

SUPPORTING

THE YEAR SEVEN

TRANSITION



FROM THE DIANA AWARD

Starting secondary school can seem daunting but it's also an exciting new chapter. Think back to when you started secondary school – how did it feel? Were you nervous? What were your fears? Getting lost, not making friends or maybe travelling by yourself to school for the first time? On the flipside, what were you excited about? Meeting new people, joining an after-school club or learning new things?

As a result of the pandemic, the Year 7s coming into your school in September probably won't have attended all the usual events like taster days that you may have had when moving from primary to secondary school. Therefore, it's more important than ever that you think about what you can do as a team of Anti-Bullying Ambassadors to make them feel welcomed, safe and happy in their new school!

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO SUPPORT NEW YEAR 7S IN YOUR SCHOOL?

THINK ABOUT WHAT YOU ARE TRYING TO ACHIEVE_

- With your Anti-Bullying Ambassador team, reflect on what your worries and concerns were when you started in Year 7. Chances are, the concerns of the new Year 7s won't have changed much since you were in their shoes!
- If you can survey the new Year 7s, ask what their worries and concerns are and how they would like to see the Anti-Bullying Ambassadors supporting them and addressing these worries, especially throughout the first term.
- Once you have identified what some of the worries and concerns are likely to be, you can start thinking about you can do to support the new Year 7s.

RUN AN ASSEMBLY_

New Year 7s are sometimes worried that they are going to experience bullying behaviour at secondary school. It certainly doesn't affect everyone but it's important that they know what to do and who can support them if it does. You could run a Year 7 assembly or form-time session (check out our template presentation [here](#)) where you introduce yourselves and cover topics such as a definition of bullying behaviour, the different types and - most importantly - what to do if they experience it or have a worry or concern. Make sure they know that there is always someone they can turn to and not to suffer in silence. Ensure that they know they can turn to any member of school staff, their parents/guardians or Anti-Bullying Ambassadors if they experience bullying behaviour.

SAFE SPACES_

Does your school have a safe space or do you hold lunch time clubs or drop-in sessions? Use your assembly or form time talk as an opportunity to let students know that they are welcome in any of these spaces if they need some time out or someone to talk to about something that's concerning them - whether this is to do with mental health, bullying behaviour or any other worry. Remember to tell them when and where these will take place!

BULLYING BEHAVIOUR CAN TAKE PLACE ANYWHERE_

For some pupils, they may be walking or getting public transport to and from school by themselves for the first time. It's important that they know that if they experience any kind of negative behaviour outside of school, including online, they can still turn to any member of school staff or Anti-Bullying Ambassador for support.

ONLINE SAFETY_

For some young people, going to secondary school marks the first time that they get their own mobile phone! This is a very exciting time but it's important to be reminded of how to stay safe when online using social media and what to do if you experience cyberbullying behaviour. How can you ensure that your school's new Year 7s know how to stay safe online? Check out the Online Safety badge section of your team's campaign pack for more information - or head [here](#) to view more about this badge.

SUPPORT NETWORKS_

A fantastic way to feel settled in a new school is to feel a collective sense of belonging, feel welcomed into your new school and connected to its values and ethos. A great way to combine this with getting new students to think about their support networks is with our support network activity which can be downloaded [here](#). This activity encourages students to reflect on the people in their lives who they can speak to if they have a worry or concern by drawing around their hand and creating a support network. You could challenge each new form group to give this activity a go, with each form creating theirs in a different colour. The hands could then all be collected to form a mural that could be displayed in your school - a colourful reminder that we all have someone we can speak to if we have a worry or concern and that no one needs to feel alone if they experience bullying behaviour.

NOTICE BOARDS_

Your notice boards are more important than you might think. Is your Anti-Bullying Ambassador noticeboard up to date? Does it include photos of your team so the new Year 7s know who you are? A noticeboard is a fantastic way for new and existing students to know who you are and what your mission is. Maybe your team could have a termly focus, such as online safety, that could be displayed on this board? Perhaps you are working towards one of our [4 badges](#) and want to tell the rest of your school about this? A noticeboard is the perfect place to do this.

