in a boys or girls school, students who completed the questionnaire, felt that co- educational schools would experience the problem more often.

FIGURE 6.3

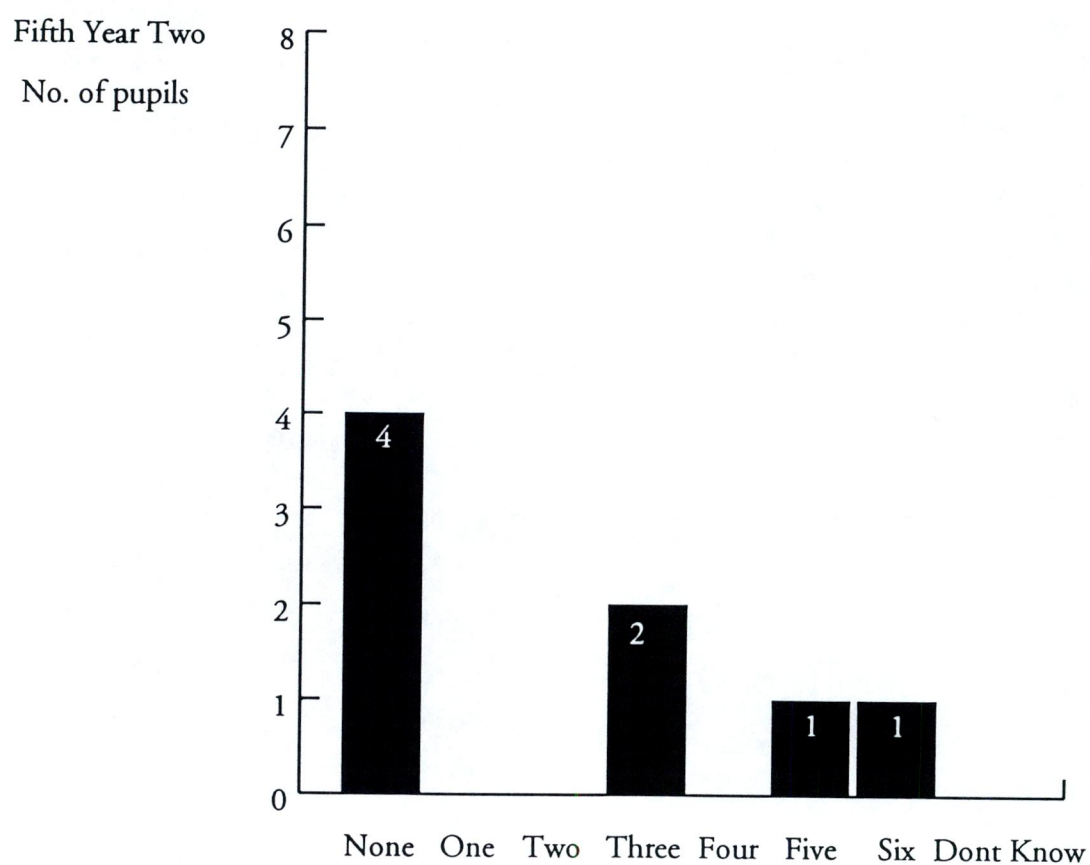
Students answers to Question 22.



About how many people in your class have been bullied do you think ?
(Also count yourself if you have been bullied)

FIGURE 6.4

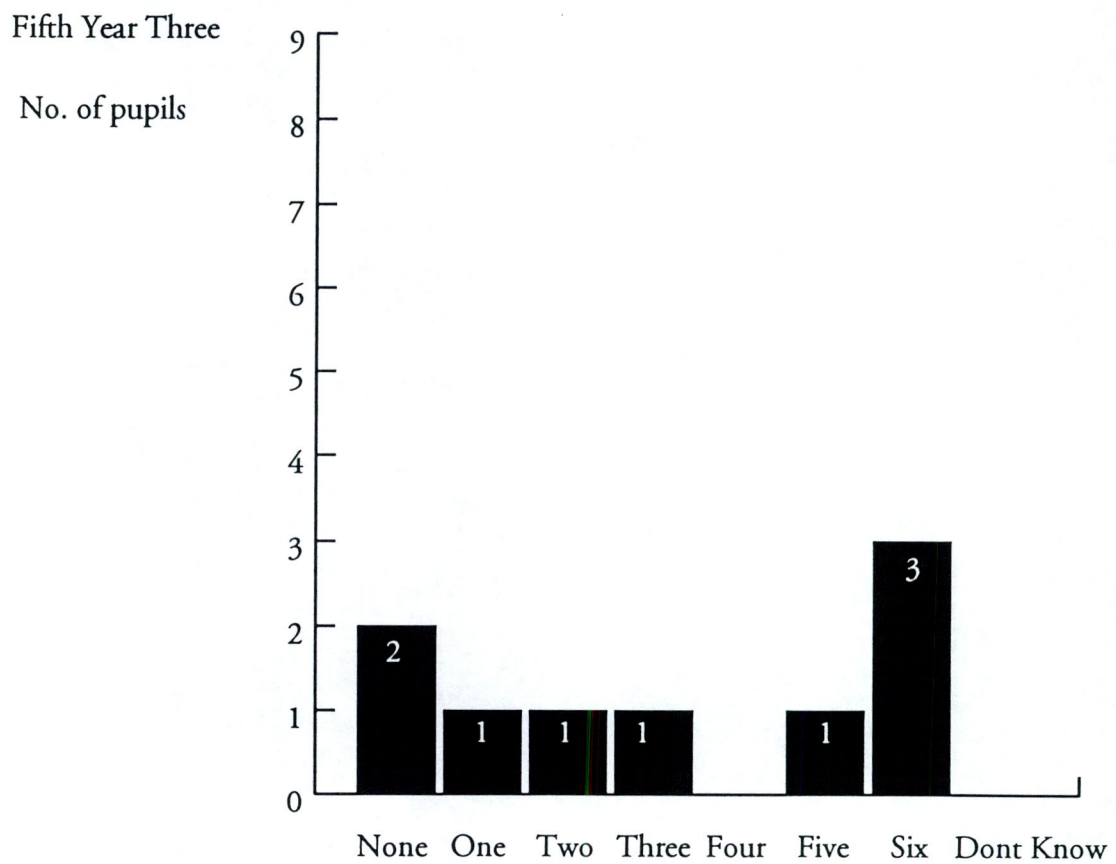
Students answers to Question 22.



About how many people in your class have been bullied do you think ?
(Also count yourself if you have been bullied)

FIGURE 6.5

Students answers to Question 22.



About how many people in your class have been bullied do you think ?
(Also count yourself if you have been bullied)

However, in agreement with the research the girls felt that bullying would occur more in single sex boys schools than single sex girls. It is important to stress here that the figures were still extremely tight. Eleven students siding with co-educational schools, ten with boys schools and eight with girls schools. (Some students put all three schools on an equal estimation or felt that two of the three schools would suffer the same amount of bullying).

In conclusion, when asked what more this school could do to tackle the problem of bullying, the students volunteered the following comments. These comments can be categorised into three preventative measures;

(1) Vigilance

Watch the pupils a lot more and warn them (bullies) how much trouble they could get in.

They could just keep an eye on the students that are or might be having trouble.

Be more aware that it's going on, because it is!

They might'nt be able to stop it because they would'nt know.

Open their eyes and realise the problem does exist

(2) Punishment

Expel the bullies

Harder punishment, maybe even suspension

They could punish the person who is being bullied and if they so it again, severely punish them and not let them near the child. If it happens again put them (bully) in a different school.

Punish the people who bully more severely. Find out more about the bullying going on in this school because there is lots.

