

Should Bullies Always Be Excluded From School?

Bullying is seen as a growing problem among young people, despite a campaign to raise awareness about the issue. It is something that affects a large number of children every day at school, and now crosses over into the home. With social networking sites and texting, the opportunities for bullies to attempt to wreck other children's lives has increased dramatically. The issue of how to deal with bullies is a long-standing one and has been debated many times.

There has recently been speculation in the media that a law is needed to ensure all child bullies are excluded from school automatically. This may seem to some people to be an extreme reaction that has not been properly thought through. One thing is true, however: if bullies are removed from school, the remaining children will be able to learn in a non-threatening environment, without fear of being picked on in the playground.

However, what happens outside the school gates? Exclusion will not stop bullying after school hours. Moreover, exclusion will not stop bullying text messages being sent and received at play times and during lunch.

On the one hand, pupils who are excluded for bullying may be helped to understand that schools have a zero-tolerance approach to the issue. Being punished in this way may help them stop bullying altogether. But, on the other hand, evidence shows that exclusion has, historically, had little effect on school wrongdoers of any sort.

A further point to consider is one of motive. Why do children become bullies? Is it because they enjoy having power over others, or is there a different underlying cause?

A policy of automatic exclusion might just sweep the problem under the carpet. Surely schools, teachers and governors should be allowed to deal with the causes and effects of bullying on an individual basis?

Everyone knows that bullying is wrong and needs to be stamped out. But every child is different and has different needs. Exclusion is not an automatic cure.

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Read the text together, and then answer the questions. Don't forget to support your answers with reference to the text.

1. What is the author's purpose in this text?

2. What is the purpose of the opening paragraph?

3. Underline two emotive words or phrases the author uses in the opening paragraph.

4. What are the main points the author makes to support the argument for a law to exclude bullies?

5. What arguments does the author make against exclusion?

6. What evidence does the author give to support the argument against exclusion?

7. Why does the author ask questions of the reader? Underline any examples in the text.

8. What do you think is the author's opinion about exclusion of bullies? Support your answer with evidence from the text.

9. Circle two words or phrases from the last but one paragraph which indicate the author's viewpoint. Explain your choice.

10. Underline two connectives that are used to signal opposite points of view.