



“I found the tips in this guide invaluable, I felt prepared and confident about meeting with my son’s Head Teacher.”

Parent.

DEALING WITH RACISM AND BULLYING:

**Make sure you are prepared
when you meet the Head Teacher**

TIPS FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

Dealing with racism and bullying: make sure you are prepared when you meet the Head Teacher

Tips for parents and guardians

One of the most difficult experiences for parents/guardians with school age children is dealing with racism and/or bullying at school. It is very upsetting for the child and the parents. However, when meeting with the Head Teacher to find a resolution to the situation, you should try not to let your understandable emotions affect your focus. What you want to achieve is a positive timely response from the school so that your child is allowed to enjoy their learning experience free from racist behaviour and/or bullying.

The tips below have been informed by the experiences of parents and we hope that you will find their suggestions helpful.

Tips for Parents

1. If it's an on-going issue try and keep a diary about how your child felt. Where possible use your child's own words.
2. Always take a note-book and take notes as you go along.
3. Try and take your partner or friend with you to help each other keep a focus and mutual support. The role of the partner/friend should be to act as an observer, to take notes, or to help you clarify points.
4. Identify what the key issues are and make a note of them. Don't allow the discussion to move off the core issue i.e. the racist/bullying behaviour affecting your child.
5. Be clear about what outcomes you want for your child. Remember it is the school's responsibility to find a solution for the behaviour of the other child - not you. Focus on your child's needs and not the other child's issues.
6. There may be two sides to the story, but focus on the impact on your child. Remember your child's 'perception' of what has happened has equal weighting to other 'perceptions' of what has occurred. Try not to get drawn into 'defending' your child as this will deflect you from the main issue.
7. Ask to see a copy of the schools bullying and race equality policies beforehand.
8. Ask the Head Teacher to clarify the appeal process. This should be a written school policy.

Email: info@bteg.co.uk

Website: www.bteg.co.uk

9. If the meeting has met your expectations, ask for a review meeting in three to four weeks' time. You may want to follow up with a letter thanking the Head Teacher for seeing you. In the letter summarise the main points discussed, the outcome of the meeting and any follow-up date if one was agreed.
10. Ideally, do not leave the meeting without a decision in place (i.e. the next steps, an agreement on a further meeting, a solution or resolution). Whatever the outcomes, if minutes have been taken ask for a copy be sent to you via email so that you can verify (or correct) the interaction which transpired. If no minutes were taken write back confirming what has been agreed and any outstanding issues.
11. If the meeting has not met your expectations ask the Head Teacher to clarify the appeals process, and appeal.

We hope that these tips are of help to you. Please do get in touch and let us know how useful they were. Similarly, if there are any tips that we may have overlooked do send them to jeremy@bteg.co.uk.

For more detail, the following websites are useful

(click on link to go to website):

Direct Gov's guide to bullying:

<http://bit.ly/10Uu28c>

Department for Education's guide on behaviour and discipline in schools:

<http://bit.ly/tMkOWJ>

BullyingUK's advice to parents, including case studies:

<http://bit.ly/10T1zNr>

Kidscape's information for parents:

<http://bit.ly/WFrw8>

Kidscape also has a specific Antibullying Helpline for parents:

08451 205 204

Registered charity number: 1056043

Email: info@bteg.co.uk

Website: www.bteg.co.uk