(3) Intervention

Be more aware of it. If the person being bullied tells a teacher, the teacher should put a stop to it.

They could have someone which people would not be scared to talk to about bullying.

The school could let one teacher deal with bullying, like at break you could talk to her.

The school could help the person being bullied if the person had someone to talk to that he/she trusted.

Have someone for the pupils to go to - someone nearer their own age or who they trust.

Set up a confidential class or meeting with a skilled unknown person and not a teacher.

Try to explain to the bullies that what they are doing.

It could try to get the classmates to get on well and not abuse anybody who is different or quiet.

Just try to get along with the students so as when it comes to a problem, the students would be able to confide in the teacher.

Not treat some people differently because they know them or their family.

Well, if the bullied person doesn't report it, they won't do anything about it. But it should be looked into very carefully as I think bullying could maybe kill a person's personality.

Have more teachers you could talk to easily and have lecturers in to talk to you about it.

Having completed the questionnaire, the students were given literature on bullying (ie., articles from newspapers) to read and were shown a short video made by the Anti-Bullying Campaign in the U.K. This video included an interview with the director of the campaign and a documented case study of the counselling sessions of both a bully and her victim in a London comprehensive school.

After the video, I used the following questions as starting points for a discussion on bullying:

- What sort of people are bullies?
- What sort of people are victims?
- What types of bullying do you think take place in this school?
- Where do you think are the most likely places for bullying to occur in the school?
- What can we do about the problem of bullying?
- Should there be a school policy on bullying?
- What should a school policy on bullying say?
- Why do you think many victims do not report incidences of bullying?
- What system could we devise that could help victims to report being bullied?

In the second week, I asked the students specific questions related to bullying, the answers to which were documented on the blackboard. These questions were specifically related to the different ways in which a person can be bullied (both physically and verbally) and the feelings induced by these actions.

Over the course of this class, the students were engaged in life drawing, in various 'bully/victim' poses. The emphasis was not only on accurate proportion, but particularly on getting the action and force into the poses. The students themselves were responsible for deciding on a variety of appropriate poses which would suggest the physical or verbal aspect of the incident and the feelings of both the bully and the victim during the encounter. (See Figure 6.6 and 6.7)

I noticed at the beginning of the class, that the students were quite reluctant to do life drawing. They said that they normally found it boring and difficult. It became evident

Figure 6.6

Life Drawing in Bullying Poses.





FIGURE 6.7

Life Drawing in Bullying Poses.





that the girls had no practically no experience of life drawing other than a crash course before the Junior Certificate. However, using the theme of bullying seemed to motivate them greatly. It was a welcome break from the 'figure holding the sweeping brush' poses that they had become accustomed to.

In lesson three, the students decided on six locations within the school grounds where they felt bullying took place. Answers were volunteered quite readily, which left me in no doubt as to its existence within the school. During this class, I requested that the girls take photographs of these locations and divide into six groups of four. (See Figure 6.8 and 6.9)

The theme of the project was **'Bullying in our School'**, and the aim was that each group would compose a panel (all of equal size). Each panel would comprise of a bully/victim incident taking place within the school environment - the students would use their photographs as support studies for this.

I emphasised that each panel would be unique in that a different 'method' of bullying and a different environment would be explored in each one. Over the course of the next couple of weeks, I had to revise this lesson plan as it became evident that the majority of students were reluctant to continue working in groups (they had been involved in group project work prior to this scheme) and wanted to concentrate on individual work.

As a compromise, the class were divided into two schemes - both working on different projects but using the original theme. The first scheme comprised of those students who were happy to continue with the original project. (I now had two groups working on two panels instead of the original six groups.) The remaining sixteen girls were

FIGURE 6.8

Support Studies:
Photographs of bullying environments within the school.





FIGURE 6.9

Support Studies:
Photographs of bullying environments within the school.





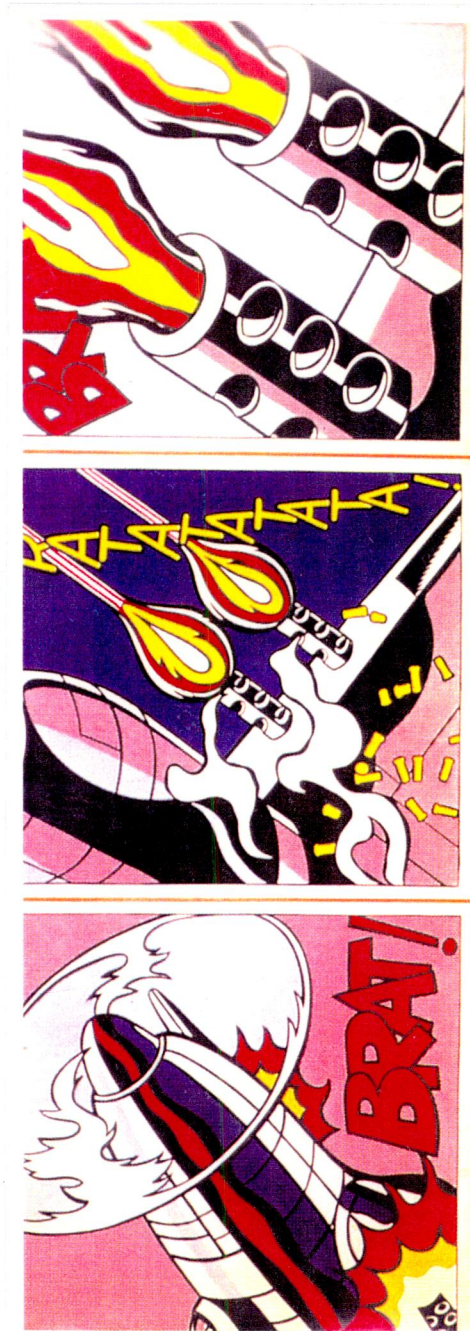
presented with a scheme which enabled them to work individually and yet, still as a group.

For this scheme, the students were asked to develop the idea of a low relief storyboard in clay. The girls were shown examples of storyboards by Roy Lichtenstein and the Beano comic - the latter illustrating both the issue of bullying and storyboard layout. (See Figure 6.10 and 6.11)

The students collectively decided on a sixteen sentence story, based on 'Bullying in our school'. Each student had to continue the next line of the story. A specific profile of the bullies and victim were decided on so that the characters would look similar in each panel of the storyboard. The story that the students decided on is documented below:

- Samantha had always liked school.
- But lately she had been having problems.
- A group of girls had begun picking on her.
- They teased her about her glasses.
- They called her specky.
- They pulled her hair.
- They took her schoolbag and damaged her books.
- They never talked to her except to tease her,
- Samantha was bright and worked hard at school.
- But because of the bullying, her work began to disimprove.
- Her teachers were confused by her change in behaviour.
- Samantha was really depressed.

FIGURE 6.10



Roy Lichtenstein 'As I opened Fire' 1964

FIGURE 6.11

Support Studies:
Beano Comic





- She wished she had more friends.
- She dreaded going to school each day.
- Finally, she plucked up the courage to tell an adult she trusted.
- She felt happier knowing there was somebody on her side.

Using their individual sentences, the students translated them into drawings for their clay relief panels. Observational drawing, photographs of the different areas of the school and the previous weeks life drawings were used as references for this.

Shape was emphasised as the main art element at the beginning of both schemes.

