The National Anti-Bullying Poetry Competition

The Winners

Used in the right way, words can be very powerful
Used in the right way, words can be very powerful. The National Anti-Bullying Poetry Competition launched during Anti-Bullying week in November 2004 shows this very well.

The contest was open to all learners, and to members of staff. We asked participants to use their imagination and creativity to highlight one or more of the issues around bullying, including homophobic and racist bullying. Prizes were awarded in categories for learners from primary schools, secondary schools, and special schools and we also had a category for staff.

A panel of judges, including representatives from the Department for Education and Skills, the Anti Bullying Alliance and Panasonic were on hand to shortlist from the nearly 6,000 entries we received, and from that shortlist our celebrity judges went on to select our overall category winners.

All the shortlisted poems are featured in this book alongside handwritten comments from the children themselves. We congratulate the children and young people who have expressed themselves so eloquently on this subject. We hope that you enjoy these poems and think that they very much live up to our aim and show that used in the right way, words can be very powerful indeed.
Foreword

As a child, I was bullied for being different, for showing my feelings all too easily. Poetry was a way out, an escape, a way of expressing what was going on. What these young people have written is brave and bold. It is the most powerful way of standing up for yourself and being counted. It says – ‘Listen to me. I am here. I am worth something. I am more than just a victim.’ Too often in my years of working as a writer in schools have I heard the dreadful stories of everyday cruelty and the sense that we should all just accept bullying as part of life. But I don’t agree with that sentiment and words can be one of the instruments of personal revolution. So, read this book and know that these poems come from the heart and that behind each set of verses is a real person who, by the act of writing, becomes the victor.

Andrew Fusek Peters
July 2005
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Overall Primary Winner and South East Primary Winner

Brooke Millar, age 10

The Bully

My bully is scary,
My bully’s in a gang,
They all beat me up,
My brother’s in it too.
He laughs at me,
He tells mum lies,
I don’t know what to do,
I love my brother dearly,
I love my brother nice.

But when he hits me hard I take back that thought,
I have tried everything,
I really have.

But when I tell mum, it just makes her sad.
She doesn’t believe me,
She only believes him,
I don’t matter,
It’s all about him, him, him.

Michael Rosen judged the primary category

The poem I liked the best that had the most emotion and the most feeling in was The Bully. I also think it’s brilliant and painful that it’s ‘my’ bully. It completely inverts the idea of something belonging to you being something you like and want to keep...brilliant.
I hope my poem makes somebody think about how they treat others.
South West Primary Winner
Gabriel Sullivan, age 11

Thanks To My Friend

I was bullied and broken,
Because of my name,
But what’s in a name?
It’s a crying shame.

They hated me, because I was fat,
I never hit back.
What’s the shame in that?

I thought I might die,
But because of my friend,
I told them to stop.
And did not suffer alone.
For my friend had been beaten.
I did not cry alone.

So thanks to each other,
We now stand as one.
And as you all know,
Two heads are better than one.
Thanks to my friend.

By Gabriel Sullivan

Don’t be weak to a bully
Stand up and be strong.
London Primary Winner
Saima Chowdhury, age 10

Recipe for No Bullying Surprise

A handful of support,
A teaspoon of courage,
A sprinkle of confidence,
And a pinch of love.

A spoon full of belief,
A pinch of trust,
A cup full of friend.
A teaspoon of good feeling,
A sprinkle of charity and
A piece of joy.

A slice of happiness,
A bunch of kindness,
A cluster of help,
A cup full of hope,
A mug of sweetness,
A sprinkle of honour,
A pour of freedom then,
Mix it with a cuddle.

Then put it in the oven of justice
and wait for 10 minutes,
Take it out and enjoy your No Bully Surprise.

Hint: always cook with a friend!
by famous cook
Saima Chowdhury
Bullies are not nice. They are bad. They can make you feel very sad. Some say wrong words, punch and kick and you end up crying or being sick. So let’s stop it now, cause bullies aren’t cool. And let’s all live in a happy school.

By Zoe Snell, aged 5.

If you get bullied, tell someone.

Love Zoe x
West Midlands Primary Winner
Lameece Masud, age 10

Bullies.

Bullies come in all different shapes and sizes.
They always come out with nasty surprises.
Bullies, bullies think they are strong,
but we all know they are wrong.
Bullies make people feel lonely and sad,
they don’t even stop and think that they have done something bad.

Let’s all get together once and for all,
and tell them they shouldn’t do bad things
to prove big or small.
Bullies, bullies think they are clever
But we can all say to them ‘WHATEVER’.

Stand up and speak up
Be proud of who you are.
Don't Bully

Don't bully me.
It's very easy to see
when people are scared and sad.
The bullies make me mad.

If this happens to you,
You know what to do:
Don't get angry and fight.
But tell someone right.

Always your Mum and Dad
When things are getting really bad.
Let's get this sorted from the start.
Everyone can play their part.

