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Reducing bullying through awareness of verbal and non-verbal communication

How we psychologically and physically position ourselves in relation to others determines how they will respond to us.

The aim of the workshop is to enable teachers to facilitate the exploration of their pupil's patterns of relating to others.

Having an awareness of these patterns can uncover what a pupil might unconsciously be setting up, eg. negative body language is an invitation for a bully to exert their power. Therefore, with the new knowledge of their behaviour, a pupil can reposition their psychological and physical approach to others, whilst creating a healthier stance in pupil to pupil interactions and other relationships.

The session has been designed with theoretical presentations of TA (Transactional Analysis), to create an opportunity for questions and analysis as well as exercises such as partner work and role-play.

Structured with a balance of challenging self-exploration and role-play, the exercises will focus on the teacher's own interactions, so enabling them to facilitate the repositioning of interactions between pupils.

Self-exploration (fixed patterns of relating)

The purpose here is to analyse the theory that we are comprised of many different 'part-selves' and that we are constantly dynamic and responsive to others. With recognition and awareness of these concepts, a person can begin to have a choice, with the ability to rewrite their 'life-script' of fixed patterns of relating. We can then question how helpful these patterns of relating are within school, by looking at what the pupil might be 'setting up' (are they unconsciously inviting another pupil to have power over them?) and therefore moving on to facilitate a new approach.

Psychodrama (alternative patterns of relating)

Through psychodrama, the teacher has a chance to reflect on their interactions and find strategies to reposition themselves if the power dynamic feels uncomfortable. From the experience of this exercise, the teacher is enabled to facilitate a roleplay for pupils to find a way of reducing bullying by understanding their unconscious motivations, by checking out and modifying their interactions.