For the groups working on the paintings, everything in the composition was represented through shape at the beginning and over the course of the next few weeks, the art elements were explored further. Shapes began to take on mixed media, mainly in the form of collage (poetry and newspaper articles related to bullying). The students also incorporated their own poems and written opinions on the problems of bullying into their collage work. (See Figure 6.12 - 6.15)

Shape was the main art element explored with the students working on the low relief storyboard as each piece of the storyboard was a shape cut from the clay and applied to the panel. An emphasis was placed on attempting to achieve the illusion of depth in the panels by using three levels of relief. The highest relief being the foreground, middle-ground in lower relief and the background being engraved into the panel. Ghiberti's competition panel of 'The Sacrifice of Issac' was shown to the group to illustrate creating an illusion of depth in a low relief panel. (See Figure 6.16)

FIGURE 6.12

Student collage work of newspaper articles.



Collage work of newspaper articles, poetry and students
written opinions on bullying within the paintings.



FIGURE 6.13

Back in the Playground Blues

Dreamed I was back in the playground, I was about four feet high
Yes I dreamed I was back in the playground,
 and standing about four feet high
The playground was three miles long
 and the playground was five miles wide

It was broken black tarmac with a fence all round
Broken black dusty tarmac with a high fence running all round
And it had a special name to it, they called it the Killing Ground.

Got a mother and a father, they're a thousand miles away
The rulers of the Killing Ground are coming out to play
Everyone thinking: who they going to play with today?

 You get it for being Jewish
 You get it for being black
 Get it for being chicken
 Get it for fighting back
 You get it for being big and fat
 Get it for being small
 O those who get it get it and get it
 For any damn thing at all

Sometimes they take a beetle, tear off its six legs one by one
Beetle on its black back rocking in the lunchtime sun
But a beetle can't beg for mercy, a beetle's not half the fun

Heard a deep voice talking, it had that iceberg sound;
'It prepares them for life' - but I never found
Any place in my life that's worse than The Killing Ground.

Adrian Mitchell (Rosen 1985)

FIGURE 6.14

Sticks and Stones

Sticks and stones may break my bones,
but words can also hurt me.
Sticks and stones break only skin,
while words are ghosts that haunt me.

Slant and curved the word-swords fall
to pierce and stick inside me,
Bats and bricks may ache through bones,
but words can mortify me.

Pain from words has left its scar
on mind and heart that's tender.
Cuts and bruises now have healed;
it's words that I remember.

Anon

Figure 6.15

Bullying

Bullying can occur in every type of school, from primary to secondary, girls - boys to co-educational schools. There are many types of bullying - intimidation, verbal and physical bullying and each of them can be very harmful and can effect people in different ways and can have harmful effects on people in later life. Bullying can also occur in the home by both parents, brothers sisters and cousins.

People who bully usually have a reason for bullying. Whether they're insecure or have been bullied at home by parents or someone else. They themselves need help as well as the victims because they are just as much a victim. Bullying can also occur in the work place in which case nothing can really be done but at school or in your area there is always to stop it. First tell your parents, then your teachers or community officer.

Bullying

"What are you looking at?", shouted Cathy to the quiet looking girl sitting at the top desk. Jane turned around and looked at her questioningly. "Me?", "Yeah you, and don't get smart with me, right!". "But I wasn't even looking in your direction" Jane protested. "I said, don't get smart with me!" threatened Cathy and with that hit Jane. Jane began to sob quietly holding her bleeding lip so as not to drop any blood and ran out to the toilets.. Cathy and two other girls followed her. "You'd want to watch yourself girl" said Cathy, gripping Jane's chin so hard that she winced in pain. "So stay out of my way". With that she and her friends walked out. "What did I do?", whispered Jane. "What did I do?".

Fifth year students written opinions on bullying.

FIGURE 6.16



Lorenzo Ghiberti The Sacrifice of Isaac 1401

As the aim of these projects was to raise an awareness of bullying through the students artwork, and particularly to develop student empathy for the victim in the situation. The victim played an important role in the work, both in the paintings and clay panels. Therefore, the victim was usually placed in a prominent position (usually the foreground) in the compositions.

One of the most important aspects of my sequence of lessons was that the students should encompass various emotions and feelings into their practical work. These emotions would include hate, violence, despair, sadness, jealousy - particularly in relation to the painting project. The storyboard project would also incorporate these emotions but as it had a more optimistic outlook over the course of the story, would in addition cater for love, caring, trust, friendliness and happiness to name but a few. Obviously, the students would have experience of many of these emotions. However, as I had established in my questionnaire that the majority of the class had been involved in a bully/victim incident to some extent, either directly or indirectly, I felt sure that everyone in my class group would have experienced at least some, if not all of the above mentioned feelings - more specifically in relation to incidences of bullying behaviour.

Through the use of appropriate art history references, I would show students how the technique used by a particular artist and the various art elements can help to express different emotions. The use of art history references was invaluable to all students but particularly in relation to the two groups working on the paintings. Over the course of the schemes, the students were shown work by George Grosz, Pablo Picasso, Francis Bacon, Robert Moskowitz, Raoul Hausmann and Munch, in relation to emotions expressed through colour, actions, gestures, facial expression, colour and technique. By technique, I was referring to compositional layout, media and brushwork, to illustrate

certain emotions. (See Figure 6.17 - 6.24)

In the paintings, the students worked extremely hard to try to get across the feelings of violence, hate, anger, despair, isolation and sadness in their work. Both panels concentrated on a different form of bullying behaviour, one being physical and the other, verbal. They used colour which they felt represented the emotions felt by both the bully(ies) and the victim. Tones of red for anger, hate and violence and tones of blue for sadness and despair. They used grey tones and collage in the background so as not to attract from the action in the foreground. One of the groups used exaggerated perspective in order to achieve a sense of isolation and 'no escape' in their composition. (See Figures 6.25-6.42)