GET PRACTICAL_

You could for example speak to your anti-bullying staff lead to see if Anti-Bullying Ambassadors could be involved in things like building tours for new year 7s or a Q and A session with new students. They might want to ask all kinds of things and no question is a silly question!

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO SUPPORT NEW YEAR 7S IN YOUR SCHOOL?

GETTING TO KNOW YOU_

Your team of Anti-Bullying Ambassadors could run activities for the new year 7s that help them to get to know each other better in form times. Do you remember the parachute activity from your Anti-Bullying Ambassador training? If not, no worries – this activity involves all students standing around a parachute (or in a large circle if you don't have a parachute) and sharing interesting facts about themselves that others may relate to. For example, the first round could include statements like 'I have a pet', 'My favourite subject is Maths' or 'I like football'. Everyone who shares this then swaps places across the parachute/circle. Round two should include slightly more personal statements, such as 'I am a good friend' or 'I always aim to do my best, even in Maths!' Round three can take this one step further, with statements reflecting on what makes you, you. For example, 'My best quality is that I listen' or 'I am proud of what makes me different'. This is a great activity that your team could run with new year 7s. It not only helps people to get to know each other better but it also helps to remind everyone of the importance of celebrating differences and how unique we all are.

BEING AN UPSTANDER_

We can only tackle bullying behaviour if we all play our part - and this includes the new Year 7s. How can they get involved in your mission to prevent bullying behaviour and celebrate difference and diversity within your school? How can they join you alongside existing students in being upstanders?

WHAT HAVE OTHER SCHOOLS DONE?

We work with thousands of young people every year and we love hearing what they've been up to since training. Here, we feature three of our 2019 Showcase schools and the work that their Anti-Bullying Ambassadors have done to support Year 7s in their schools:

The Joseph Whitaker school Anti-Bullying Ambassadors ran tutor time sessions with Year 7s on how to be an Upstander and how the Year 7s could play their part in tackling bullying behaviour.



The Highfield Leadership Academy Anti-Bullying Ambassadors created a fun run for Year 7s to run for something that is important to them.



The Kings High School for Girls Anti-Bullying Ambassadors ran 'speed friending' events with Year 7s so that they could get to know each other better.



I think that's enough ideas to get you started!

Remember, it's been a strange and uncertain time for us all recently. You might not have been in school for a while and the new Year 7s may have had quite a disrupted last term in their primary school. They may therefore be feeling even more nervous than usual about transitioning to secondary school. Your actions and your kindness towards them, no matter how small, will make a real and lasting difference! Remember to be kind to each other and if you're worried or concerned yourself about returning to school, talk to someone you trust, whether this is a teacher, friend or parent.

BBC Bitesize has loads of videos and resources all about starting secondary school – you can check these out [here](#).

Don't forget to also check out our [Badges page](#) and our [Resource Centre](#) for more inspiration for your anti-bullying work! Good luck!

The Diana Award Crisis Messenger

The Diana Award Crisis Messenger provides free, 24/7 crisis support across the UK – simply text **DA** to **85258** and trained volunteers will listen to how you are feeling and help you think through the next step towards feeling better.

We're proud to be the only charity set up in memory of Diana, Princess of Wales and her belief that young people have the power to change the world. It's a big mission but there are two things within it that we focus our charity's efforts on – young people and change.

Throughout all of our programmes and initiatives 'change' for and by young people is central, including our anti-bullying work which encourages change in attitudes and behaviours.

We hope you found this resource useful and wish you all the best in your anti-bullying journey. If you would like to help us create more resources and train even more Anti-Bullying Ambassadors you can make a £5 donation by texting CHANGE 5 to 70470 or visit diana-award.org.uk/donate

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