

Bullying

SPHE STRANDS:

**Myself – Safety and protection
– Personal safety – Making
decisions**

**Myself and Others – Myself and
other people – Relating to others**

**Myself and the Wider World –
Developing citizenship –
My school community**

Chatting about Bullying

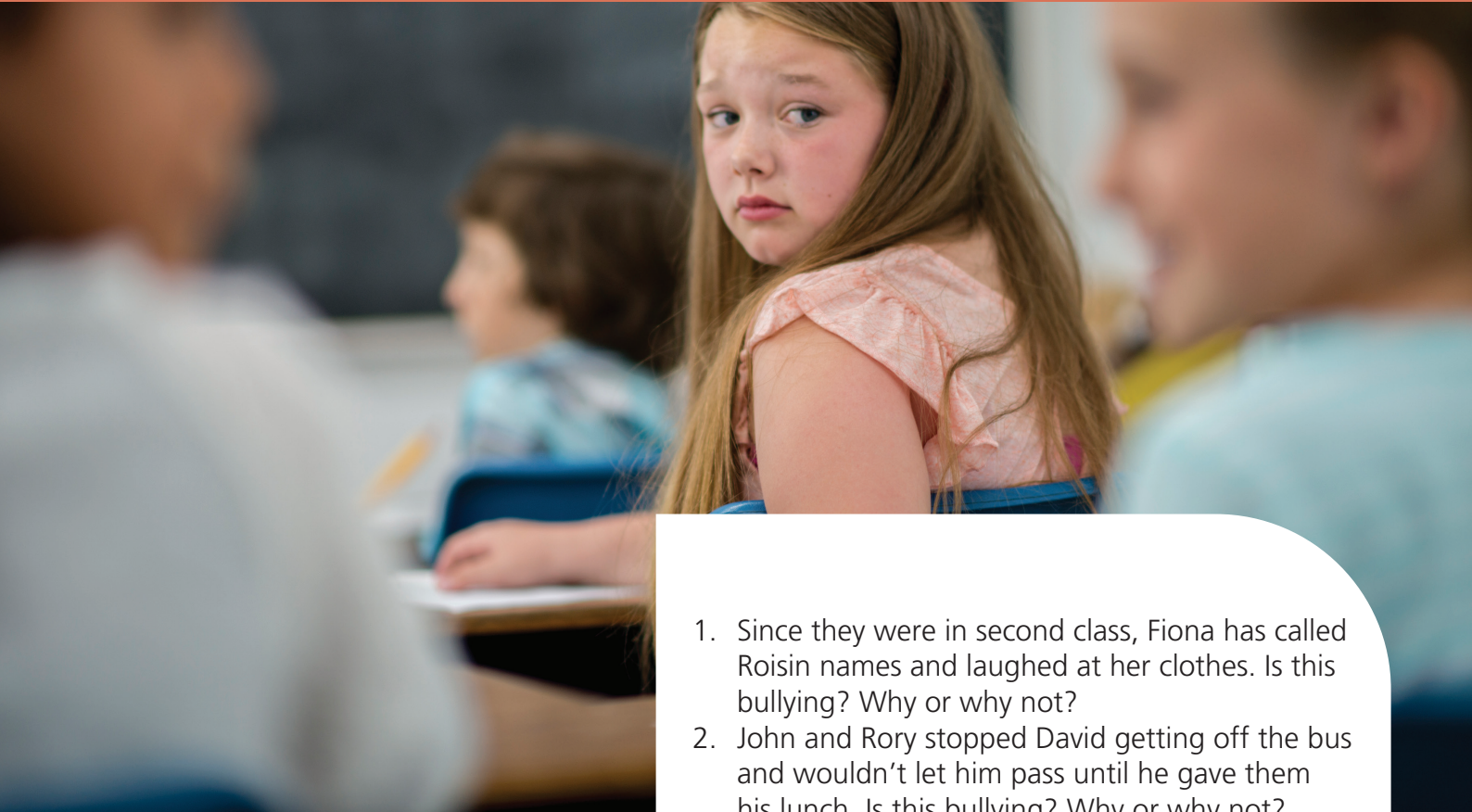
- Chat with the children about what bullying is – aggression or rudeness or insults carried out by one person or a group on another person. It's important to point out that while one incidence may be hurtful and unpleasant, it must be repeated to be considered bullying. (It is a good idea to refer to the school's anti-bullying policy here.)
- Talk about how bullying makes the victim feel.
- Consider why someone might bully someone else.