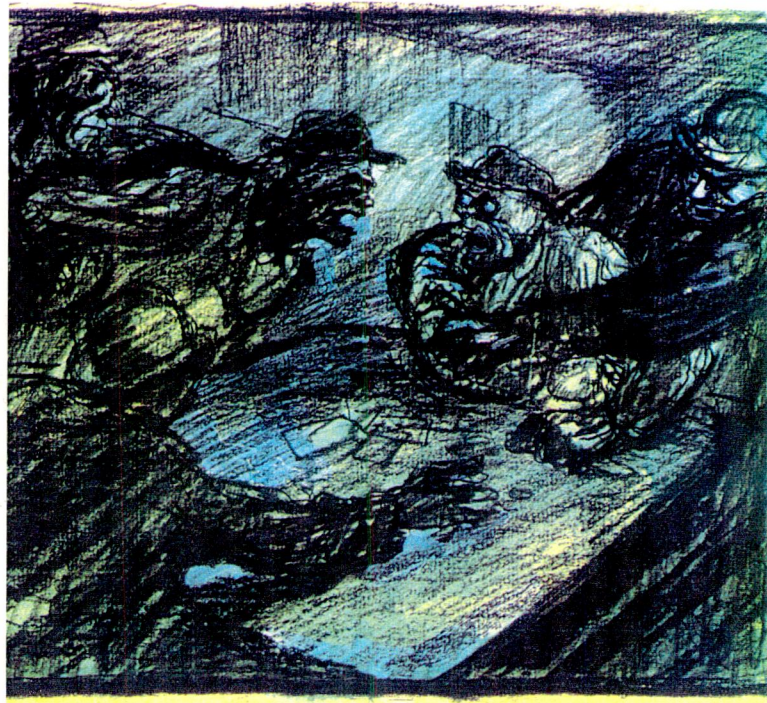
FIGURE 6.17



George Grosz



FIGURE 6.18



George Grosz



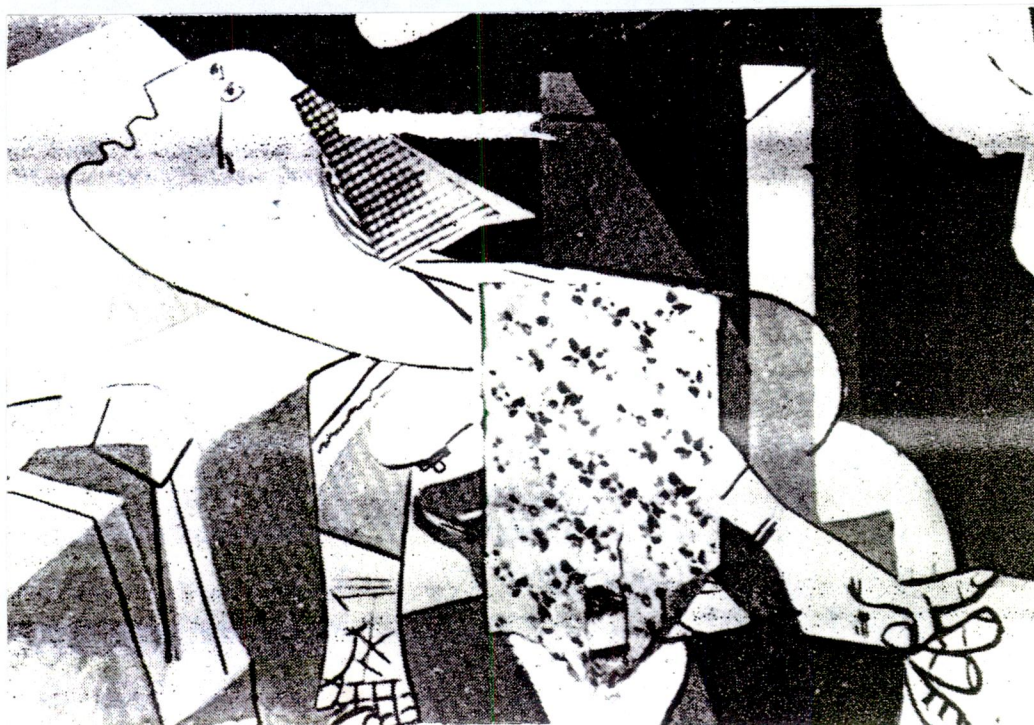
FIGURE 6.19



George Grosz



FIGURE 6.20



Pablo Picasso 1937
section of '*Guernica*'



FIGURE 6.21



Francis Bacon 1953
Study after Velasquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X



FIGURE 6.22



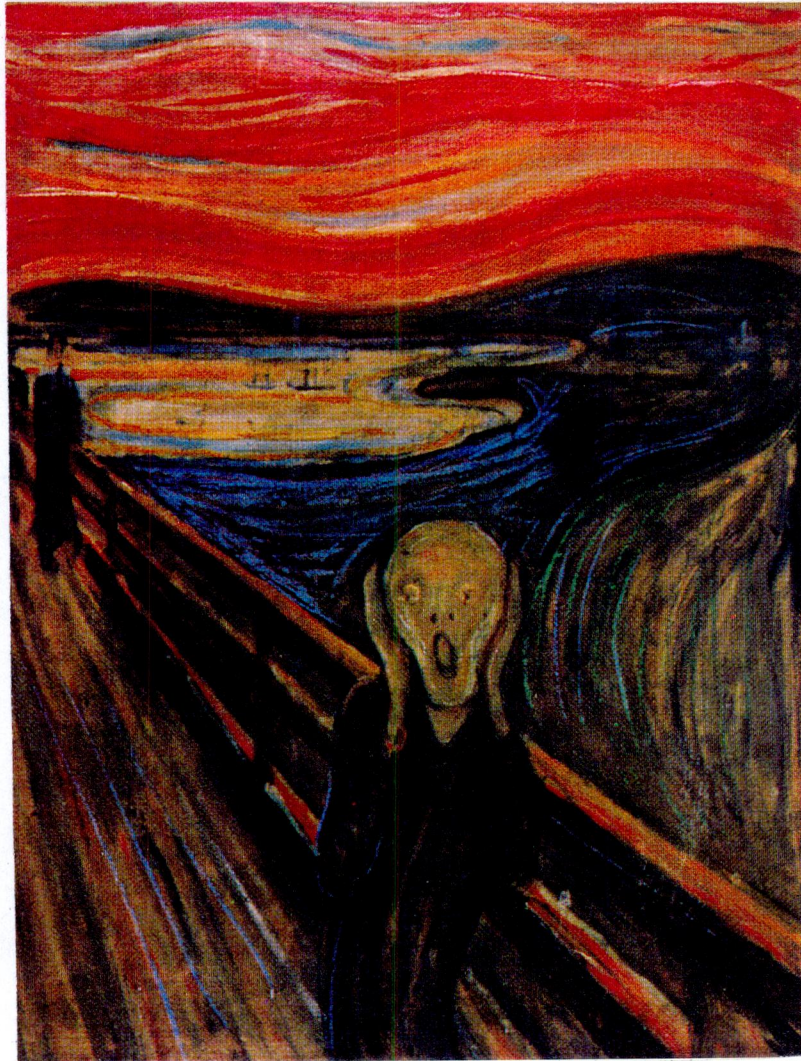
Robert Moskowitz 1982
Thinker

FIGURE 6.23



Raoul Hausmann 1920
Tatlin at Home

FIGURE 6.24



Edvard Munch 1893
The Scream

FIGURE 6.25

Students group painting on "Bullying in our School".





FIGURE 6.26

Close up section of Fig. 6.25.



FIGURE 6.27

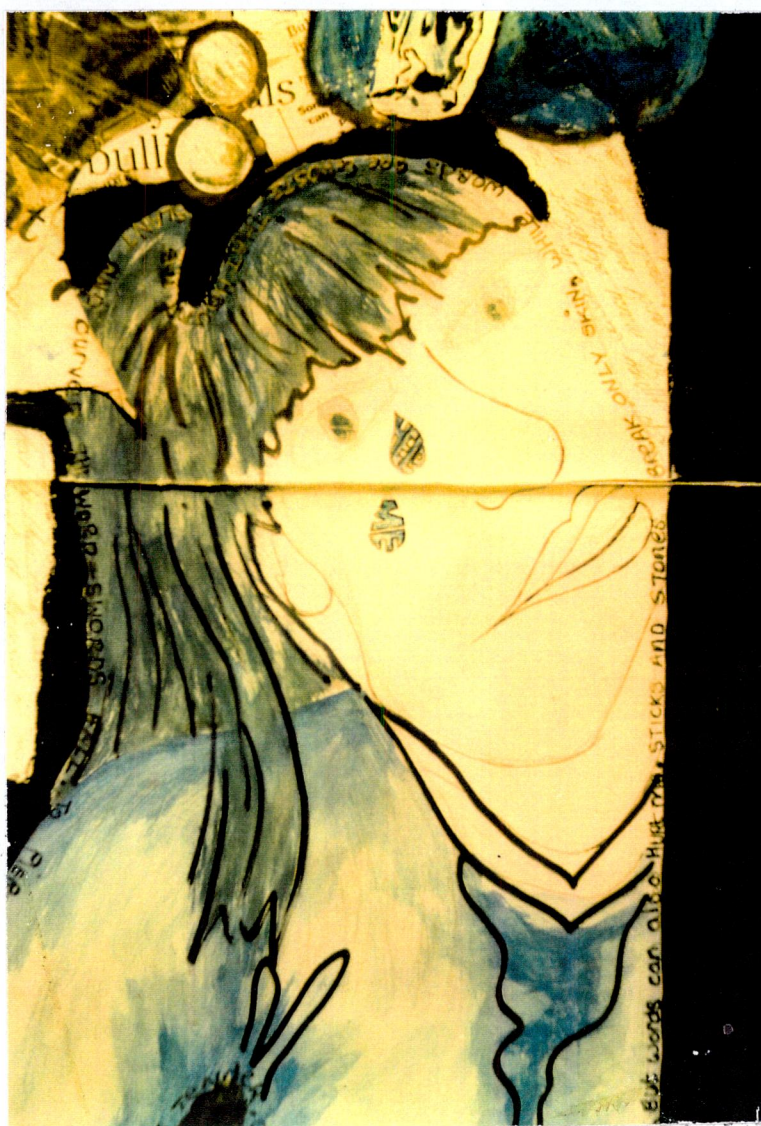
Students group painting on "Bullying in our School".