Remember to help friends in need
And please remember this little poem.
Don't put up with violence.
And never suffer in silence.

by James Rayner

Choose your friends carefully and
Remember your teachers are friends as well.

James
North East Primary Winner
Micha White, age 10

Don't be a victim. Stand up and be strong.

Standing up instead of staying down will make a difference.

Bullying

Bullying

by Micha White

Age 10 years
Yorkshire and Humberside Primary Winner
Sophia Anderton, age 9

If I WAS A BULLY

If I was a bully, what would it be like,
Swiping a ball, stealing a bike.

If I was a bully, it wouldn’t be fair,
Stomping on toes, pulling your hair.

If I was a bully, I’d soil in a canoe,
And make someone paddle, someone like you.

If I was a bully, it wouldn’t be true,
I’m glad I’m not a bully, just like you.

By Sophia Anderton 4s
Feelings and Bullying

They weren’t bigger than me,
They weren’t smarter than me,
But somehow that’s how they made me feel.

They didn’t hit me or kick me,
They didn’t punch or spit at me,
But somehow it would have been easier if they did.

It was just the nasty comments,
And the way they made me feel,
I wish I’d told the teacher,
It wouldn’t have been such a big deal!

Lydia Scott
Just watching telly

As I was watching telly just the other day,
I saw something which upset me, and it just won’t go away.
My favourite sport is football, I’m a forward not a back,
I saw someone being insulted just because their skin was black.

I felt so sad to see this happen in my favourite game, he was only playing football and I thought it was a shame.
I just hope the player is ok so he can play again,
and the nasty things those people said didn’t cause him too much pain.

by Thomas Yr 8

Bullies are the losers

Thomas Graham
Yorkshire and Humberside Primary Runner-up
Ayesha Patel, age 11

Bullying

It all started when I was young,
The bully came and stuck out his tongue,
First I thought it was just for fun,
Then I realised it wasn’t a joke,
The bully started bullying from that day on.

I just wished I could run away,
I had friends but he took them away,
I had told my friends all my secrets,
Now they might tell the bully.

I was sad I was lonely,
I knew I had to tell someone,
So I told the teacher and she understood,
She gave me some advice,
Now I’m not coming home covered in mud.

If you’re being bullied then tell someone,
It will really help,
And remember you’re never alone.

By Ayesha Patel

Don’t be afraid
Bullies are cowards!

A. Patel
Fading Away

They had been
my friends before.
Suddenly they
acted like
they hadn’t been.
They started to
threaten me.
I felt like
I was
fading away
from
everything
and
everyone.

Monu Sachdeva, aged 8

"Never give up, the bullies can’t beat you if you tell the teacher."
Andrew Fusek Peters judged the Special category

The winner for me is True Life about a boy who got asthma: Why do I like this poem? I think because it’s emotionally honest and true. In reading it, I was moved and it felt real. Does it work as a real poem? Well, I think so, perhaps more than my ‘cleverly’ constructed poems – as it does what it says. After reading a poem like this, anyone with a tiny smidgen of sensitivity will have some sympathy for what the writer is going through. Personally, my heart goes out to the writer. I also like the fact that it doesn’t provide some pat answer to the problem but just states the facts as they are.
Overall Secondary Winner and South West Secondary Winner

Helen Judd, age 11

Dear Diary
This was my first day at my new school,
I didn't run,
I didn't have fun,
I didn't make friends
And I didn't smile,
I had a horrible play-
A horrible day.

Dear Diary
This was my second day at my new school,
They called me names,
Left me out from their games,
I was all alone,
I wanted to go home,
I had a horrible play-
A horrible day.

Dear Diary
This was third day at my new school,
They kicked me and punched me,
They wouldn't give up,
They got taller and taller,
I got smaller and smaller
I had a horrible play-
A horrible day

Dear Diary
This was my forth day at my new school,
I stuck up for myself,
They didn't call me names,
They let me play their games,
I wasn't all alone,
I didn't want to go home,
We were all friends,
They said it wouldn't last,
I said it wouldn't last.
I had an O.K play -
An O.K day

Helen Judd 7B

Estelle judged the Secondary category

I choose Dear Diary as my winner as the diary style gives a very personal insight into the progress of the bullying and a sense that we, as readers, are being confided in. The short, punchy rhymes, and the use of repetition make the poem very memorable and catchy. I found the positive ending where the writer finds the strength to deal with the bullying very inspiring. Well done!
West Midlands Secondary Winner
Lyam Parker, age 13

Do I have to go to school mum?
Do I really have to go,
I’ve got a bummy ache,
I think I’m going to throw.

They push and threaten me,
It means outside and in,
There’s much stranger than me,
I guess I’ll never win.

I couldn’t sleep last night,
I was worried about what they’d say,
I have to try and ignore them,
I’ll tell someone someday.

Lyam Parker, age 13

Stand up to bullies
and don’t let them win.