Activity – Is it bullying?

Teacher reads out five scenarios, stopping after each one to consider and discuss whether bullying has taken place.

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1. Since they were in second class, Fiona has called Roisin names and laughed at her clothes. Is this bullying? Why or why not?
2. John and Rory stopped David getting off the bus and wouldn't let him pass until he gave them his lunch. Is this bullying? Why or why not?
3. For the past two weeks Matthew knocked Aidan's books on to the floor when they were going out to the yard at lunchtime. Is this bullying? Why or why not?
4. Louise didn't invite Sarah to her birthday party. She asked all the other girls in fourth class and she talked about it really loudly when Louise was passing. Is this bullying? Why or why not?
5. Robert called Emma a pig in school. Then he posted a picture of her on Facebook with pig's ears and a snout. Is this bullying? Why or why not?

What is bullying? It is negative behaviour by an individual or group against another person (or a group of people) and which is repeated over time. But any action that uses someone's power against someone else might feel like it's bullying. Any action that makes someone feel small might feel like bullying. We all need to be careful of one another's feelings. In our school, respecting other people is very important. If you feel you have been bullied you should tell a trusted adult. Number 5, although it may have only happened once, would be considered bullying because of the nature of the internet and that it can be shared many times once it is posted.

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Group Activity – Why do people bully?

Invite the children to think of a time they might have been unpleasant to someone. Tell them they don't have to share it out loud. Did they ever bully someone? Tell them we are going to try to understand what makes people be mean to each other.

- Ask the children to work with the child beside them and distribute the following scenarios, giving every second pairing either A or B.
- Allow five minutes for them to consider why each child in the scenario acted as they did.

A – Every day this week James has told Ben that if he doesn't bring in one euro for him he will be beaten up after school. Ben takes the money from his money box and gives it to Ben without telling anyone.

Consider: What is the problem?

Why does Ben bring in the money?

Why might James demand the money?

What would be the best thing to do?

Who could help?

B - Elaine keeps laughing at Aisling's runners and jacket saying that they are from a cheap store and don't have a 'label'. Aisling just walks away but Elaine keeps doing it.

Consider: What is the problem?

Why does Aisling not say anything?

Why does Elaine keep making fun of Aisling?

What would be the best thing to do?

Who could help?

By trying to understand why people sometimes bully or are unpleasant to each other, the children may come to an understanding of different points of view. They will come to recognise reasons for their own behaviour as well as the behaviour of others and may develop the ability to reflect and make good choices.

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It is important to emphasise the benefit of communication with each other and with trusted adults as most problems will be sorted by talking them out.

Art Activity

Invite the children to divide an A4 page into four sections and to draw a cartoon of one of the scenarios explored in this lesson with a view to trying to sort the difficulty by talking.

Reflection:

Invite the children to close their eyes and read the following reflection:

Think of a time when someone was mean to you or bullied you. How did you feel? Who did you tell? Did the problem get sorted out? What might you do differently?

Now think of a time when you were mean to someone else? Reflect on why you behaved like that. Were you angry? Jealous? Were you trying to get back at them for something? What might you do differently if you were in the same situation?

Think of the people in your life who could help if you are ever in trouble? Who would you tell? A parent/guardian? An aunt or uncle? A cousin or friend? One of your teachers? One of the leaders in an activity you do after school?

We ask God to help us to be kind to each other as Jesus asked us to. Help us to try to understand other people's feelings. Help us to stand up for those who are being hurt. Help us to be fair and to remember to say sorry when we are unkind. Amen.