FIGURE 6.28

Close up section of Fig. 6.27.



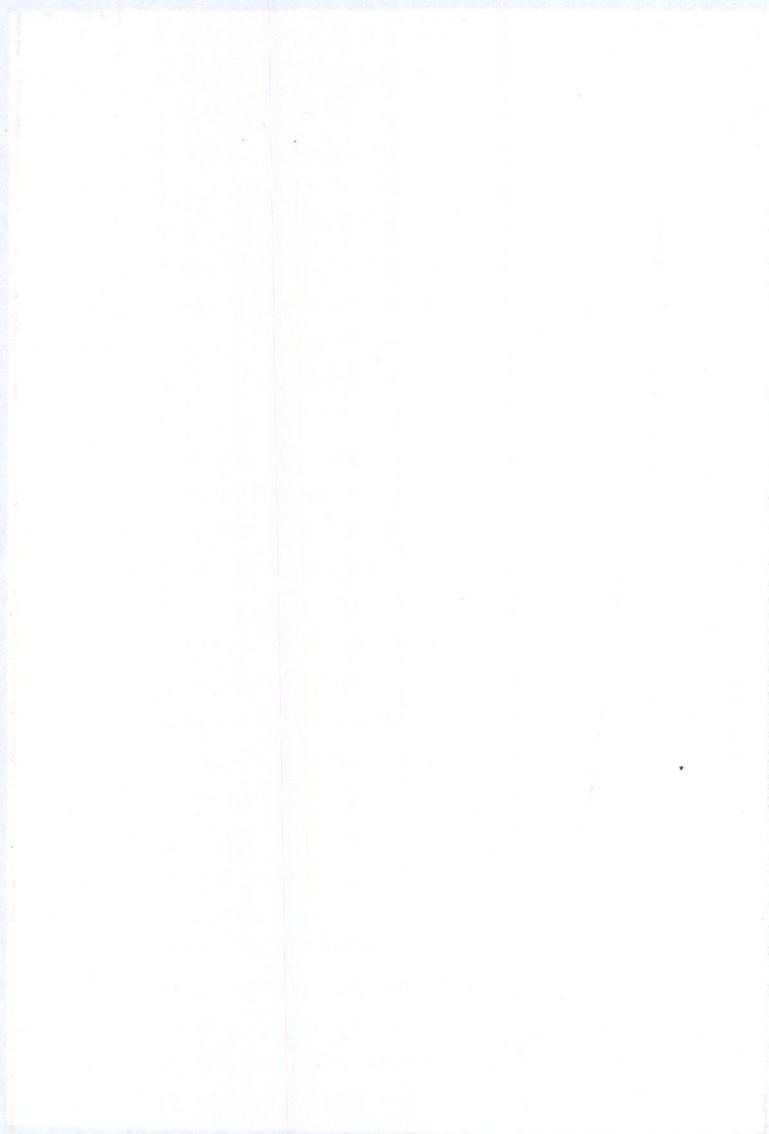


FIGURE 6.29

Close up section of Fig. 6.27.

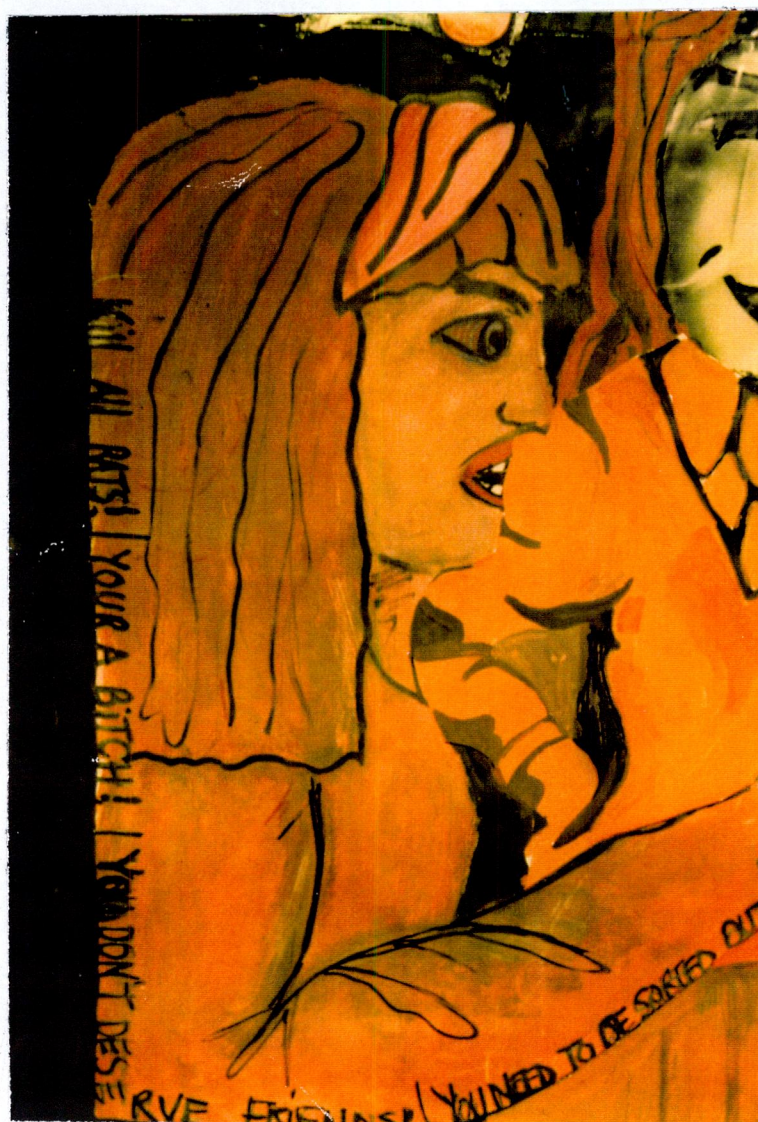




FIGURE 6.30

Close up section of Fig. 6.27.

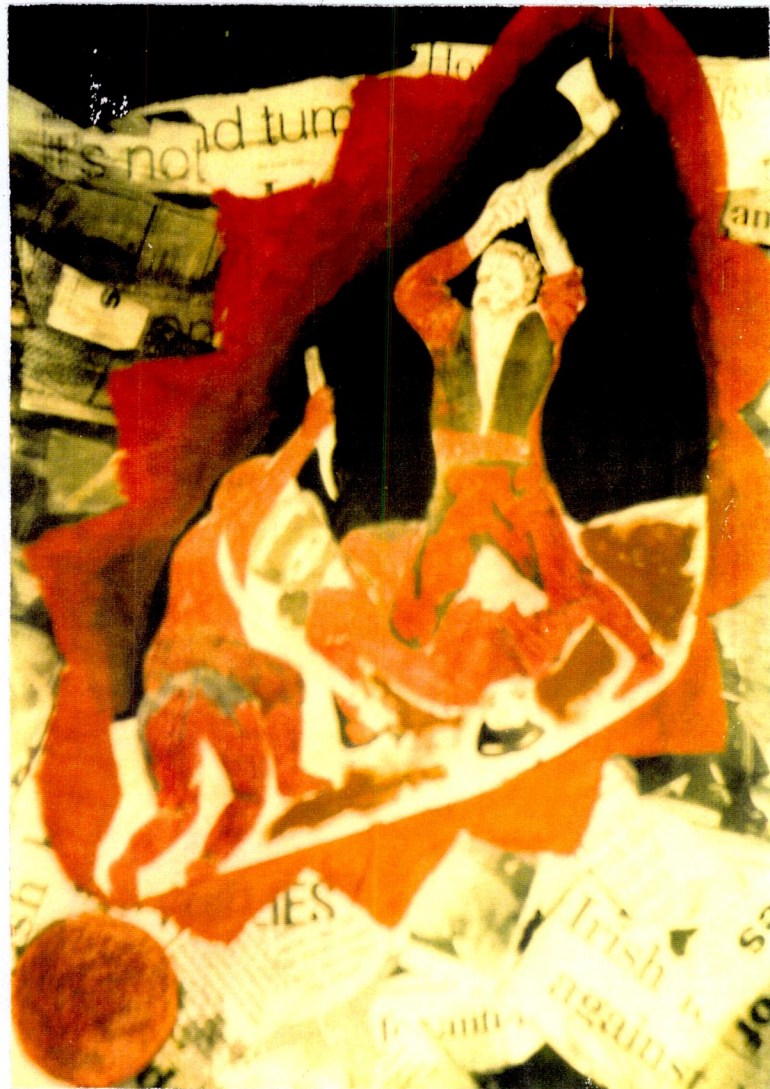




FIGURE 6.31

Visual Aid:
Clay low-relief storyboard on "Bullying in our School".





FIGURE 6.32

Students Work

'Samantha had always liked school'



FIGURE 6.33

Students Work

'But lately she'd been having problems'





FIGURE 6.34

Students Work

'A group of girls had begun picking on her'





FIGURE 6.35

Students Work

'They pulled her hair'





FIGURE 6.36

Students Work

'They never talked to her except to tease her'



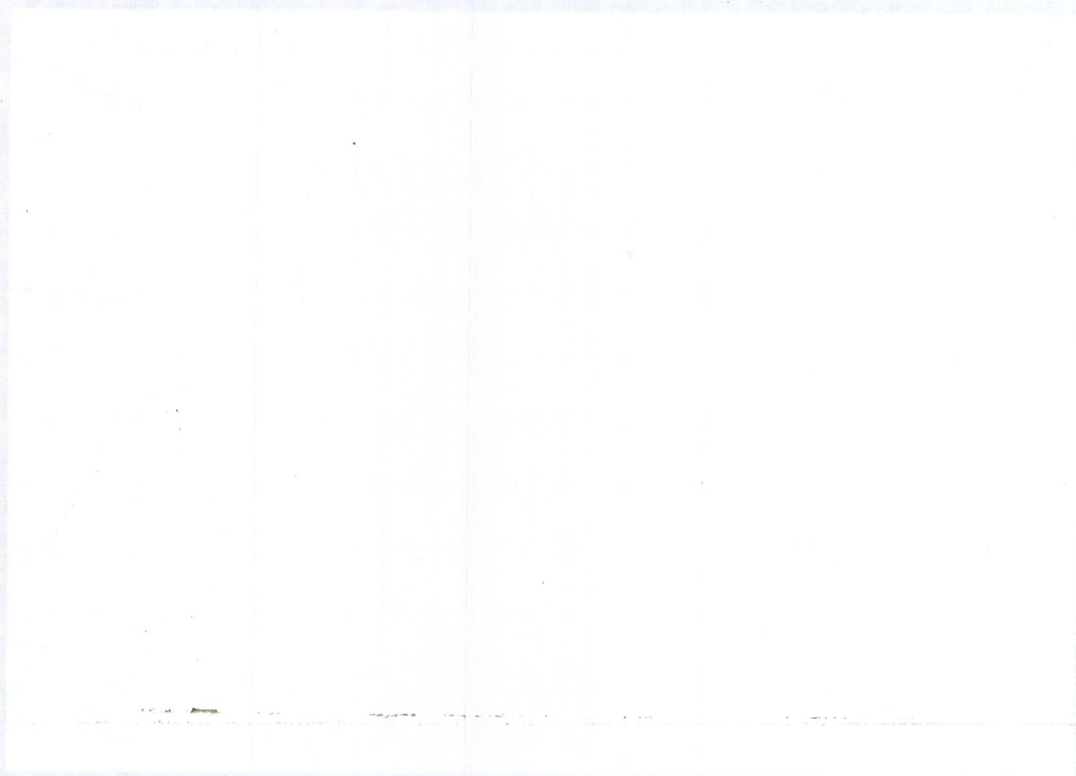


FIGURE 6.37

Students Work

'Samantha was bright and worked hard at school'





FIGURE 6.38

Students Work

'But, because of the bullying, her work began to disimprove'

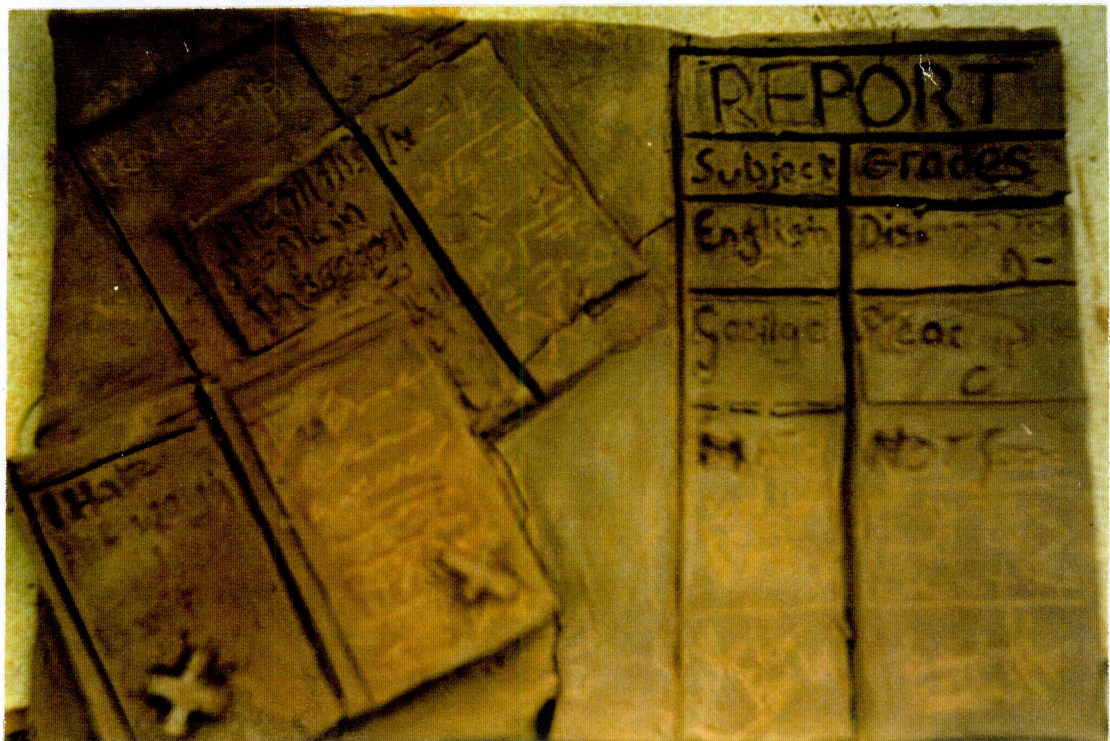


FIGURE 6.39

Students Work

'Samantha was really depressed'



FIGURE 6.40

Students Work

'She wished she had more friends'

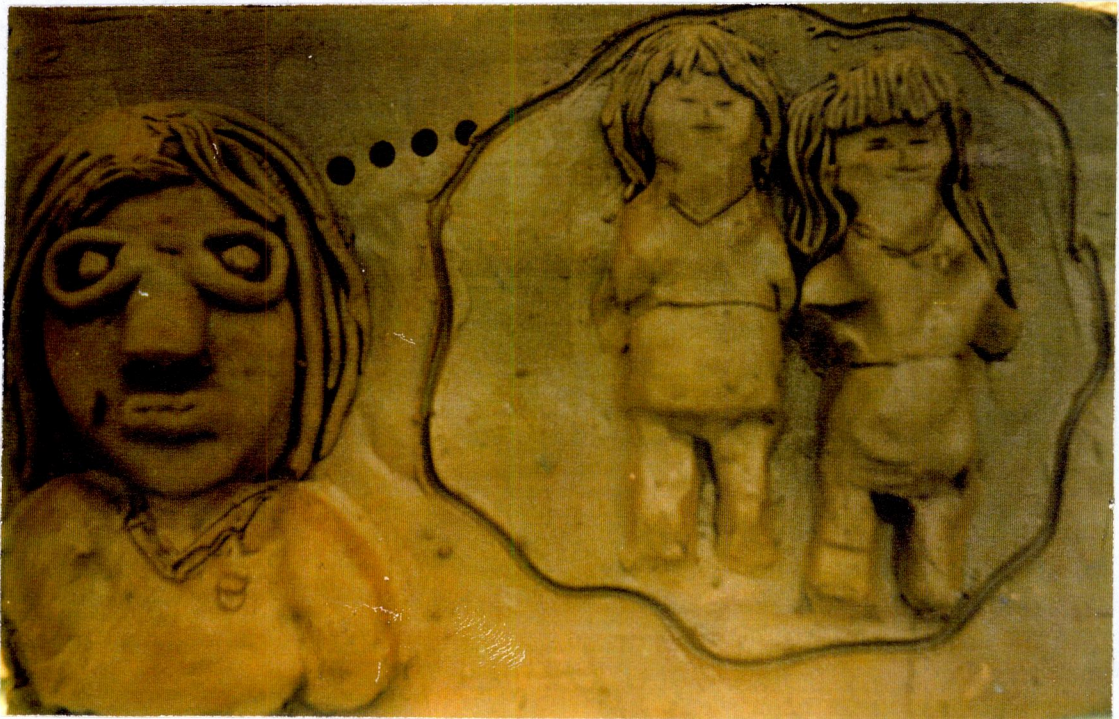




FIGURE 6.41

Students Work

'Finally she plucked up the courage to tell an adult she trusted'





FIGURE 6.42

Students Work

'She felt happier knowing there was somebody on her side'





CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

Aims of a Curriculum Based Approach to Bullying

The curriculum can be used to:

- Raise awareness about bullying behaviour and about the schools anti-bullying policy.
- Challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour, increase understanding for bullied pupils and help develop an anti-bullying ethos.

I now feel it is possible to achieve these aims through practical projects in Art, Craft and Design.

Materials and Resources which help explore Bullying

Many subject areas within the existing curriculum could be used to promote anti-bullying values and co-operative behaviour. This may be achieved directly through reference to individual or group behaviour and its impact on others, as illustrated by, for example, an incident in history, current affairs or fictional account. Alternatively, it could be achieved indirectly through the selection of curriculum approaches which require pupils to work together co-operatively and which include regular opportunities for personal evaluation and reflection on how each pupil has worked with others and how interaction could be improved. Art, Craft and Design projects which are based on group tasks, experiments and investigations offer plenty of existing opportunities for this kind of personal and social development.

One of the more obvious ideas would be a graphic design project eg. Poster Design. The art teacher could run a poster competition and award prizes to those who best capture the ways to deal with bullies. A local business could be approached to give prizes and local media could be invited to cover the story.

Posters advertising a 'Contact Telephone' could also prove very useful to those students who may need a push to seek help or advice with the added advantage of it being offered on a confidential level.

There can also be advantages in developing an improved school ground environment which allows for the direct involvement of pupils both in its design, creative development and maintenance.

On a daily basis, supervisors may have to deal with the effects of a badly planned, poor physical environment making such playgrounds or recess areas difficult to supervise well. There are common problems:

- (1) Boredom - often leading to fights, teasing, bullying and damage to the environment;
- (2) Crowding - open unstructured playgrounds can stimulate vigorous and sometimes frenzied activity creating competition for space and leading to conflicts and injuries.
- (3) Marginalisation - many usually vigorous activities that take up a lot of space, eg. football, can push other pupils (often girls and younger children) to the margins of a featureless playground. It is sometimes impossible for less spatially demanding activities to occur in such circumstances.

- (4) Isolation - those who do not excel in skills required for the dominant games are noticeably excluded because they have little opportunity to engage in other smaller and different games and social activities.

As far as is possible , a developed school ground environment will be more diverse, flexible and multi-functioning, with settings, areas and features offering pupils the facilities for learning through experience, contact and enjoyment of a wide range of play experience and teaching functions. It should also be one which is secure, safe and easily supervised, through good planning of facilities that can be economically maintained.

Students could work on a design project to change a poorer school ground environment to an improved one. With active participation of pupils an improved playground environment could lead to these benefits:

- (1) Purposeful recreation and play with reduced boredom.
- (2) Increased personal and social activities bringing about reduced playground aggression and squabbling.
- (3) Increased imaginative play through provision of a variety and range of diverse environments.
- (4) Improved social skills through the provision of small and intimate (but not secluded) spaces.
- (5) Improved and positive relationships and communication between pupils, teachers and non-teaching staff through collaborative educational and recreational ventures.

The way the playground is changed - the participation process - is as important as the end result. Ideally, the whole school should be involved throughout. The communication and sharing of ideas cultivates an atmosphere of understanding and co-operation. Thinking and talking about their playground and social areas allow students to consider their behaviour within that environment. This can in turn help with the implementation and setting up of other bullying interventions and policies.

Information Gathering

Schools should obtain as much information as possible about the 'existing situation'. Much of this can be gathered and recorded by pupils in many forms and as part of the art, craft and design curriculum. Data will be needed about the physical site (vegetation, climate, etc.) so that ways of changing it can be assessed. This information can be made into displays for the whole school to see and comment upon. Methods can include giant maps (students draw large plans of the schoolgrounds and discuss activities that occur); or photo safaris (pupils record favourite and least favourite places by taking photographs or doing sketches).

Aim Setting : Deciding what changes should be made

Having become more aware of what happens and what is liked and disliked in the playground it is possible to set aims for initiatives to change the environment. Ideas can be generated through class exercises which stimulate creativity, imagination and idealism. Pupils could be asked to make an ideal playground/outdoor social area drawing; a simple analysis of popular features can be carried out - social areas with seats, trees for colour, interest, shade, ecology.

Developing Specific Areas and Design Features for School Grounds

Developing ideas and designing should result in a positive plan. This plan ought to become the school grounds development plan from which smaller areas would be designed in detail. Schools may like to consider seeking the support and assistance of a specialist designer, landscape architect or architect to show the students how to translate their ideas into plan form, whilst taking into account services (gas, water, electricity and drains). Local environmental groups could also be contacted for advice.

Some ideas that schools might like to think about in considering their own school grounds, include the following:

- (1) Areas could be provided for specific activities. It may be possible to divide up the school ground site into a series of areas, eg. a quiet nature resource area, a ball games area or a covered seating area for conversation or quiet learning in good weather. Prescribing the function of an area can help to identify and to provide for a wider range of activities.
- (2) Different areas could be separated in some way and there is a wide range of options for separating the different areas, eg. hedges or low brick or stone walls, fences, planting and changes of level.
- (3) Areas can be designed for multi-purpose use so that they can be used flexibly to cope with many different activities, eg. on a small urban primary school site, the playground, if treated with a synthetic surface can double, if a ball retaining fence is provided, as a multi-games pitch.

- (4) Features: school grounds should contain as many varied and interesting features related to the curriculum as possible to absorb the students interest. Murals can enliven the playground without taking up space. They provide colour and stimulation for the students imagination and can incorporate goals and targets for games' practice. They are quick to produce and can transform a bleak playground environment into something with interest and challenge in a short time. The asphalt playground surface is generally under-developed in terms of markings and paintings, and these can even include trails, games, maps, rivers, streams and even roads for the practice of safety drills.

Any work that it is possible to include in the curriculum on self esteem and assertiveness also helps. It is vital to establish good staff/pupil relations as this relationship is important in helping children to develop self- esteem, which helps prevent them from becoming both bullies and victims.

As previously mentioned, children do still fear the transition periods from primary to secondary as this is a time when a large amount of bullying is likely to occur. Most good teachers should be aware of children's concerns about this transition period. Children should be invited to spend a morning in their new school and questions and worries should be addressed.

I also feel, we could go one step further, and assign the new students an older student to show them around and ease the way. Since much bullying comes from slightly older children, this might also help to change the attitude of the older children to one of protection instead of harassment.

In conclusion, it should be said that school as an institution does not make people become bullies and victims. While it may be the case in some schools that the atmosphere is conducive to bullying behaviour, it is more likely that social and family background in conjunction with certain physical, personality, psychological and behavioural characteristics, are paramount importance in the appearance and continuation of such behaviour.

The school therefore has a responsibility to accept and act upon the possibility that there are students who are bullies and victims. Parents should be taken seriously if they suggest to the school that their child is being bullied.

If the school has a policy for dealing with this behaviour it should be possible to ensure that bullying is at least reduced to the minimum. The responsibility of the school probably ends when the principal and teachers feel they have done everything possible to ensure that all students entrusted to their care can learn and develop without fear of aggression from others.

Appendix A

Please do not put your name on this questionnaire.
It is strictly confidential.
Your answers will remain anonymous.
Honest answers will help us and you!!!

1. Year: _____

Class: _____

2. **About friends**

How many good friends do you have in your class ?

- A. None
- B. I have one good friend
- C. I have 2 / 3 good friends
- D. I have many good friends

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3. How often does it happen that other pupils don't want to spend breaktime with you and you end up being alone ?

- A. Has'nt happened
- B. Happened once or twice
- C. Sometimes
- D. About once a week
- E. Several times a week

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4. In your opinion which of the following counts as bullying ?
(tick as many as you wish)

- A. Notepassing
- B. Ignored
- C. Teased / Name calling
- D. Threatened
- E. Pushed
- F. Hit or kicked
- G. Your things taken/damaged
- H. Money demanded

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Others you can think of:

5. Have you ever been bullied ?

- A. Yes
- B. No

☐
☐

6. If you answered **Yes** to this question.....
Were you bullied in

- A. Primary School
- B. Mercy College Yr. 1-3
- C. Mercy College Yr. 4-6
- D. Another school

☐
☐
☐
☐

7. If you were bullied, was it.....

- A. Regularly
- B. Occasionally

☐
☐

8. What age were you when bullying started ? _____

9. In what way have you been bullied ?
- A. I have not been bullied
 - B. I was called nasty names
 - C. Members of my family were insulted
 - D. I was physically hurt eg. Hit / kicked
 - E. I was threatened
 - F. No one would talk to me
 - G. I had rumours spread about me
 - H. I had belongings taken/damaged
 - J. I was bullied in another way
(Please write below)
-
-
-

10. Where did the bullying take place ?
- A. Classroom
 - B. Corridor
 - C. School grounds
 - D. Canteen
 - E. P.E. changing room
 - F. Toilet
 - G. Journey to / from school
 - H. Other place (write below)
-
-

11. Who were you bullied by ?
- A. I have'nt been bullied
 - B. A girl
 - C. A boy
 - D. A group of girls
 - E. A group of boys
 - F. A group of boys and girls

12. In which class is the pupil / pupils who bully you ?
- A. I have'nt been bullied
 - B. In my class
 - C. In a different class but the same year
 - D. One or more years above
 - E. One or more years below

13. Did you report the bullying ?
- A. Yes
 - B. No

14. If **Yes** did you report it to a.....
- A. Friend
 - B. Parent
 - C. Teacher
 - D. Other (please write below)
-

15. If you answered **Yes** to question 13..... What happened ?

16. If you answered **No** to question 13.....
Why didn't you report it ?

- A. Afraid
- B. Thought it would not be taken seriously
- C. Don't like telling tales
- D. Thought I would look like a coward
- E. Thought it would not stop
- F. Other reason (write below)

17. How often do the teachers try to put a stop to it when a pupil is being bullied at school ?

- A. I don't know
- B. Almost never
- C. Sometimes
- D. Almost always

18. How often do other pupils try to put a stop to it when someone is being bullied at school ?

- A. I don't know
- B. Almost never
- C. Sometimes
- D. Almost always

19. Why do you think you were bullied ?

20. Have you told any of your teachers or Year Head that you have been bullied at school ?

- A. I have not been bullied
- B. No I have not told them
- C. Yes I have told them

21. Have you told anyone at home that you have been bullied at school ?

- A. I have not been bullied
- B. No I have not told them
- C. Yes I have told them

22. About how many people in your class have been bullied do you think ?
(Also count yourself if you have been bullied)

- A. None
- B. One pupil
- C. Two pupils
- D. Three pupils
- E. Four pupils
- F. Five pupils
- G. Six or more pupils

23. Are you still being bullied ?

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. I have not been bullied

24. If **Yes** is it.....

A. Less often
B. More often
C. Stopped

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25. Has the bullying changed you in any way ?

26. Did the person who bullied you bully others as well ?

A. Yes
B. No
C. Don't know

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27. Have you ever seen any one else being bullied ?

A. Yes
B. No

☐
☐

Did you do anything about it ?

A. Yes
B. No

☐
☐

28. What more could this school do about bullying ?

29. Do you think bullying would be more prevalent in a.....

A. Single sex boys school
B. Single sex girls school
C. Co - Ed. school

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30. Have you ever done any of the following to another pupil on a number of occasions ?

A. Ignored
B. Teased / name called
C. Threatened
D. Pushed
E. Hit or kicked
F. Taken or damaged their belongings
G. Demanded money
H. Others (please write below)

☐
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31. Which do you fear most about coming to school ?

A. Being picked on by teachers
B. Being picked on by pupils
C. Not being able to understand each lesson/subject

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32. On the whole are you happy about coming to school ?

A. Yes
B. No
C. Most of the time

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Thank you for your co-operation!!

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